2 Network Leadership

> *Network leadership draws on the natural leadership capacity that exists in **all** of us.*

We're used to leaders who are standing behind podiums and have titles like Executive Director or President. In the past, we've looked to them for direction and counted on them to make things happen. The problem with this traditional model is that we need many more leaders for the complex problems we face today than the heroic and gifted model of leadership can generate. Network leadership, on the other hand, is a model that draws on the natural leadership capacity that exists in all of us. Network leadership is something we do and learn together. When we build on our natural capacities in this way, we will find that our networks will quickly generate the initiative and skill needed for transformation.

WHEN DO YOU NEED NETWORK LEADERSHIP?

Have you experienced any of the following situations? If so, your network can benefit from more, and more skilled, network leadership.

- A funder provides funds for a set of organizations to try a new strategy. Some amazing breakthroughs are made by several of the projects, but the funder neither brings the organizations together to share these breakthrough nor shares was is earned with the rest of the field.

- Over ten years, a very innovative regional network develops a great strategy but can't find any funding to share with other communities, even though many other communities have expressed interest.

- A conference is packed with speakers and the breaks are very short, so people really don't get to meet others.

- Five organizations get together to develop a joint project, but no one really knows how to keep the collaboration on track.

- Ten groups who have been working together on an issue get together but the discussion spirals off into harangues about the opposition.

- A young leader knows that other groups are working on the same issue but isn't sure if she should try to bring the groups together or what to do once they are in the same room.

- Lots of people in the community have expressed interest in doing something to improve the community, but no one really knows **how to start.**

Remember, YOU
already
are a Network
Weaver!

We use the term Network Weaver to describe leaders in networks. Network Weaver leadership is multi-faceted: it's critical that we understand the various roles involved and help ourselves and others learn the skills needed for each role.

The following section provides a description of Network Weaver roles, while the activity section provides several checklists that can be used to help people assess their current strengths and skills and identify areas for additional skill building.

Section 1. Leadership Roles in Networks
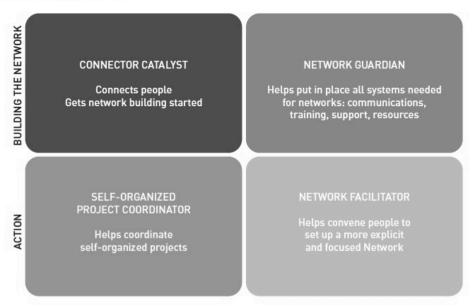
NETWORK WEAVER ROLES

Figure 1. Network Weaver Roles

A Network Weaver is someone who is aware of the networks around them and explicitly works to make them healthier. Network Weavers do this by helping people identify their interests and challenges, connecting people strategically where there's potential for mutual benefit, and serving as a catalyst for self-organizing groups.

The work that Network Weavers do can be subdivided into 4 different roles, shown in Figure 1 above. The *Connector* and *Network Guardian* roles are concerned with enhancing the network, while the *Project Coordinator* and *Network Facilitator* are more focused on the work of the network. The Connector and the Project Coordinator tend to work on the micro level, while the Facilitator and the Network Guardian are often working on the macro level.

Any individual can – and often does – fill more than one of these roles, but often people are particularly suited for one of them. Each role has a particular skill set that enhances that role, and each has specific processes that the person playing

that role will need to utilize. Any training or support program for Network Weavers needs to understand which of these roles are most important in the network at that time and then design training to support that role or roles.

NETWORK CONNECTOR

A Network Connector identifies undeveloped aspects of the network and works to strengthen them so that the network becomes a *Smart Network* with a core of overlapping clusters of different types of groups and individuals and a vast periphery of connections to new resources and new ideas.

THE KEY PROCESS FOR CONNECTORS: CLOSING TRIANGLES

For example, a Connector will identify types of people who are missing from the network. People often left out of networks include young people, older people, people of color, people with few resources, and people served by organizations (such as homeless people or people on public assistance). A Network Connector will identify key *hubs* (people who are well-connected) among those groups and build a relationship with them, identifying their strengths and interests, but also their challenges. They also get a sense of their unique personalities.

The Connector then identifies people in the core of the network who might be a good match with a hub person. The best kind of match would be based on pairing the strengths and gifts of an excluded person with a need of a person in the core. For example, a Connector might connect an individual who runs several computer centers (but is interested in expanding the centers' services to meet the needs of homeless individuals) with a homeless individual who knows a lot about how and where people who are homeless use computer communications.
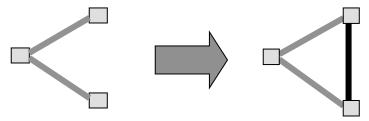

Figure 2. Closing Triangles

The Connector then **closes the triangle** by introducing these two individuals in an informal conversation. The Connector helps the two individuals get to know each other, encouraging them to share about common interests, values, or histories. Then, if it makes sense, the Connector helps the two figure out how they might help each other or work together. We call this a *twosie* – a two-person collaboration – which is the basic building block of a healthy network.

The Connector makes sure to follow-up with those he or she has connected. Sometimes people just need a reminder to keep the relationship on track. However, especially when people are from different cultures or backgrounds, they may need help clearing up assumptions they made about the other. If all is going well, the Connector might suggest that their *twosie* expand into an exploratory project. In the example above, the computer center director and the homeless individual could

invite several other homeless people, along with a grant writer and project implementer, to develop a plan for expanding homeless access to computers.

<table>
<tr><td>

Case Study

</td><td>

Sue Dormanen, Closing triangles

Sue Dormanen manages an active online community called the Community Clinic Voice. A community member recently asked for a sample Request for Proposals that had been developed to be used to get bids for a building project. Having a sample to work from would save the organization a lot of time coming up with one on its own.

Sue didn't have such a sample proposal, but she knew someone who she thought might have one, and she introduced them to each other in an email. That person knew of yet another party who had what was needed and connected those two individuals. "You all rock!" was the grateful comment of the requester after receiving just what she needed.

</td></tr>
</table>

THE IMPORTANCE OF CONNECTING CLUSTERS

In addition to bringing excluded people into the network, the Connector looks for parts of the network that are not well-connected. For example teachers are often not connected to non-profits in their community, or low-resource entrepreneurs are often not well-connected to banks. These unconnected or poorly connected *clusters* might be from different types of organizations, different geographies, or different political views. Very often there is a power imbalance between the two clusters. The clusters may use different jargon or represent different cultures.

The Connector needs to identify individuals who are currently bridging both groups and are well-respected by individuals in both. Such individuals can most easily be identified from a comprehensive network map (generated from a survey and software), but also conversations with people in both camps will generally reveal them. (Do you know anyone in Group B? Who do you know that knows someone in that group?)

Once that bridge person (or persons) is identified, you can find out whether he or she is interested in helping to bring the groups together. However rather than bring the two groups together en masse, which may lead to conflict or misunderstanding, it often makes sense to start with a small project that would be of high interest to a few people from each cluster. Those individuals should be both open and well regarded.

An example of such a small collaborative project might be one including individuals from a fisheries conservation group and some fisherman (perhaps retired) who are all interested in the history of the fisheries and especially old conservation practices. Together they might create a program to share with the local schools. As they work together, though, they are likely to get to know and enjoy each other and many of the stereotypes they had of people from the other cluster are likely to soften. Encouraging them to share the good experience with others in their cluster begins to make the boundaries between the groups more permeable. This then

opens even more opportunities for new – perhaps more risky but also more high-impact – collaborations.

<table>
<tr>
<td>

Case Study

</td>
<td>

Deborah Drysdale, Connecting Clusters

Deborah Drysdale is part of the Women Donors Network (WDN) and the Race and Gender and Human Rights Fund (RGHR) of the Women's Foundation of California. As a Connector, she realized that many women concerned about criminal (in)justice didn't have firsthand experience with the prison system and didn't have relationships with women who had been incarcerated.

With others, she helped organize a two-day experience to connect these clusters. First, a briefing was held, in which formerly incarcerated women and their children told stories about how incarceration had impacted themselves and their families. The next day, a busload of funders and activists (mostly formerly incarcerated women from local non-profits) went to visit a women's prison. This bus ride provided the opportunity for funders and activists to build relationships and find out about each other's specific interests in this field. As Deborah said, "The bus ride created a space that accelerated serendipity."

In the prison, the activists and funders joined in small groups with women prisoners. First, the visitors explained why they wanted to come, sharing how much they wanted to hear the women prisoners' stories. This created a sense of trust, as the incarcerated women were touched that anyone wanted to listen to them. They shared about the recent Mother's Day visits from their children – the only time many of them got to see their children since the prison was so far away from where their children lived. They discussed the educational programs that had been cut, that there were no law books in the library, that phone charges were

</td>
</tr>
</table>

Connectors also help networks build connections with more resources and expertise. One easy way to do this is to encourage people in the network to brainstorm names of people they know who might know people with resources. We call this mining your friends' friends. For example, if your network is looking for more people skilled in facilitation, you might think of a good facilitator you know and ask him or her the names of other skilled facilitators. You then could meet with them (preferably with your friend) to find out their interests and specialties. This way, when you came across a specific need for facilitation, you would already know several people who could be contacted.

PROJECT COORDINATOR

Once enough people in a network know each other, it becomes a field of potential for action. At this point the Network Weaver needs to model *self-organizing*. Self-organizing occurs when an individual or small group identifies some opportunity to make a difference and initiates a collaborative project. A healthy network will be generating dozens of collaborative projects at any one time, and

Make your motto, "No one works alone."

WORK WEAVER

the network as a whole will be watching and learning from these projects. The role of Project Coordinator in this situation is critical because even though people may work in teams in their workplace, they often lack the skills and mindset needed for projects that are shorter-term and have no boss to hold people accountable. There are three parts to the Project Coordinator role:

1. PROJECT CATALYST

A Project Catalyst helps people in the network cluster into action groups. The first step is to help people form *twosies* – actions groups of two individuals. Make your motto, "No one works alone." Encourage people to do all tasks with at least one other person so that they can get to know more people and know them better! For example, even the job of notetaking can become a twosie – both people take notes then compare and notice their different perspectives on the meeting. Researching new ideas makes an excellent job for a twosie. Interviewing new people for the network is a great twosie.

A Project Catalyst can help people identify others interested in the same activity by using a survey that offers a list of actions and asks the survey takers to identify which one they are most interested in doing. This can be done using www.surveymonkey.com. One of the individuals in each group can be given the names of all those who selected that activity and asked to convene that group. Another way to catalyze action groups is using the Opportunity Process described in Chapter 8. This is a great process because people get to see how clustering works.

2. PROJECT COORDINATOR

A Project Coordinator actually coordinates projects that are done by subparts of the organization, but does it in a way that is transparent so that others throughout the whole group can easily observe all aspects of project coordination. People often need to see someone modeling self-organization before they can initiate and coordinate a project on their own. They need to watch someone getting an idea for a project, finding other people who want to join with them, convening a project, and helping the group figure out how to work together.
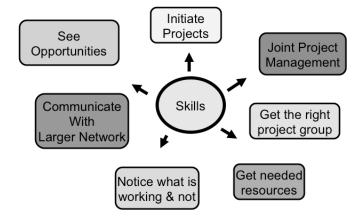

Figure 3. Skill Set for Project Coordinators

There are many skills, tools, and processes involved in coordinating projects. The fastest way to learn them is to be part of a community of practice where you can

share skills and get feedback on what you are doing. Chapters 8 and 9 contain many skill-building activities.

3. PROJECT COACH

A Project Coach helps interested individuals become good Project Coordinators. The first step in becoming a Project Coach is to co-coordinate a project with an individual who wants to learn to be a Project Coordinator. You may start out doing most of the coordination while explaining everything you are doing to the novice coordinator. Then you can encourage her to take over, with you checking in frequently to see how she is doing and affirming her good work. Once she does a project on her own, the Coach checks in with her to offer encouragement and discuss any issues that arise.

NETWORK FACILITATOR

A Network Facilitator helps intentional networks be successful. The Facilitator helps a group of people with a common interest or issue come together to set up a more formal network. The Network Facilitator has four major tasks.

1. CATALYZE THE NETWORK

A Network Catalyst is someone who helps a group of people start thinking about networks. They do this by:
- Providing information about networks
- Helping people see the benefits of a network approach
- Convening people to help them map and understand their network

A Network Catalyst often starts with small informal meetings with others, sharing articles and information about networks. As the Catalyst starts identifying more people, he or she will start connecting those individuals if they do not already know each other. The goal of the Catalyst is to create a critical mass of those who have some basic understanding of and interest in networks.

Case Study

Janet Shing, Network Catalyst

Janet Shing, a program officer at the Monterey Community Foundation, has helped quite a few intentional networks get started. For example she convened leaders from the community of Greenfield. This town had less than 10,000 residents so people thought that everyone knew everyone else. At the first meeting, people discovered that they knew of other people in the room, but had not actually met them in person. She helped them build relationships and encouraged them to work on collaborative projects.

She also convened a 311 Network and a Literacy Network. These differed considerably in their formality and their need for outside facilitation.

2. HELP THE NETWORK DEVELOP APPROPRIATE STRUCTURE

Whether the network is just starting or is well-developed, the Network Facilitator needs to make sure the participants pay attention to the structure of the network and notice if it is appropriate to the purpose or needs of the network.

For a start-up network, this means setting up a series of meetings where some or all of the network members define each of the following elements:

- Purpose
- Goals
- Membership, including responsibilities
- Governance
- Coordination
- Action
- Finances

Unless the Network Facilitator has very strong group process skills, he or she needs to bring in highly skilled facilitators for these meetings, as arriving at consensus is often very difficult.

For existing networks, the Facilitator can lead the network members through an assessment process (using the Monitor Institute's excellent Diagnostic Tool in Chapter 13) and have them take a fresh look at the seven core elements listed above. From this reflection, the network can develop a strategy to tune up the network.

3. COORDINATE THE NETWORK

Coordinating the network is a demanding task, as the Network Facilitator has no actual authority to get members to do anything! Because of this, the Network Facilitator needs to be persuasive and be comfortable as a peer rather than as a manager.

The other skill needed for coordination is the ability to engage people. Involvement in the network is not a full time job for the members, and their attention will not be on network activities unless excellent communication and engagement systems are in place. This is why widespread use of social media is so important to successful networks: social media platforms provide a means to keep people engaged in the network. The Network Facilitator needs to identify *Technology Stewards* who can train and coach members in the use of social media for their projects.

An additional aspect of this role is helping to organize action. This will vary considerably depending on whether the network focuses more on a single plan for implementation or whether new projects are self-organized as opportunities arise. In the first case, the Network Facilitator needs to ensure that a plan with clear tasks, roles, and timelines is developed and that there are frequent opportunities for the membership to review progress on their plan.

In a self-organizing network, the Network Facilitator will focus more on helping members cluster and organize projects. Reflection on the progress of those projects and insights gained from them is the most critical process in this approach.

4. HELP PEOPLE IN THE NETWORK BUILD AND DEEPEN RELATIONSHIPS

An essential part of the Network Facilitator role is to help network members build relationships of trust and understanding. This requires a clear framing of network values such as openness to new ideas, appreciation of differences, and willingness to share information.

The Network Facilitator needs to make sure that every meeting and phone call includes relationship building activities. Since people in intentional networks often have to work very closely together for long periods of time, an important shift is for people to accept each other and be able to catch when they start being reactive to another person. When each member works on staying open, without being attached to a particular outcome, the network will more easily reach consensus.

NETWORK GUARDIAN

The Network Guardian is like a hot air balloon, floating over the network and noticing what the whole network needs to function more effectively. The Network Guardian thinks about the systems a network needs, whatever its structure, so that it creates results.

NOTICING THE NETWORK

A Network Guardian is usually well-connected to all parts of a network and is good at listening and asking questions that help determine the network pulse. Questions the Guardian is trying to answer through this listening are:

- How is the energy in the network? Is the energy even?
- What is going well? Why?
- Are people feeling engaged? Are they collaborating with others?
- What are the challenges the network is experiencing?
- Are people hearing about what is happening in other parts of the network?
- Are resources flowing well and fairly in the network?
- Are people making sense of what is happening? Are they making breakthroughs?

Answers to these questions help the Network Guardian determine which part of the network support system might need some shoring up.

DEVELOPING AND IMPROVING SYSTEMS

There are four basic systems that support networks:
- Communication and Engagement Systems
- Support for Network Weavers
- Even access to appropriate resources
- Reflection and Integration

The Network Guardian will help network participants deepen their understanding of each system and then lead them through processes to help them develop or improve these systems (see Chapters 14 and 15). Often the Network Guardian needs to work with foundations (or foundation staff may play a key Network Guardian role) to get the resources that the network needs for these systems.

Case Study

Three Network Guardians

A team of three people acted as Network Guardians for the Blue Cross Blue Shield Healthy Eating Minnesota Network. They funded 8 local Healthy Eating Networks, each with a different approach. They were part of the network, frequently interacting and listening to people in the various local networks.

They set up a 6 month training program for Network Weavers in these networks and a ning site that was used for communication. In addition, they set up an evaluation system that was useful to the projects to determine strengths and challenges.

QUESTIONS

1. Which of these roles do you currently play?
2. Which are you most interested in exploring further?
3. Which role does your network most need right now? How can more people play that role?
4. How might you go about developing these roles and gaining the skills needed for each?

Chart 1: Four Network Weaver Roles

Role	Skills and Tasks
Connector	• Mapping networks • Analyzing maps • Closing triangles • Building trust
Project Coordinator and Coaching Project Coordinators	• Forming action groups • Setting up coordination systems • Helping others form action groups • Sharing back learning to the larger network
Network Catalyst and Facilitator	• Convening people to organize an intentional network • Helping networks determine purpose and structure • Setting up agendas and facilitating meetings for intentional networks
Network Guardian	• Identifying what a network needs • Setting up communications systems and platforms • Helping people use social media and the social web • Setting up Innovation Funds • Setting up evaluation and reflection • Support and provide training for Network Weavers

Section 2. You are a Network Weaver

Networks are everywhere. But for networks to make a difference, someone has to help people become aware that they are part of a web of relationships. That someone is a NETWORK WEAVER.

A Network Weaver helps people become aware of the web of relationships – or networks – in which they are embedded and encourages them to become more intentional about those networks. Reading and using this handbook is a first step in becoming a Network Weaver.

A Network Weaver often identifies a network of people with some common interest and helps them focus on increased effectiveness of that field of interest. Network Weavers help shape and weave their networks so that they become more innovative and effective.

"I loved taking the Network Weaver Checklist.

I've been doing this all my life but never had a name for it!"

- Participant at a Network Weaver Training

A key aspect of the Network Weaver role is catalyzing networks so they become intentional in their development. In this role as catalyst, Network Weavers:

- provide information about networks
- tell stories about networks
- help people understand why networks are so important
- explain the benefits of a network approach

Each person starts with specific strengths and challenges as a Weaver. By reading more about Network Weavers and by taking the checklists in the resource section at the end of this chapter, you can get a clearer sense of yourself as a Network Weaver. You can also begin to identify which role or roles you are most interested in filling and the skills you need to be most effective.

Since a major aspect of your role as Network Weaver is to help others become Network as well, you'll want to share this information with others and encourage them to take the Network Weaver Checklist(s).

ACTIVITY: LEARNING FROM THE READING ON NETWORK ROLES

Read the **Network Weaver Roles** article at the beginning of this chapter with a group of people.

Share your answers to the questions at the end of the article with others.

ACTIVITY: NETWORK WEAVER CHECKLIST AS A PERSONAL ASSESSMENT
This activity is useful to help people realize they are Network Weavers and to introduce them to additional actions they can take as Network Weavers. You will want to design Network Weaver training based on the results of these surveys.

Take the **Network Weaver Checklist** and identify your strengths as a Network Weaver. Next, identify areas where you are not as strong. Which of these areas would you like to learn more about? Which skills described would you like to learn?

Share your results with others in the group.

ACTIVITY: NETWORK WEAVER CHECKLIST BY ROLES
This checklist is useful when your network is ready to think more deeply about the roles that Network Weavers play in a network. It can help the network develop specific strategies to support each of the roles.

Take the ***Network Weaver Checklist by Roles*** and identify which role you currently tend to play.

Next, identify which role you are most interested in playing. What skills will you need to play that role well? What else will you need to learn to be effective in this role?

Share your answers with others in your group.

ACTIVITY: USING THE NETWORK WEAVER CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATION

If you give either of the checklists to a group of people, you may want to have them put their names on the checklist and make a copy of them so that you can record responses. This way you can get an average total number for the group. Then, in 6 months or a year, you can have the group re-take the survey and see if the average score has increased, which would be an indicator that the network now had increased leadership capacity.

Set up an excel spreadsheet with names of people in the first column and with each column representing a question on the checklist. Fill the cells for each name with the number they selected on the checklist. Then add up each individual's scores to get a total score. Finally, add up all of the total responses and divide that number by the number of people who took the survey to get an average score.

The next time you give the survey, collect scores again and compare the individual scores and the average scores. Share these with the network participants and have them discuss how they have changed as Network Weavers.

Section 3. Network Weavers Work Together

Network leadership is not a solitary activity. Network Weavers work collaboratively to make a difference in their network. This way they can learn from each other and support each other when challenges arise.

You may be in one of two different situations regarding networks. You may be part of an existing intentional network but want to introduce some of the new ideas and practices that are found in this handbook. Or, you may be interested in forming a new intentional network. In either case, you will be a catalyst in your network although your agenda may be somewhat different in each case.

If you are forming a new network, you'll want to read Chapter 11, Forming a New Intentional Network. If you are working with an existing network, you'll want to look at the various assessment worksheets in this handbook to see which aspects of the network are most needing attention.

However, in either case you will benefit by forming a group of people interested in introducing network benefits to your network. One of the best ways to learn about networks is through hands-on practice in network weaving, which, as you will learn, is best carried out as a group activity.

Forming a group to carry out the activities in the handbook and then share experiences will accelerate your learning. The group may include people from the reading/discussion group you started to study network basics. Or it might involve people you know who want to start a network or who are already part of an emerging network. You may want to form a Network Weaver learning group or community of practice; both are discussed in Chapter 15. The Leadership Learning Community (www.leadershiplearning.org/our-community/leadership-for-a-new-era) has an initiative on network leadership with many useful resources.

ACTIVITY: WHAT NETWORK?

> With your Network Weaver group, complete the worksheet ***What Network?*** to help get clarity on the network where you will be focusing your efforts.

ACTIVITY: STEPS IN CATALYZING A NETWORK
This activity introduces you to the steps involved in catalyzing a network. Some of you may be catalyzing a new network. Others already work with a network: your role as a catalyst is to increase participants' awareness and understanding of their network.

> Review the checklist ***Steps in Catalyzing a Network*** adding additional steps and including dates for each step. As each step is completed, check it off!

ACTIVITY: HOW WILL WE WORK TOGETHER?
It's critical that your Network Weaver Group make clear agreements about how you will work together. You may want to revisit this worksheet once or twice a year to make changes.

> With your Network Weaver group, complete the worksheet ***How Will We Work Together***?

ACTIVITY: OUR ONLINE SPACE

> Set up a Google doc to track your Network Weaver Group, inviting others in your group to be participants so that they can enter information and edit the document. Use it for your meeting notes, your conference call number, etc.

Resources for Chapter 2

Network Weaver Checklist

Network Weaver Checklist by Roles

What Network?

How Do We Work Together?

Reflection

WORKSHEET ➤ Network Weaver Checklist

What kind of Network Weaver are you? Mark each from 1 to 5, with 5 being "major strength" and 1 being "lack this quality."

Network Weaver Characteristics

____ 1. Focus on the positive, are optimistic

____ 2. Ask a lot of questions

____ 3. See problems and needs as opportunities

____ 4. Every new relationship is an opportunity to connect that person to others

____ 5. Comfortable with uncertainty

____ 6. Persistent in making things happen

____ 7. Share information and resources freely

____ 8. Have big dreams; want to really make a difference

____ 9. Enjoy people who are "different" and people with different perspectives

____10. You are unique, maybe considered a "character," but you have little ego

_____TOTAL

Do you help build a network culture?

____ 1. Love to unearth other people's dreams and visions

____ 2. Model an approach to relationships that is positive, appreciative, and focused on strengths and gifts

____ 3. Treat everyone as a peer

____ 4. Encourage complex reciprocity – sharing information and resources with others without expecting a return from that person because you know others will share with you

____ 5. Point out the value of knowing people with different perspectives and from different backgrounds

____ 6. Encourage people to see conflicts as opportunities to develop breakthroughs

____ 7. Encourage people to listen deeply to each other

____ 8. Encourage people to identify shared or overlapping interests or values

____ 9. Help people make accurate and realistic assessments of others

____10. Show people how to build trust through small, low-risk collaborations with others

_____TOTAL

Do you enhance the effectiveness of the network?

_____ 1. Identify people's strengths and gifts

_____ 2. Help people with common interests connect

_____ 3. Unearth new people with needed skills and resources and link them into the network

_____ 4. Help people bring innovation and new perspectives into their networks

_____ 5. See patterns in the network: where there is energy, where there is isolation

_____ 6. Help people map, analyze, and enhance their networks

_____ 7. Help people understand Smart Network concepts and translate into practice

_____ 8. Set up an innovation fund to provide seed funds for small collaborations

_____ TOTAL

Do you move the network to action and impact?

_____ 1. Encourage people to initiate collaborations with others and provide coaching for them

_____ 2. Mentor others in project coordination skills

_____ 3. Encourage initial collaborations to be "small acts" or projects

_____ 4. Not attached to specific next steps but help everyone be strategic

_____ 5. Help people reflect on successes and failures and understand the underlying patterns of success

_____ 6. Able to quickly help people see when something doesn't work and move on

_____ 7. Help small projects move to scale

_____ 8. Convince policy makers to be part of your network

_____ 9. Encourage others to become network weavers and take responsibility for increasing the health of their networks

_____ 10. Set up training and coaching for network weavers

_____ TOTAL

Network Weaving Strengths:

TOTAL
SCORE HERE

Improve Skills:

CHECKLIST ➤ # Network Weaver Roles

What kind of Network Weaver are you? Mark each from 1 to 5, with 5 being "major strength" and 1 being "lack this quality."

Weaver or Connector

_____ 1. Love to unearth other people's dreams and visions, strengths, and gifts

_____ 2. Help people identify challenges and introduce them to others who can help

_____ 3. Encourage people with skills and resources to connect to people with needs

_____ 4. Model an approach to relationships that is positive, appreciative, and focused on strengths and gifts

_____ 5. Treat everyone as a peer

_____ 6. Encourage complex reciprocity – sharing information and resources with others without expecting a return from that person because you know others will share with you

_____ 7. Point out the value of knowing people with different perspectives and from different backgrounds

_____ 8. Encourage people to listen deeply to each other

_____ 9. Encourage people to identify shared or overlapping interests or values

_____10. Help people make accurate and realistic assessments of others

_____11. Help people bring innovation and new perspectives into their network by adding new people to their network

Collaborative Project Coordinator

_____ 1. Initiate cross-organizational collaborations and activities with others

_____ 2. Show people how to build trust through small, low-risk collaborations with others

_____ 3. Have good project coordination skills

_____ 4. Encourage initial collaborations to be "small acts" or projects

_____ 5. Not attached to specific next steps but enjoy helping people do something

_____ 6. Encourage people to see conflicts as opportunities to develop breakthroughs

_____ 7. Help people reflect on successes and failures and understand the underlying "patterns of success"

_____ 8. Quickly help people see when something doesn't work and move on

_____ 9. Insist that people check assumptions about what others are saying

_____10. Encourage people to share about their project with larger networks

_____11. Encourage others to initiate cross-organizational collaborations and activities and provide coaching for them

Network Facilitator or Organizer

_____ 1. Convene people with common interests to form a network

_____ 2. Continually unearth new people with needed skills, resources, and perspectives and link them into the network

_____ 3. Help people map, analyze, and enhance their networks

_____ 4. Help people understand Smart Networks concepts and translate into practice

_____ 5. Help Network determine strategic directions

_____ 6. Help small projects move to scale

_____ 7. Encourage more people to become Network Weavers

_____ 8. Set up training and coaching for Network Weavers and project coordinators

_____9. Find resources to support the functioning of the network

_____10. Set up communications systems for the network

Network Guardian

_____ 1. Support, encourage, and mentor Network Weavers

_____ 2. Encourage others to become Network Weavers and take responsibility for increasing the health of their networks

_____ 3. Help the network identify and enhance or set up Networking Hubs or spaces where people can bump into each other

_____ 4. Help people reflect on successes and failures and understand the underlying patterns of success

_____ 5. See patterns in the network: where there is energy, where there is isolation and help develop strategies to deal with those aspects of the network

_____ 6. Communicate about networks to the public

_____ 7. Make sure that network weavers and network projects are celebrated in the local media

_____ 8. Set up an innovation fund to provide seed funds for small collaborations

_____ 9. Find or provide resources for networks and training for Network Weavers

Who will fill each role (weaver, facilitator, coordinator, or network guardian) in your network?

CHECKLIST   **Catalyzing Networks**

☐   1. Read articles about networks.

☐   2. Take the Network Weaver Checklist to determine your strengths and challenges as a
Network Weaver.

☐   3. Find other Network Weavers interested in working with you.

☐   4. More clearly identify the network you hope to catalyze or work with (What Network?).

☐   5. Share information and have informal discussions to introduce benefits of networks.

☐   6. Convene a small group to think about next steps.

☐   7.

☐   8.

WORSHEET ▶ **What Network?**

1. Who are the units in your network? What organizations? What individuals?

2. What are the types of units?

   Individuals: parents, employees, volunteers, executive directors, etc.

   Organizations: non-profits, schools, agencies, foundations, businesses, etc.

3. What is the focus of the network? What is the issue?

4. What do you see as the major needs of this network?

5. What role will you play?

WORSHEET **How Will We Work Together?**

1. How often will we meet?

2. Where will we meet?

3. Who will be responsible for reminding us about meetings?

4. Who will generate agendas?

5. Who will take notes?

WORKSHEET ▶ **Reflections on Network Leadership**

1. What particular insights did you get from this section? What will you try to apply to your network?

2. What questions do you have about network leadership?

3. What would you like to learn about network leadership?