

# Political astuteness

Showing commitment and ability to understand diverse interest groups and power bases within organisations and the wider community, and the dynamic between them, so as to lead health services more effectively.

***This document aims to help you manage your own learning and development by:***

- allowing you to reflect on whether this quality is an area you would like to develop further;***
- providing you with ideas on how to develop this quality; and***
- enabling you to draw up an action plan targeted to your specific development needs.***

***The information you input into this interactive PDF document is not stored anywhere on this website. We encourage you to download and save this document so that you can add to it and refer back to it in reviewing your development plans.***




## Features of this Quality Include:

- Understand the climate and culture in your own organisation and in the wider health and social care environment
- Knowing who the key influencers are - both internally and externally to the organisation - and how to go about involving them, as required.
- Being attuned to health strategy and policy at a national and local level and being able to plan ahead that takes account of these strategies.
- Understanding the role of a leader in the health service is now broader than simply being responsible for one organisation and that no one organisation in the health service can be 'stand alone'

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## Self Reflection

- Look at the statements below.
- On the scale next to each statement, choose a rating that reflects how frequently it applies to you.

		
A lot of the time	Some of the time	Very little / None of the time

<b>Having a political antennae</b>			
I keep up-to-date with developments in the health and social care context	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Using informal networks</b>			
I identify key people inside and outside the organisation who are influential and can help get things done	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I use my own networks to gain information and communicate with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Understanding the culture and climate</b>			
I understand how to navigate politics within a health and social care context	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I use my understanding of how things have been done in the past to inform how future changes will be made	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I put my own experience and expertise at the disposal of others for the greater good	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Understanding the politics</b>			
I understand how to navigate politics within the health and social care context	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I mobilise the support of key stakeholders to get things done	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Self reflection continues on the next page

## Self Reflection continued

- Look at the statements below.
- On the scale next to each statement, choose a rating that reflects how frequently it applies to you.

 <b>A lot of the time</b>	 <b>Some of the time</b>	 <b>Very little / None of the time</b>
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Understanding long-term, underlying issues			
I use my understanding of social, political and historical factors shaping the health service to get things done	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I identify key influencers and involve them when shaping and delivering changing across the wider organisation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>TOTAL</b>	—	—	—

**Total your scores and reflect on what you've given yourself (remembering to include your scores from the previous page). If you have mainly red and orange circles, this quality may be an area you wish to develop further. If you have green circles, then check that these are not overplayed strengths. An overplayed strength could be a behaviour you over rely on and one which might impact negatively on your performance.**

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## Development Ideas – Getting Started

If you feel this quality is an area you would like to develop further, the bullet points below provide you with some general ideas on how to get started with your development. For more specific suggestions on the different types of development activities you may wish to undertake. For suggested reading or further information on this quality, please refer to the related section of the LQF website.

### Getting started

- Acknowledge the value of informal networks. These should not be seen as a nice to have, but essential to your ability to operate effectively. Read about them, to help you understand how they work and how you might go about building them
- Nurture your informal networks by maintaining regular contact, ensuring exchange is reciprocal, undertaking favours, offering advice, helping.
- Keep your ear to the ground by: reading the health sector press regularly; attending conferences/NHS events; reading newsletters; reviewing various NHS websites; becoming involved in internal & external projects; reviewing patient feedback forums; keeping in touch with patients and users

## Next Steps

Over the next page you will find a personal action plan which you may wish to complete to help you consolidate your ideas for development in this area. Below you will find some helpful hints and tips for drawing up your action plan.

### Hints and tips on action planning

- Define your action plan in SMART terms (Specific, Measurable, Action oriented, Realistic and Time bound). This will help you reach your goals.
- Identify individuals you want to talk to about your action plan and who can help you make it happen
- Assess potential obstacles and how you might be able to overcome these.
- Think about how you can utilise your strengths to help you reach your goals
- Identify resources that are available to you or that you will need to obtain in order to achieve your goal e.g. what resources (internal, external) can you draw upon in order to reach your goal?
- Write action steps to help you reach your goal and assign a completion date to each one.
- Set a date to evaluate your progress toward your goal.

## Action Plan - part one

Development Need	
<b>Reason for choosing</b> Max characters (750)	
<b>Goal</b> Max characters (750) Describe the desired new behaviour in SMART terms	
<b>Benefits</b> Max characters (750) Describe the benefits of reaching this goal	

## Action Plan - part one continued

Development Need	
<p><b>Risks</b> Max characters (750) Outline any risks that might be involved in reaching this goal</p>	
<p><b>Obstacles</b> Max characters (500) Outline any potential obstacles</p>	
<p><b>How are you going to overcome them?</b> Max characters (750)</p>	

## Action Plan - part one continued

Development Need	
<b>Resources/ support needed</b> Max characters (750)	
<b>Where available?</b> Max characters (750)	

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## Action Plan - part two

Action Steps max characters (1000)	Approach	Target Date
	<input type="checkbox"/> Experience <input type="checkbox"/> Exposure <input type="checkbox"/> Education	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Experience <input type="checkbox"/> Exposure <input type="checkbox"/> Education	



## Action Plan - part two continued

Action Steps max characters (1000)	Approach	Target Date
	<input type="checkbox"/> Experience <input type="checkbox"/> Exposure <input type="checkbox"/> Education	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Experience <input type="checkbox"/> Exposure <input type="checkbox"/> Education	
<b>Date to evaluate progress towards your goal</b>		

## Resources

For suggested reading or further information on this quality, please refer to the related section of the LQF website.



### ***IMPORTANT!***

***If you wish to refer back to this document at any point, please save a copy to your computer or print in the usual way. For confidentiality reasons, the information you have input will not be saved on this web site.***