

The Leadership Compass

INTRODUCTION

This exercise introduces a leadership metaphor that describes four types of leadership styles (North, South, East, and West.) Participants use this metaphor to explore the strengths and challenges of each style and to identify strategies for understanding and collaborating with styles that differ from their own. This information is powerful because it points out how each of us leads and thinks differently.

NOTES:

Ahead of time:

- Thoroughly review this Facilitator Guide
- Prepare flipcharts (see the Script for examples)
- Ideal room set up is described on the next page

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

By the completion of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Explore a variety of leadership styles using four compass points (North, South, East, and West) as metaphors
2. Identify each Compass Point's strengths and challenges, and
3. Explain why and how to respect and collaborate with diverse leadership styles.

MODULE OVERVIEW:

Introduction/The Big Picture	5 minutes
Compass Point Style Review	10 minutes
Self-Selection – Style Groupings	5 minutes
Activity "The Award"	25 minutes
Reflection/Closure	15 minutes



Time: 45 minutes

Materials and Equipment

- 5 Flipchart Pads and Easels (one for the facilitator and one for each of the Compass Points: North, South, East, and West. (Or, tape Compass Point flipchart sheets directly to the walls.)
- Markers
- Prepared flipcharts for the facilitator to use (see Script for samples)
- Handouts:
 - The Leadership Compass

SUGGESTED SCRIPT

Room Set Up

Place four prepared COMPASS POINT flipcharts and easels (**North, South, East, and West**) in four corners of the room. Display the Facilitation Flipchart/easel (module's Learning Objectives and Agenda on it) where everyone can see it.

Introduction/ The Big Picture

Welcome participants. Briefly review what will happen during this session. Encourage active participation and idea sharing.

Direct participants to **The Leadership Compass** module in their binders.

Explain

The Leadership Compass is a metaphor that describes four leadership styles, using the four compass points: North, South, East, and West as categories. Like all style or preference tools or metaphors (e.g. Myers-Briggs) this one has limits. This information should not be used to "label" or stereotype others or our selves. We offer this metaphor as a mechanism for catalyzing thought and dialogue about leadership styles. Understanding your own style - and being open and respectful of differing styles - is a key competency of facilitative leaders. We realize that participants spend sizeable amounts of time working in teams or groups yet we spend almost no time exploring the best ways to work together or to accomplish a task. Oxfam America believes that teamwork can be more productive if we take the time to discuss group members' work styles and how we can work effectively with each other.

Flipchart 1.

THE LEADERSHIP COMPASS**Learning Objectives**

By the completion of this module, you will be able to:

- Explore a variety of leadership styles using four compass points (North, South, East, and West) as metaphors
- Identify each Compass Point's strengths and challenges, and
- Explain why and how to respect and collaborate with diverse leadership styles

Agenda (60 minutes)

Introduction/The Big Picture	5 minutes
Compass Point Styles - Handouts	10 minutes
Self-Selection – Style Groupings	5 minutes
Activity: "The Award"	25 minutes
Reflection/Closure	15 minutes

Make the following points about the Learning Objectives and Agenda:

- This is a participatory activity. You will self-select to move into small groups, based on what you determine to be your preferred Compass Point Style.
- Each group will have a task to accomplish and present back to the rest of the group.
- As usual in this training program, it is important to allow time to reflect on this experience, and make notes on how to continue exploring these concepts. We allocate five minutes at the end for reflection and closure.

Transition

We're going to use the Leadership Compass to begin to determine what your leadership style or preferences might be. Are there questions before we move on?

Compass Point Styles -Handouts

5 minutes

Ask the participants to listen to each work style description as the facilitator reads them and reflect on whether the direction is describing you (only read the portion described as work style). The descriptions are also in the participant binder and posted at different places in the room. We will allow time for participants to wander around the room and read each directional description.

Self-Selection – Compass Point Styles

5 minutes

Some may express concerns they are being limited or labeled. Acknowledge that the Compass metaphor has flaws – but is a good way to start dialogues about styles

After participants review the different descriptions, ask them to move to the Compass Point they identify with most – North, South, East, or West. (If participants identify with more than one, ask them to choose one for the purposes of this activity. They can change directions during the activity if they feel they are in the wrong group.)

Ask the North, South, East, and West groups to compare notes for about five minutes, sharing why they resonated with or agreed with some or most of the descriptors. Encourage them to adapt the wording of any descriptor that doesn't describe them properly –and to add any descriptors they want.

Transition

Now that you've chosen a Compass Point Style and shared a little bit with others in your small groups, each group will be given a certain assignment.

Activity: "The Award"

25 minutes

In previous programs, the following has happened:

Norths had more than one recipient and/or award titles – they all felt right when picking a recipient

Souths had to check in with each other to make sure everyone was involved – to the point of not accomplishing goals

Easts talked about the vision of the recipient using passionate and descriptive words to detail why they received the award.

Wests had to ask for clarification and questions and used a system to select their recipient.

Explain activity instructions. Each of the Compass Point groups will:

- Select a social justice leader (either living or dead) to receive an award
- Create a title for the award
- Select a representative to explain to the large group (in less than two minutes) the rationale selecting the recipient and for naming the award
- As a large group we will process what it was like to complete this activity, looking for particular points that demonstrate their particular work styles.

During the activity time, watch the groups or assign a facilitator to record the behaviors of each direction. You will share this behavior during the debrief.

After 15 minutes of small group work, ask for the group representative to present the award name and the recipient they selected. Monitor time (two minutes per group) so that all four groups have a chance to present.

Debrief

After all four groups have presented, ask:

- *What patterns did you see? Were there differences between the four styles?*
- *What did you discover about your own style/preference – and the other groups' style/preferences? Reread full work style descriptions to stimulate discussion.*

Reflection and Closure

5 minutes

Thank everyone for participating.

Direct participants to turn to the **Reflection Questions/Notes** page in this module. Let them know they should take some time to reflect on their experience and how they take what they discovered back to campus.

Point out the agenda for the remainder of the day/week and describe how upcoming activities/modules build on what was covered in this one.