QUALITIES OF A NETWORKED IMPROVEMENT LEADER

Quality	Importance to Networked Improvement	Description	Look Fors

Self-mastery	At its heart, improvement is about learning. In order to learn with others and as an organization, you need to be a learner yourself.	Commitment to continued personal growth, self-reflection and learning	• Able to balance personal vision for oneself with accurate assessment of current reality
			  – Articulates personal strengths and weaknesses
			• Able to engage in productive conflict
			  – Uses conversational capacity "candor" and "curiosity" skills
			  – Recognizes triggers during conflict; takes responsibility for behavior

Transparency	"If we cannot express our assumptions explicitly in ways that others can understand and build upon, there can be no larger process of testing those assumptions and building public knowledge." (Peter Senge)	Willingness to make work and outcomes public and to learn from failure	• Open to participation in shared environment
			  – Tests a change idea even if confidence in idea is low
			  – Shares "failures"
			  – Shares data
			  – Makes thinking explicit

Humility and empathy	"Every system is perfectly designed to get the results it gets" (Paul Batalden). Given this, there is no one person who is the cause of the problem or who can solve it alone. As a result, this means you must adopt a type of inquiry borne in a sincere sense of humility and empathy to see and understand the problem and possible solutions.	Willingness to 1) recognize and acknowledge one's inability to see and understand whole system given limitations of one's own experience and vantage point of the system and 2) actively seek out perspectives, insights and experiences of others.	• Open to feedback and learning from others
			  – Accepts disconfirming evidence
			  – Defers to expert knowledge when appropriate
			  – Recognizes when one does not have evidence to support theories or assumptions
			• Values and actively seeks out different perspectives
			  – Engages in "humble inquiry"
			  – Uses "empathy" tools (e.g. shadowing, interviews, fly-on-the-wall observations) to better understand the experiences of others

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Ability to move forward in the face of uncertainty	While we may be able articulate the end goal, the path to getting there is usually not linear or clear. If we knew how to solve the problem, we would have done so already. However, rather than letting the unknown paralyze us, we need to actively lean into the improvement process, trusting that it that will help us learn our way into the problem and ultimately figure out how to solve it.	Willingness to engage proactively in work when solutions or path forward are vague or unclear	• Approaches uncertainty with curiosity and views it as opportunity to learn – Asks "why?" – Uses improvement tools (process map, empathy interviews, data) to gain more clarity – Seeks help when unclear or does not know how to do something
Rigorous and disciplined	One of the primary goals of improvement science is to generate new knowledge that can be spread. This requires more rigorous testing, adherence to a consistent rhythm of testing, and a more stringent evidence base than learning that happens through traditional professional learning communities and action-based research.	Willingness to put ideas and work through a demanding inquiry process and to set high bar for evidence of improvement	• Able to focus for sustained period of time on improving high-leverage area – Says "no" to work or changes that are not related to network's focus areas • Exhibits scientific orientation to work – Uses data or evidence to back claims and beliefs – Respectfully asks others to share evidence for claims and beliefs – When new idea posited, asks, "How could we test this?" – Actively tests change ideas under multiple conditions; seeks disconfirming evidence to "break" theory • Adheres to improvement routines – Uses three improvement questions to guide thinking – Completes fully inquiry cycle, uses to reflect and build on learning • Documents work consistently (PDSAs, data charts, process maps, progress reports)