

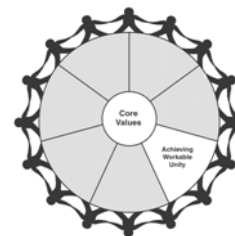
The **Leadership & Justice framework** is built around seven core competencies that successful leaders exhibit. A **competency** is defined as a specific range of skill, knowledge or ability that can be developed through education, training and practice. The Leadership & Justice training is distinguished from other leadership development programs in that it is firmly rooted in the experience, practice and values of the civil legal aid community.

1. Introduction

The Leadership Institute begins by exploring the meaning of leadership – to mobilize others in pursuit of shared aspirations – specifically in a social justice context. We emphasize the notion that legal aid leadership is carried out in many contexts – managerial, advocacy and community-oriented. Through examination of “leaders we have known”, we identify the qualities and behaviors that effective leaders exhibit and from these, introduce the seven core competencies around which the Leadership Institute is built.

2. Communicating Strategic Intent

We define strategic intent as “an organization or group’s values, mission and vision, which together provide clarity and direction.” Strategic intent is one of the most important leadership competencies and one that distinguishes “leaders” from others involved in particular initiatives, e.g., managers or other activists. Through this competency, we emphasize how important it is for leaders to be able to communicate clearly and succinctly their purpose, why what they are doing is important, and what it will look like when the purpose is achieved. This notion of “vision,” describing “the world as it should be,” is one of the defining elements of effective leadership.



a) During Retreat One, fellows:

- i.) Examine the notion of storytelling as a vehicle for communicating strategic intent; they listen to and engage in discussing the first leadership story presented by a legal aid leader from outside of the region;
- ii.) Review the three components of “strategic intent” – values, vision and mission;
- iii.) Examine selected “seminal visions” presented by some of the legal aid community’s early leaders and reflect on values, vision and mission reflected in each.

b) Between Retreats One and Two:

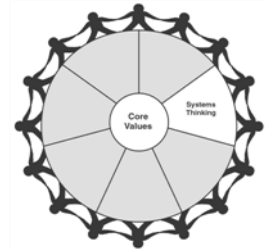
- i.) Fellows and mentors continue to explore the meaning of mission and vision in the legal aid context with the goal of developing a shared statement of strategic intent for legal aid;
- ii.) Fellows also work with these concepts in the context of their leadership initiatives;
- iii.) Fellows meet with their Executive Directors to communicate the strategic intent of their proposed Leadership Initiatives.

c) During Retreats Two and Three:

- i.) Fellows listen to and engage in discussing two additional leadership stories presented by legal aid leaders outside of the region;
- ii.) During Retreat Three, fellows explore concepts and skills related to strategic framing and practice developing and communicating messages related to their Leadership Initiatives using strategic framing tools.

3. Systems and Strategic Thinking

Systems & Strategic Thinking refers to the process of taking in complex and ambiguous data and making sound decisions that address underlying causes of problems; it is a continuous process/pattern of understanding and making choices about critical and complex issues. It involves a mix of concrete tools as well as intuition and creativity.

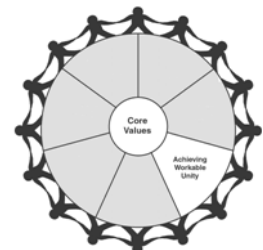


- a) **During Retreat One** we examine a number of tools for analyzing underlying causes of presenting problems; we also introduce a number of tools for creating alternative approaches to addressing problems and to assessing the feasibility of and ultimately choosing a particular approach using a number of strategic criteria.
- b) **Between Retreats One and Two**, fellows continue applying these strategic thinking tools to refine and ultimately choose the problem that they will address through their leadership initiative.

4. Achieving Workable Unity

The ability to work across differences and bring together diverse perspectives and interests is the cornerstone of social justice advocacy. In achieving workable unity, leaders are responsible for creating environments that encourage participation, respect for differences and commitment to group initiatives.

- a) **During Retreat One**, we explore issues of difference as they relate to group work, problem-solving and decision-making. The True Colors exercise illustrates differences in personality while the Ecotonos activity demonstrates the ways in which cultural norms affect how individuals communicate with each and work together in groups.
- b) **Between Retreats One and Two:**
 - i.) Fellows conduct a stakeholder analysis related to their proposed leadership initiatives



c) During Retreat Two:

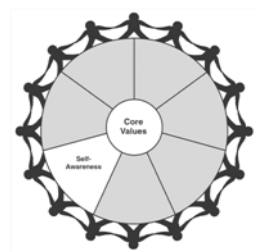
- i.) Fellows explore alternative means for involving stakeholders in problem-solving and decision-making;
- ii.) They also practice developing meeting agendas that achieve desired outcomes and plan and facilitate meetings.

d) Between Retreats Two and Three:

- i.) Fellows plan and facilitate a meeting.

5. Self-Awareness

Knowing who we are and what we stand for is one of the most important capacities for leaders. Within this competency, we emphasize the importance of a leader's self-awareness, noting that those we seek to lead look to us to "walk the talk," that is, to be authentic, reliable and trustworthy. To be authentic, we need to know who we really are: including what are our values and motivations as well as our leadership strengths and challenges. Self-awareness also assumes a heightened level of discernment, i.e., the ability to separate out one's personal agenda from the needs of the organization or project and to prioritize those over one's personal needs. It also requires the willingness to seek out and respond to feedback about how others perceive our actions, strengths and weaknesses, to be aware of the impact we have on others and be able to respond proactively rather than becoming immobilized by self-doubt.



a) During Retreat One:

- i.) Fellows, through the "Standing on the Shoulders" exercise, share stories of individuals who have influenced them.
- ii.) They also explore the Difficult Conversations framework which, through an understanding of one's assumptions and biases, provides a means for engaging in productive conversations with others.

b) Between Retreats One and Two:

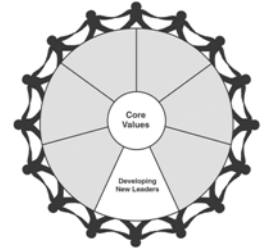
- i.) Fellows assess their incoming leadership knowledge and skills by completing the LI Self-Assessment.
- ii.) They identify individuals from whom they would like to receive feedback through the 360° Feedback Survey about their leadership strengths and challenges in relation to the seven core competencies.
- iii.) Fellows also plan for, conduct and evaluate a "difficult conversation."

c) During Retreats Two:

- i.) Fellows review feedback received through their 360 feedback surveys and, using this information, begin working on their Leadership Development plans (see description below).

6. Developing New Leaders

Another critical function of an effective leader is to continually develop new leaders. To be successful, existing leaders must be able to recognize leadership potential in others, especially in those least like themselves. They also need to be able, beyond superficial differences, to see ways in which other people are like us in more fundamental ways. This Leadership Institute is itself an example of how one community has institutionalized its commitment to developing new leaders.



a) During Retreat One:

- i.) Fellows examine the four stages of the Mentoring Relationship and alternative mentoring styles;
- ii.) Fellows meet with their assigned mentors and begin to establish their mentoring relationship.

b) Between Retreats One and Two, fellows meet with mentors once each month to review what they learn about their incoming strengths and challenges in relation to the leadership competencies and begin building these insights into their thinking about how they approach their leadership initiatives.

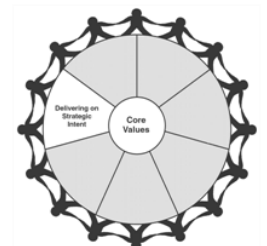
c) During Retreats Two and Three, fellows and mentors explore issues of power and difference and how these are reflected in one's ability to recognize and support new leaders.

d) Between Retreat Two and Three, fellows meet with their mentors to work on Leadership Initiatives and develop and then carry out goals reflected in individual leadership development plans.

7. Delivering on Strategic Intent

Effective social justice leaders help groups identify common concerns, values and vision and translate these into actionable issues and successfully develop and carry out strategies to achieve results. Delivering on strategic intent requires that leaders create environments in which planning, priority-setting and accountability are ensured.

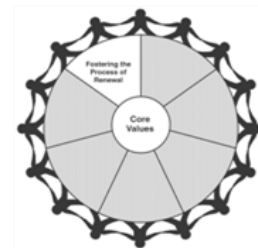
a) Beginning with Retreat Two, fellows review and apply a number of tools for delivering on strategic intent: defining goals, objectives and action plans for specific initiatives; identifying outcome measures; evaluating project effectiveness; managing project work and ensuring accountability.



- b) **Between Retreats Two and Three**, fellows develop project plans for carrying out their leadership initiatives.
- c) **During Retreat Three**, fellows review tools for resource assessment and budget planning and, where applicable, integrate these into their Leadership Initiative project plans.

8. Fostering the Process of Renewal

This last competency asserts that “organizational renewal is a necessary condition to ensure that social justice efforts are responsive to evolving community issues and needs.” Using combined tools of strategic planning and appreciative inquiry, among others, fellows will analyze the extent to which their ongoing work or proposed leadership initiative is responsive to community needs and interests.



- a) **Beginning with Retreat Two**, fellows:
 - i.) Examine renewal issues in the context of their personal work/life balance.
 - ii.) Review tools related to organizational renewal.