

LEADERSHIP ADAPTABILITY ASSESSMENT

A Self-Diagnostic for CEOs, Business Owners & Senior Leaders

Developed by Ed Robinson

Vistage Master Chair | Capacity Building Solutions, Inc.

"You're not stuck – you're undecided."

Name: _____ Date: _____





WHY THIS ASSESSMENT MATTERS

The leaders who thrive in today's environment aren't the ones with the best original plan – they're the ones who adapt fastest when reality doesn't cooperate. Adaptability is not about being indecisive or reactive. It's about having the clarity to recognize when circumstances have changed and the courage to adjust your approach while staying anchored to your core values and vision.

This assessment is designed for the leaders I work with every day: CEOs, business owners, and senior executives running small to mid-sized businesses who face relentless pressure to grow, manage people, navigate uncertainty, and somehow sustain themselves as whole human beings in the process.

It draws on three decades of executive coaching and peer advisory group facilitation, and it's built around a simple premise: the businesses that grow are led by people who grow. If you stop adapting, your organization will too.

How to Use This Assessment

This is a self-diagnostic, not a test. There are no trick questions and no passing score. The value is in the honest reflection it provokes. Here's how to get the most from it:

- 1 Be ruthlessly honest.** Rate yourself as you actually are today, not as you aspire to be or as you were at your best moment.
- 2 Slow down at the reflection questions.** These are coaching questions – the kind you'd encounter in a Vistage 1:1. Sit with them. Write your answers.

- 3 **Look for patterns, not just scores.** Your lowest dimension isn't your weakness — it's your biggest opportunity.
- 4 **Take action within 48 hours.** Insight without action is entertainment. Pick one thing and commit to it.

The Six Dimensions of Leadership Adaptability

This assessment measures adaptability across six dimensions that together capture the full picture of how effectively you lead through change — as a thinker, as a manager of people, as a strategist, and as a whole person:



Cognitive Flexibility

Your ability to shift thinking and generate new solutions



Emotional Resilience

Your capacity to manage yourself through adversity and disruption



Situational Leadership Agility

Your skill in adjusting your leadership style to fit different contexts



Strategic Pivoting

Your effectiveness at recalibrating business direction



Relational Adaptability

Your ability to build and sustain trust across diverse stakeholders



Personal Sustainability & Growth

How you manage the whole leader, not just the business executive

Rate each statement from 1 (Rarely) to 5 (Always). Circle or mark the number that most honestly reflects your current behavior.

THE ASSESSMENT

For each statement, circle the number that best reflects how you actually behave today – not your aspiration. After each dimension, pause to reflect on the coaching questions.

How well do you shift your thinking when circumstances change?

Dimension 1: Cognitive Flexibility

#	Statement	1 Rarely	2 Sometimes	3 Often	4 Usually	5 Always
1	When my initial strategy fails, I can quickly generate alternative approaches without losing momentum.					
2	I actively seek out perspectives that challenge my existing assumptions about the business.					
3	I can hold two competing ideas in mind simultaneously and find a workable synthesis.					
4	I adjust my decision-making approach based on whether I'm facing a technical problem or a people problem.					
5	When new information contradicts my plan, I revise my thinking rather than defending my original position.					



Coaching Reflection – "Let's slow this down."

What decision are you currently defending that the data no longer supports?

Where in your business are you solving last year's problem instead of this year's?

If you zoomed out, what would a trusted advisor tell you that you're not seeing?

How effectively do you manage yourself through disruption and adversity?

Dimension 2: Emotional Resilience

#	Statement	1 Rarely	2 Sometimes	3 Often	4 Usually	5 Always
6	I can acknowledge a significant setback and move to problem-solving within hours, not weeks.					
7	I maintain consistent leadership presence even when I'm personally stressed or uncertain.					

#	Statement	1 Rarely	2 Sometimes	3 Often	4 Usually	5 Always
8	I recognize when my emotional state is influencing my judgment and can pause before reacting.					
9	I recover from difficult conversations (terminations, confrontations, bad news) without prolonged rumination.					
10	I can be vulnerable with my team about challenges without losing their confidence in my leadership.					

Coaching Reflection – "Let's slow this down."

What's the conversation you're avoiding right now, and what is that avoidance costing you?

When was the last time your emotional reaction to a situation made the situation worse?

How sustainable is your current approach to managing stress – honestly?

How well do you adjust your leadership style to fit different people and contexts?

Dimension 3: Situational Leadership Agility

#	Statement	1 Rarely	2 Sometimes	3 Often	4 Usually	5 Always
11	I consciously shift between directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating based on the person and situation.					
12	I can lead effectively in a crisis (decisive, clear) and in stability (collaborative, developmental) with equal comfort.					
13	I adapt my communication approach based on whether I'm addressing my leadership team, frontline employees, or the board.					
14	I know which of my direct reports need tight accountability and which thrive with autonomy, and I manage accordingly.					
15	I can step back from operational control when the business needs strategic thinking, even when fires are burning.					



How effectively do you recalibrate your business direction when the landscape shifts?

Dimension 4: Strategic Pivoting

#	Statement	1 Rarely	2 Sometimes	3 Often	4 Usually	5 Always
16	I regularly scan the competitive landscape and adjust strategy before being forced to react.					
17	I can distinguish between a temporary disruption and a permanent market shift, and respond appropriately to each.					
18	I involve my team in strategy adaptation rather than dictating changes from the top.					
19	I am willing to sunset a profitable product, service, or process when it no longer serves the company's future.					
20	I maintain a clear long-term vision while remaining flexible on the path to get there.					

Coaching Reflection – "Let's slow this down."

What are you clinging to in your business model that the market has already moved past?

If you started your company today, would you build it the same way? What would be different?

Where are you confusing activity with progress on your most important strategic priority?

How effectively do you build and sustain trust across different stakeholders?

Dimension 4: Strategic Pivoting

#	Statement	1 Rarely	2 Sometimes	3 Often	4 Usually	5 Always
21	I can repair a damaged professional relationship by owning my part without requiring the other person to go first.					
22	I adjust my influence approach based on what motivates each stakeholder (data, vision, relationship, autonomy).					
23	I build genuine trust with people whose working styles, values, or backgrounds differ significantly from mine.					
24	I know when to push for alignment and when to disagree and commit for the sake of progress.					

#	Statement	1 Rarely	2 Sometimes	3 Often	4 Usually	5 Always
25	I actively develop my successor and key leaders rather than making myself indispensable.					

Coaching Reflection – "Let's slow this down."

What does winning look like for both sides in your most important business relationship right now?

Where are you people-pleasing instead of leading?

Who on your team has the potential to grow that you're not investing enough time in developing?

How well are you managing the whole leader – not just the business executive?

Dimension 6: Personal Sustainability & Growth

#	Statement	1 Rarely	2 Sometimes	3 Often	4 Usually	5 Always
26	I consistently invest in my own learning, development, and exposure to new ideas outside my industry.					
27	I maintain boundaries that protect my health, family relationships, and personal renewal.					
28	I regularly seek honest feedback from people who will tell me what I need to hear, not what I want to hear.					
29	I have a support system (coach, peer group, mentor, or trusted advisor) that keeps me accountable.					
30	I model the adaptability I expect from my team — my people see me learn, adjust, and grow.					



SCORING SUMMARY

Add your scores for each dimension (5 statements × max 5 points = 25 per dimension) and rank them by priority for improvement.

Dimension	Score	Priority Rank
Cognitive Flexibility	/ 25	
Emotional Resilience	/ 25	
Situational Leadership Agility	/ 25	
Strategic Pivoting	/ 25	
Relational Adaptability	/ 25	
Personal Sustainability & Growth	/ 25	
TOTAL	/ 150	

Interpretation Guide

Score Range	Interpretation
120–150	Highly Adaptive Leader — You demonstrate strong flexibility across most dimensions. Focus on sustaining this capacity under increasing complexity and developing it in others.
90–119	Selectively Adaptive — You adapt well in some areas but have blind spots. The dimensions where you scored lowest are likely where your biggest leadership friction lives.
60–89	Developing Adaptability — You have a solid foundation but tend to default to a narrow range of responses. Significant growth opportunity exists with focused effort.
Below 60	Adaptation Gap — You may be leading with a fixed playbook in a world that demands flexibility. This is not a judgment; it's a diagnostic. The question is: what's your next step?



UNDERSTANDING ADAPTABILITY THROUGH THE CHANGE CURVE

Adaptable leaders don't just manage their own transitions – they guide their organizations through change. The Change Curve, adapted from the Kübler-Ross model, outlines six stages every team moves through during significant change. Your job as a leader is to recognize where your people are and adjust your approach accordingly.

Stage	What You'll See	How to Lead Through It
Shock & Denial	Confusion, numbness, resistance to acknowledging the change	Communicate clearly and repeatedly; provide facts; show empathy
Anger & Frustration	Blame, pushback, vocal resistance, drops in productivity	Listen actively; acknowledge the emotion; avoid defensiveness
Confusion & Depression	Low energy, disengagement, questioning purpose	Provide support; clarify the path forward; offer small wins
Acceptance	Beginning to let go of the old way; cautious engagement	Reinforce progress; involve people in shaping the new direction
Problem-Solving	Active engagement, creative solutions, rebuilding routines	Empower; delegate; recognize initiative and momentum
The New Normal	Integration of change into daily operations; renewed confidence	Celebrate; capture lessons learned; prepare for the next change

Ask yourself: *Where are you on this curve right now with your most significant current change? Where is each member of your leadership team?*



YOUR 48-HOUR ACTION PLAN

Insight without action is entertainment. Use this section to convert your assessment results into commitment. Pick your lowest-scoring dimension and answer these questions:

Coaching Reflection – "Let's slow this down."

What is the one dimension where improving my adaptability would have the biggest impact on my business in the next 90 days?

What is the specific behavior I need to change, start, or stop?

What is the first concrete step I will take within the next 48 hours?

Who will hold me accountable for this commitment, and when will I check in with them?

What's the cost of doing nothing about this for 90 more days?



The standard is the standard. Let's make this practical.



For coaching, peer advisory groups, and leadership development:

Ed Robinson | Capacity Building Solutions, Inc. | capacity-building.com