



# Transitioning into Leadership

---

Presented by: Sara Grivetti

Email: [sgrivetti@stepcentral.org](mailto:sgrivetti@stepcentral.org)

An interactive, research-based workshop for clinicians aspiring to leadership roles.

## Welcome & Objectives

- 
- Explore the differences between clinical and managerial roles
- 
- Identify KSAs (Knowledge, Skills, Abilities) for leadership
- 
- Reflect on readiness for leadership transition

# Clinician vs. Leader: The Role Shift

- Clinicians focus on individual client outcomes

- Leaders focus on systems, people, and strategy

# Role Shift

(Based on Grivetti, 2019 & Grivetti, 2020)

- Ability to manage complex & ambiguous situations
- Ability to work in high pressure situations
- Ability to be creative & innovate
- Build & manage strategic partnerships
- Systems knowledge
- Personnel management
- Partnership management
- Communication
- Time management/ability to prioritize
- Flexible

# Theoretical Framework: Competency Models

Based on Leahy et al. (2003, 2018) and Lucia & Lepsinger (1999)

- Key Competencies:
  - Communication
  - Emotional Intelligence
  - Strategic Thinking
  - Initiative

# Emotional Intelligence (EI/EQ)

(Goleman, 1995)

## Five pillars of Emotional Intelligence

- Self-awareness
- Self-regulation
- Motivation
- Empathy
- Social skills.



# Evidence-Based Leadership Skills

Handle	Handle high-pressure situations
Manage	Manage partnerships
Think	Think strategically
Build	Build trust and emotional intelligence

# Strategic Thinking Skills

(Stobierski, 2023)

Skills that enable you to use critical thinking to solve complex problems and plan for the future.

- Analytical skills
- Communication skills
- Problem-solving skills
- Planning and management skills

# How to Improve Strategic Thinking Skills (Stobierski, 2023)

- Ask Strategic Questions
- Observe & Reflect
- Consider Opposing Ideas
- Embrace Formal Training

# Group Activity

Identify the challenges of making a role transition from clinician to leadership role

# Challenges in Role Transition

Letting go of direct client work

Managing former peers

Administrative demands

# Adaptive & Transformational Leadership



- Research: Kremer Scot & Bender (2025), Herold et al. (2008)
- Adaptive leaders adjust to change
- Transformational leaders inspire others

# Case Scenario- "The New Program Rollout"

- **Background:**  
You've recently been promoted from clinician to program manager in a community rehabilitation agency. The organization is rolling out a new client management system that will significantly change daily workflows for counselors and support staff.
- **Challenge:**  
Many of your former peers are resistant to the change, expressing frustration about the additional data entry requirements and fear that client time will decrease. Morale is dropping, and staff are beginning to question leadership's decisions.

# Discussion

## **Adaptive Leadership Focus:**

- How can you *adapt your leadership approach* to meet your team where they are emotionally and practically?
- What actions could help uncover and address the underlying concerns behind the resistance?

## **Transformational Leadership Focus:**

- How can you *inspire and motivate* your team to see the bigger purpose behind this change?
- What vision or message could you communicate to shift mindsets from fear to opportunity?

## **Debrief Questions:**

- Which leadership approach feels more natural to you — adaptive or transformational?
- What balance of both might be most effective in this situation?
- How might your response differ if you were leading a highly experienced team versus a new one?

# The KSAs in Action (Grivetti, 2020)

- Knowledge: Legislation, systems, policies
- Skills: Communication, planning, teamwork
- Abilities: Initiative, trust-building, decision-making

# KSA's for a VR Counselor

(Leahy, et al, 2018)

- Rehabilitation and mental health counseling
- Employer engagement and job placement
- Case management
- Medical and psychosocial aspects of chronic illness and disability
- Research methodology and evidenced-based practice
- Group and family counseling

# Developing Leadership Competence

- Seek mentorship and coaching
- Pursue continuous education
- Self-assess regularly
- Rate your readiness using the Leadership Readiness Self Assessment
- Reflect on the results

# From Research to Practice

Evidence from Evans (2003), Le Deist & Winterton (2007), Riggart et al. (2005)

Key Insight:  
Leadership in VR =  
Strategic Influence +  
Human Connection

# Closing & Reflection

- Leadership = Influence + Competence + Courage
- What is one action step you will take on your leadership journey?

Contact: Dr. Sara Grivetti

[sgrivetti@stepcentral.org](mailto:sgrivetti@stepcentral.org)