Unlock Your Leadership Potential

Measuring Storytelling, Improv, and Connection Skills

by Melissa Dinwiddie of

Creative Sandbox™ SOLUTIONS

How do you score?

Leadership means more than telling people what to do. The best leaders have human-to-human skills.

These include, among other things, building rapport, listening, telling a story, tailoring your messaging, and thinking on your feet to respond in the moment.

How well are your leaders and HiPo’s doing? That’s what this tool is designed to help you assess.

In just 12 questions and about 5-10 minutes, this assessment tool will help you evaluate where your leaders and HiPo's stand in their storytelling, improvisation, and audience connection skills.

Let’s get started!

Melissa Dinwiddie
Founder & CEO of Creative Sandbox Solutions™
Creativity Instigator & Strategist
Originator of The Winning Presenter Process™

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Pitch Perfect Assessment

Answer the questions below to the best of your knowledge, using a scale of 1 to 5 to rate each response. Once you've completed the assessment, calculate your team's total score to see where they stand in terms of storytelling, improvisation, and audience connection skills.

1) How often do your leaders and HiPo's use storytelling to connect with potential clients/audience?

1 - Not at all
2 - Rarely
3 - Sometimes
4 - Often
5 - Always

2) How well do your leaders and HiPo's respond to unexpected questions or objections during conversations or presentations?

1 - Very poorly
2 - Poorly
3 - Neutral
4 - Well
5 - Very well

3) How effective are your leaders and HiPo's at tailoring their messaging to fit the needs and interests of each individual?

1 - Not effective at all
2 - Somewhat effective
3 - Moderately effective
4 - Very effective
5 - Extremely effective

4) How comfortable are your leaders and HiPo's with using human language during conversations/presentations, without relying on industry jargon?

1 - Very uncomfortable
2 - Somewhat uncomfortable
3 - Neutral
4 - Somewhat comfortable
5 - Very comfortable

5) How often do your leaders and HiPo's make an effort to build rapport with people, using humor or other engaging techniques, before launching into a pitch or presentation?

1 - Not at all
2 - Rarely
3 - Sometimes
4 - Often
5 - Always

6) How well do your leaders and HiPo's listen to their audience and incorporate their feedback into their presentation?

1 - Not well at all
2 - Somewhat well
3 - Moderately well
4 - Very well
5 - Extremely well

7) How often do your leaders and HiPo's use analogies or metaphors to help their audience understand complex concepts?

1 - Not at all
2 - Rarely
3 - Sometimes
4 - Often
5 - Always

8) How well do your leaders and HiPo’s distill their message down to a headline that their audience can easily absorb?

1 - Not well at all
2 - Somewhat well
3 - Moderately well
4 - Very well
5 - Extremely well

9) How comfortable are your leaders and HiPo’s with incorporating humor or other forms of entertainment into their presentation?

1 - Very uncomfortable
2 - Somewhat uncomfortable
3 - Neutral
4 - Somewhat comfortable
5 - Very comfortable

10) How well are your leaders and HiPo’s able to use storytelling to make their presentation flow, versus spitting out information?

1 - Not well at all
2 - Somewhat well
3 - Moderately well
4 - Very well
5 - Extremely well

11) How well do your leaders and HiPo’s adjust their communication style to match the preferences of each individual?

1 - Not well at all
2 - Somewhat well
3 - Moderately well
4 - Very well
5 - Extremely well

12) How comfortable are your leaders and HiPo’s with improvising during conversations or presentations, without a prepared script?

1 - Very uncomfortable
2 - Somewhat uncomfortable
3 - Neutral
4 - Somewhat comfortable
5 - Very comfortable

Scoring

To calculate your team's total score, add up the scores for each response. The maximum score is 60, indicating that your team is highly skilled in storytelling, improvisation, and audience connection, while the minimum score is 1, indicating that there is significant room for improvement.

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Report

Once you've calculated your team's score, use the following guidelines to interpret the results:

1-12: Your team is struggling with storytelling, improvisation, and audience connection skills and could benefit significantly from working with an expert to strengthen these skills.

13-24: Your team has some storytelling, improvisation, and audience connection skills, but there is still significant room for improvement.

25-36: Your team has some storytelling, improvisation, and audience connection skills, but there is still significant room for improvement. Consider working with an improv consultant to help your team improve their skills and better connect with potential clients and audiences.

37-48: Your team is skilled in storytelling, improvisation, and audience connection, but there may still be some areas where they could improve. Consider working with an improv consultant to fine-tune your team's skills and take your efforts to the next level.

49-60: Your team is highly skilled in storytelling, improvisation, and audience connection, and is likely already connecting effectively with potential clients. However, working with an improv consultant can help your team take their skills to the next level and close deals even faster.

Remember, the ability to connect with audiences through storytelling, improvisation, and audience connection is key to impact and influence. Consider working with an improv consultant to help your team develop these skills and stay ahead of the competition.

Now What?

I hope this assessment has provided you with valuable insights into your team's performance, and has helped clarify your team’s strengths and areas for improvement.

Ready to use the power of improv to help your team increase their impact and influence? That’s one of our specialties at Creative Sandbox Solutions™. We love helping people-first and change-making organizations to:

- Build rapport with and connect better with audiences
- Use storytelling to connect with audiences, and to make presentations flow
- Tailor and hone messaging and communication style to resonate with your audience
- “Think on your” feet and respond flexibly and fluidly in the moment
- Work together and support each other as a team—make each other look good!
- All while making it fun!

But don't take my word for it. I like to let our clients speak for themselves.

“From a team dynamic standpoint it's been incredibly empowering as a manager to watch the team bond, and see them become more willing to share with each other and work together and support each other as they're trying to practice these communicating for influence skills. It's been an absolute gift and an amazing experience, one **I would highly recommend to anyone**—any manager, any group, anywhere.“

-Claire Menke
Fortune 100 Manager

"Thanks for uplevelling our team, Melissa! It was wonderful getting to work with you.”

-Dr. Natalie Reiner, Fortune 100 Manager

“Our team had so much fun and were chatting about the 500-year exercise throughout the week. Thank you both so much!”

-Fortune 100 Manager

"I was skeptical that a virtual 'offsite' was even worth doing, certainly one that involved 'play' for my team, but Melissa proved that it can work. The Communicating for Influence workshop she created for my research team was great at teaching key skills while at the same time being fun! **I have already seen my team using these tools in their day to day work.** Melissa was easy to work with, and knows how to design and facilitate an impactful program. I have already recommended her to my colleagues at Facebook, and will continue to do so."

-Carly Rush,
Fortune 100 Manager

Uber

Providence

"I truly appreciated Melissa's perspective and structure to engagement and learning. She really found an amazing intersection of art (music, visuals, embodiment) and exercises that **kept things engaging and fruitful from a learning perspective.** I also found the techniques helped me to unlock leadership opportunities and presented a way for me to grow with my team by example.

I would recommend Melissa for anyone looking to expand your influence, broaden the toolkit, or help to step outside of our comfort zones to explore additional perspectives."

-Victoria Gambardella
Fortune 100 Manager

Cricut

About Melissa

Melissa Dinwiddie, M.Soc.Sci., is a former professional artist and trained improviser and jazz singer. In 2017, she realized that the transformational creativity retreats she'd been leading for groups of artists for years had powerful business applications. This inspired her to found a consultancy, Creative Sandbox Solutions™.

Now she uses play to help people-first and change-making organizations unleash creativity and strengthen connection, communication, clarity, and collaboration, so their impact matches their smarts. She designs interactive, playful programs that attendees rave about because they acquire new skills and behaviors and build connections while having a blast. Her Communicating for Influence module, which is a core part of her team- and leadership development programs, came from work she did with research teams at Facebook. She developed her Winning Presenter Process™ to help creative agencies win business faster using the tools of improv.

Melissa is author of *The Creative Sandbox Way™*, an acclaimed book on creativity, and she's known for creating impactful, memorable experiences, planting seeds of possibility, and catalyzing individual and organizational transformation.

Melissa has degrees from UC Berkeley and the University of Birmingham, England, and lives in Silicon Valley with her husband and their two rambunctious cats.

Want to learn more about how I can help your team have more impact and influence?

Click here to set up a 10-minute Clarity Call.

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