

THE CFTW INNOVATION SKILL ASSESSMENT

This report has been
prepared for:

Sample Report

10/26/2021

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Science Learning and Harvey Seiffer
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Dear Sample,

The Creating Futures that Work Innovation Skill Assessment® is designed to give you a clear picture of your ability to apply key innovation skills to real world challenges.

In order to help you identify both strengths and opportunities for growth, this report contains detailed findings regarding your readiness to learn, cognitive agility, collaborative skills and ability to activate innovation.

This data is conveyed as a series of scores, each on a ten-point scale. **Scores of 6.5+** suggest areas of considerable strength which you can build on. **Scores between 4.1 – 6.4** suggest a mix of strengths and gaps; we suggest looking at the subscales and notes to help guide your developmental priorities. **Scores lower than 4.0** suggest opportunities for targeted development to build your strength in those areas.

We suggest that you keep these four points in mind as you review your assessment results:

- This assessment measures your ability to apply specific cognitive and behavioral skills to real world innovation. Your scores are not a statement of who you are, what your personality type is or what your preferences are. Rather, they capture the current state of your skillfulness in key areas and tell you what you are (presently) able to do. Neither more nor less.
- Your scores are not predictive, and you should not view them as such. They are there to identify existing areas of strength you can build on, and areas where developmental attention may be warranted.
- This assessment recognizes that each individual is dynamic and constantly developing. Within this context, this report is intended to serve as a catalyst for your future growth, learning and development.
- The most important use of this report is to help you prioritize your learning and target specific objectives for growth. Lower scores do not suggest innate weaknesses; rather, they provide guideposts identifying skills to be developed, behaviors to be practiced, perspectives and patterns of mind to be cultivated.

5.5

Your **Readiness to Learn** score measures your preparation for active, continuous and committed learning.

7.0

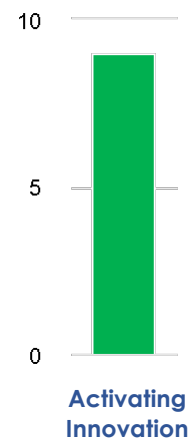
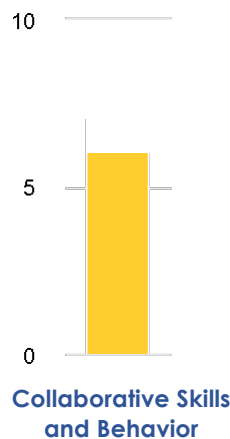
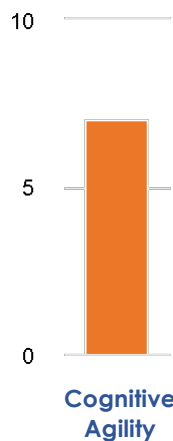
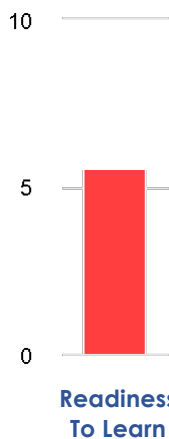
Your **Cognitive Agility** score measures your capacity to rapidly adjust your thought processes and behaviors to unexpected change.

5.8

Your **Collaborative Skills and Behavior** score measures your ability to strengthen teams through empathy, emotional intelligence and leadership skills.

8.7

Your **Activating Innovation** score measures your opportunity identification, problem solving and decision-making skills.



READINESS TO LEARN

In many ways, readiness to learn has become the foundational skill of the 21st Century workforce.

Our society produces new technologies, products, services and processes at a dizzying rate, making obsolescence a permanent challenge for leaders. In this era of rapid and constantly accelerating change, individuals committed to continuous learning throughout their lives are significantly more likely to achieve and sustain successful career and workplace outcomes.

Your ability and willingness to learn are far more important than what you've learned. Those qualities are likely to become even more essential over the course of your working life.

YOUR CURRENT READINESS TO LEARN SCORE IS **5.5**

This score reflects the degree of your active engagement with new information, the extent to which you have cultivated the attributes of curiosity and developed the skills and behaviors of inquiry, and your capacity and motivation to work through uncertainty and ambiguity.

To give you more specific and actionable insights, we measured these three separate dimensions of your readiness to learn:

Openness to New Information

Individuals show their readiness to learn by active engagement with new ideas. They take in information from a wide range of sources and they are constantly alert for unexpected opportunities to learn.

Your current Openness to New
Information score | 5.8

This score reflects the degree to which you

- Seek ideas from multiple and diverse sources
- Pick up on unexpected information
- Leverage unexpected opportunities for learning

DEVELOPMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

Here are some ways you can enhance your openness to new information:

- Openness to new information often begins with a sense of humility and an appreciation of the limits of our own knowledge. Do you actively seek insights from unexpected sources?
- Take a quick inventory of your information sources. Ask yourself: where are my gaps? Do my sources encompass people with a diverse range of backgrounds, experiences and perspectives?
- Think about how you get new information. Do I rely on human interaction, social media, articles and essays, networking, serendipity? Look for opportunities to broaden this range.
- Ask yourself, “what do I need to be more open to and mindful of?” and “How can I become more intentional about my openness to new information?”

It may help to capture your thoughts by journaling.

Curiosity and inquiry

Curiosity and inquiry work closely together. Curiosity is the single most powerful catalyst for learning. Inquiry propels learning forward in purposeful directions. Individuals who cultivate the attributes of curiosity and develop the behaviors of inquiry strive to understand complexity and address the underlying causes of confusion.

Your current Curiosity and Inquiry score | 7.1

This score reflects the degree to which you

- Actively seek out complex and challenging problems
- Approach problem-solving with a desire to gain to new insights
- Organize your work processes to maximize opportunities to learn

DEVELOPMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

We tend to think that Inquiry follows curiosity. We are curious about something, so we begin to investigate. However, there's a subtle interplay between curiosity and inquiry, and developing a more sophisticated

understanding of the way they spark each other will help you to further strengthen your skills in this area.

Try the following activity, which you can do over the course of one week:

- Step 1: Identify a subject or topic you are curious about and jot down five questions triggered by your curiosity.
- Step 2: Spend a few minutes doing some light internet research into each question and identify several sources of information that can provide fresh insight and perspective into your questions.
- Step 3: For each source of information you identify, write down three more questions that source raises in your mind.
- Step 4: At the end of the week, step back from the process and reflect on what you learned about your subject, and about the interplay between curiosity and inquiry.

Tolerance for Uncertainty and Ambiguity

The learning process can be challenging and stressful. By definition, learning starts with the unknown. Learners must remain open to ambiguous information while accepting the uncertainty that is inherent in all exploration.

Individuals with a high tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity are far more likely to embrace opportunities to learn.

Your current Tolerance for
Uncertainty and Ambiguity
score | 3.6

This score reflects the degree to which you are

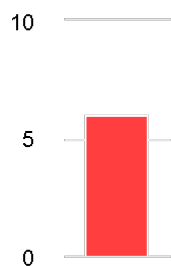
- Comfortable working with ambiguous data and information
- Willing to choose processes with uncertain outcomes
- Able to work through confusion and the unknown

DEVELOPMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

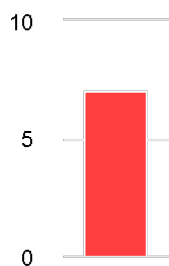
Practically every day, we face confusing work situations with unknown outcomes. People are often tempted to avoid the stress of these situations, but unfortunately, avoidance is rarely a good strategy.

The more productive alternative is to learn and practice ways to develop your tolerance, so you can maintain your focus and equilibrium when confronted by ambiguity and uncertainty.

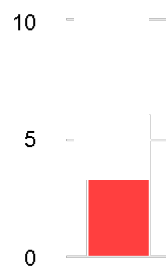
- When you find yourself under such stress, try to go underneath the feelings of insecurity or frustration to identify the source of the stress. What, specifically, is uncertain or ambiguous? Write down the answer in a few words.
- Ask yourself whether this is something you can control or influence. If so, focus on putting steps in place to do so.
- If not, write down the specific aspects of the situation that make it uncertain, ambiguous and beyond your control or influence. You will probably discover that there are things you can do to increase your insight, understanding or knowledge of at least some aspects of the situation.
- Prioritize doing those things, then reassess in light of what you've learned.



Openness to New Information



Curiosity and Inquiry



Tolerance for Ambiguity and Uncertainty

COGNITIVE AGILITY

Cognitive agility is the ability to respond productively to disruptive change, by adjusting thought processes and behaviors under challenging conditions, and often in real-time.

In order to thrive in the complex, difficult and dynamic conditions of 21st Century business, leaders are constantly called on to shift their frameworks of perception and understanding, anticipate emergent challenges, generate new mental models on demand and prepare for alternative realities.

Cognitive agility provides you with the nimbleness to generate a wide range of ideas, adjust your thinking and behavior under adverse conditions, and counter obstacles with resilience.

YOUR CURRENT COGNITIVE AGILITY SCORE IS 7

This score reflects the range and flexibility of your thinking about problems, solutions and decisions, as well as the extent to which you identify new opportunities, adapt quickly to changing conditions and new information, seek win-win resolutions to disagreements and respond productively to adversity.

To give you more specific and actionable insights, we measured these three separate dimensions of your cognitive agility:

Idea Range

Divergent thinking – the kind of wide-ranging, imaginative and non-linear form of idea generation that's familiar to many people from processes such as brainstorming – is foundational to creativity and innovation. Idea range is a way of measuring how extensively you apply divergent thinking to analyzing data, solving problems and making decisions.

Your current Idea Range score | 6.1

This score reflects the degree to which you

- Approach challenges with flexibility and from multiple perspectives

- Call on divergent thinking in problem-solving
- Apply a wide range of criteria to your decision-making

DEVELOPMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

We often default to habit in our approaches to solving problems and making decisions. The first step toward overcoming this pattern is to become aware of it.

Try the following 5-day exercise; it only takes about 15 minutes each day:

- Each morning, pick one problem you need to solve or decision you need to make, and pause before going into your default mode.
- Write down the problem to be solved or the choice to be made.
- Write down your default solution or decision.
- Write down the opposite of your default response. What would that look like?
- Now write down three other possible solutions or decisions that are neither the original default nor the opposite.
- Set the problem or decision aside overnight. If that's not possible, let it go for at least an hour or two.
- When you come back to it, look at your list; then go ahead and solve the problem or make the decision. Did you go with your original choice? Something else on the list? Something new that occurred to you?

At the end of the week, take a look at all of your choices. Did they evolve? Do you see any patterns? Opportunities? What did you learn?

Behavioral Flexibility

Agile responses to unexpected conditions and disruptive changes require willingness to engage with new images, ideas and information.

Behavioral flexibility helps you move beyond inertia and rigidity. It opens the door to successful adaptation by creating new opportunities for you to engage and grow, and providing you with a mechanism to translate your new insights into effective action.

Your current Behavioral Flexibility score:

Your current Behavioral
Flexibility score | 8.4

This score reflects the degree to which you

- Change course in light of new information and changing conditions
- Encourage others to challenge your assumptions and ideas
- Integrate divergent thinking into your work processes

DEVELOPMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

Your score indicates that you already demonstrate significant flexibility in your choices and behaviors. Continuing to grow in this area will enhance your professional success and innovation outcomes.

To further build on your strengths, consider the following activity:

- Identify and list three situations in which you have exercised behavioral flexibility and resolved successfully.
- Reflect on what behaviors on your part contributed to the favorable outcomes. For instance, did you listen to other's ideas? Did you encourage others to challenge your initial assumptions? Were you willing to change course based on new ideas or information? Record these behaviors.
- Flexibility can be hard. Reflect on what traits or characteristics allowed you to suspend your belief in your own ideas enough to recognize, consider and act on better alternatives. Jot down your thoughts.

Resilience

Cognitive flexibility requires the hard work. Its' point of departure is the willingness to go beyond the comforts of familiarity, but since adaptive response is not a one-time process, the successful application of cognitive flexibility involves resilience – the ability to bounce back in the face of repeated challenges and ongoing adversity.

Your current Resilience score | 7.4

This score reflects the degree to which you

- Respond productively to adversity
- Discover new or previously unknown opportunities in problems and challenging situations
- Find win-win resolutions to disagreement

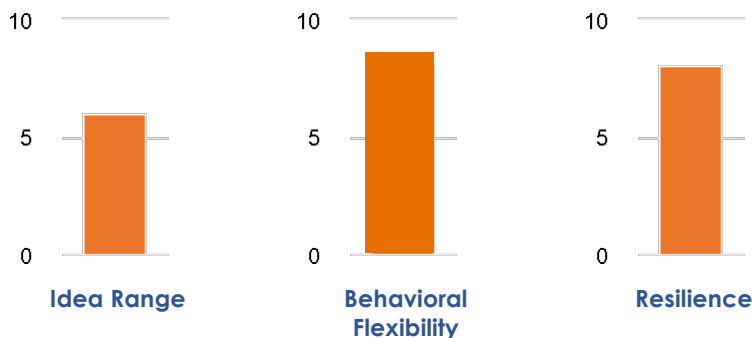
DEVELOPMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

We often think about resilience as “bouncing back from setbacks” and responding productively to adversity is clearly an important part of the picture.

One way to build on your already strong score on the Resilience scale is to give increased attention to discovering and acting on the new or previously unknown opportunities that sometimes emerge amid problems and challenging situations.

Try the following exercise:

- Scan your current situation and identify an adverse set of circumstances – one which requires you to exercise your resilience to overcome obstacles, barriers or setbacks.
- Imagine yourself on the other side of your current situation. You have made the most of the opportunities and you feel energized.
- Now imagine you are writing an article about your experience—the title is “How I Converted Adversity into Opportunity.”
- Write down specifically what you did to “convert adversity into opportunity.”



COLLABORATIVE SKILLS AND BEHAVIORS

It's impossible to overstate the importance of collaboration in the 21st Century. The highly complex challenges faced by leaders and organizations every day require multiple and highly specialized dimensions of knowledge, information and expertise that far outstrip the capacities of any one individual.

The skills and behaviors of effective collaboration allow you to radically increase the impact of your individual effort by bringing together small groups of people in environments where each person contributes their unique skills, insights and experiences to the group's shared commitment to a single outcome.

YOUR CURRENT COLLABORATIVE SKILLS AND BEHAVIORS SCORE IS **5.8**

This score reflects your ability to contribute to and lead teams characterized by trust and mutual respect, foster cultures of empathy and inclusion, welcome the contributions of people with diverse backgrounds and perspectives, and balance the requirements of group process with the demands of achieving desired outcomes.

To give you more specific and actionable insights, we measured these three separate dimensions of your collaborative skills and behaviors:

Behavioral Empathy

Empathy encompasses both the capacity to understand the world from the perspective of others, and the adaptability to constructively shape behavior accordingly. Empathy is one of the defining elements of emotional intelligence and the ability to experience and express empathy is foundational to effective collaboration.

Your current Behavioral Empathy score | 5.9

This score reflects the degree to which you

- Apply empathy to problem-solving and decision-making

- Engage with colleagues and fellow team members on empathic levels
- Demonstrate empathy toward customers, users and external stakeholders

DEVELOPMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

Cognitive empathy comes into play whenever we are aware of and sensitive to the feelings, circumstances, and perspectives of others. Behavioral empathy goes a step further—from emotional response to application in various aspects of work and life.

One key to further strengthening your behavioral empathy is to seek out and recognize opportunities to apply it as a bridge. Here's a simple template you can use to guide your development and track your progress:

Briefly describe the situation, challenge or decision	Does the situation call for empathy?	What are my feelings of empathy in this situation?	What are specific opportunities to apply empathy?	What outcome do I anticipate?

Using this framework on a regular basis will help you bridge from feeling empathy to applying empathy.

Openness to Diverse Perspectives

While all collaboration requires engaging with other people's ideas, extensive research reveals that the most successful collaborations are those that incorporate wide ranges of diversity in the background, skills and perspectives of team members; and encourage the behaviors of openness, inclusion and active participation by all team members.

Your current Openness to Diverse Perspectives score | 7.2

This score reflects the degree to which you

- Seek out collaborators from diverse backgrounds and domains of expertise
- Demonstrate openness to different perspectives and points of view
- Actively encourage all team members to participate in decision-making

DEVELOPMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

Diverse perspectives are essential to high impact outcomes.

Diverse perspectives grow out of different sets of experiences that can be related to professional background, education, family, culture, gender, ethnicity, race, geography, etc. These diverse experiences represent invaluable resources which you can leverage to strengthen team recruitment and composition, internal and external communications, processes, decision-making, planning and performance assessment.

Using these touchpoints will assure you are taking robust advantage of the opportunities offered by diverse perspectives within and beyond your team. The greater the diversity of your team, the greater the range of ideas and sources of creativity that are available to you and your organization – if you are open to them!

To leverage the full benefit of diverse teams, it's essential to encourage all team members to actively engage and express themselves. Making this norm explicit before launching new teams and projects will create a clear set of operational expectations that greatly will enhance team performance.

Team Leadership

Team leadership requires a deep understanding of and respect for other team members, since without followers there are no leaders. In organizational settings, this requires providing each team member with the opportunity, framework, work processes and resources needed for success, while fostering clarity of purpose and a culture of trust and mutual respect across the team.

Your current Team Leadership score | 4.1

This score reflects the degree to which you

- Foster a culture of collaboration through your choices and behavior
- Provide teams with a clear sense of purpose
- Prioritize giving teams effective processes and the resources they need to succeed

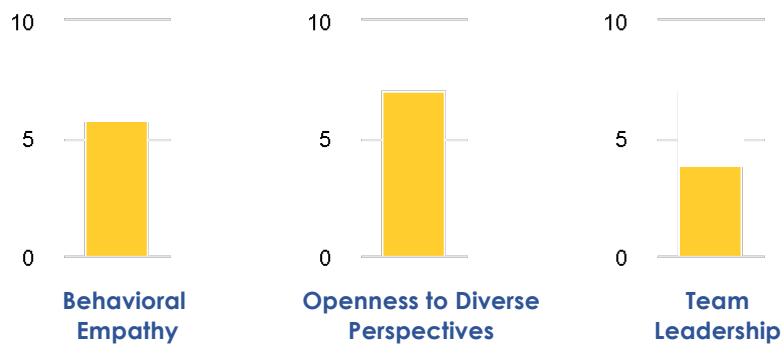
DEVELOPMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

Along with their commitment to outstanding outcomes, high performing teams are characterized by their highly tuned awareness of process – sometimes referred to as “the work of the work” and “how the work gets done.”

Team leaders play vital roles in assuring excellence in both process and performance.

- Leaders facilitate outstanding outcomes by helping teams develop clarity regarding mission, roles and responsibilities, expectations, desired outcomes, and the relationship between the team’s work and the strategic direction of the organization.
- Effective team leaders also foster clarity regarding work processes, communication and cultural norms, and decision making. These are cornerstones of team performance that assure strong execution.
- A focus on process awareness can strengthen team agility and resilience, help teams learn to self-correct, and foster both individual engagement and collaborative innovation. For that reason, effective leaders encourage regular reflection and discussion for this topic.

Building these dynamics into team formation from the beginning will create conditions for success and build highly engaged and effective teams.



ACTIVATING INNOVATION

We live in an age of innovation. Customers and users are constantly challenged by a multitude of problems in urgent need of solution. In our highly competitive and fast-changing global marketplace, organizations thrive and businesses prosper in direct proportion to their ability to add value by developing new and better products, processes, services and business models that can impact the most critical challenges faced by their customers.

As a result, innovation is the air leaders breathe every day, and never in history has the ability to activate innovation been so central to the demands of leadership. That ability rests largely on the development of a set of applied thinking skills.

YOUR CURRENT ACTIVATING INNOVATION SCORE IS **8.7**

This score reflects your skillfulness at imagining new possibilities, recognizing opportunities, productively organizing your thinking around problems and making effective decisions about solutions.

To give you more specific and actionable insights, we measured these three separate dimensions of your collaborative skills and behaviors:

Finding Opportunities and Problem-Solving

While we tend to think of innovation as a problem-solving activity, the first step toward achieving impact is finding and targeting opportunities for real world impact. In other words, in order to add value by solving problems, it's first necessary to identify the "right" (i.e. most productive) problems to solve.

Your current Finding Opportunities and Problem-Solving score:

Your current Finding Opportunities and Problem- Solving score	8.2
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This score reflects the degree to which you:

- Identify opportunities for innovation and productive problems to solve

- Enjoy imagining new possibilities and solving complex problems
- Find innovative solutions to problems

DEVELOPMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

Most people place great faith in their ability to think their way out of the most difficult problems.

Yet one of history's great problem-solvers, Albert Einstein once said "Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world." To further strengthen your innovation skills and capabilities, consider exploring new ways to cultivate your imagination by reaching outside your comfort zone and venturing into new modes of experience.

Try this exercise:

- Consider a problem you are currently facing. Write it down on a piece of paper and carry it with you.
- While watching a movie, listening to music or enjoying a long walk, take out the paper and read the problem out loud to yourself. Then continue with your activity.
- At the conclusion of your activity, take out the paper again and begin to write down your thoughts regarding the problem. Then put the paper back in your pocket.
- The next day, take another look at the paper, reflect further on the problem, and sketch (or doodle) any thoughts that rise to the surface.

This kind of exercise stimulates the brain to process problems in unconventional ways and can lead to new insights and fresh creative practices.

Decision-making

Leaders are defined by the quality of the decisions they make. Organizations succeed or fail based on the sum total of their decisions. Clearly, strong decision-making skills are vital. Effective decision-making calls on good judgment, analytical reasoning skills and readiness to act when necessary.

Your current Decision-making score | 9.7

This score reflects the degree to which you:

- Effectively apply data, logic and appropriate criteria to decision-making
- Act, when it is important to make decisions
- Exercise good judgment when choosing between “pivot” and “persevere” options

DEVELOPMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

“Pivot or persevere” decisions are especially challenging because the time, energy, resources, and emotional commitment already invested make objectivity very difficult.

The next time you're faced with a pivot or persevere decision, try doing the following:

- Make a clear and specific list of the assumptions you are bringing into your decision-making process on this issue.
- Make a second list of the biases you bring with you, paying special attention to biases that grow from your previous experience with this issue.
- Review and augment the two lists, asking yourself “what did I leave out.”
- Ask for input from stakeholders. Be mindful of *their* assumptions and biases and document their feedback.

Before moving forward with your decision, create a 3-slide presentation that makes the case for the choice you are about to make. Imagine you are presenting this to your stakeholders. Ask yourself:

- Have I satisfactorily made the case for my decision?
- Am I prepared to respond to stakeholder questions?

Engaging in this practice will build discipline and structure around your decision-making process.

