

Qualities you admire

Note for facilitator: For this activity you need individual cards or pieces of paper with a word on each for participants to order as a group.

You can print the page below and cut out the words. Some blanks are also provided for participants to add other adjectives.

Depending on the size of the group, you may want to divide into two groups. You will then need two sets of these words.

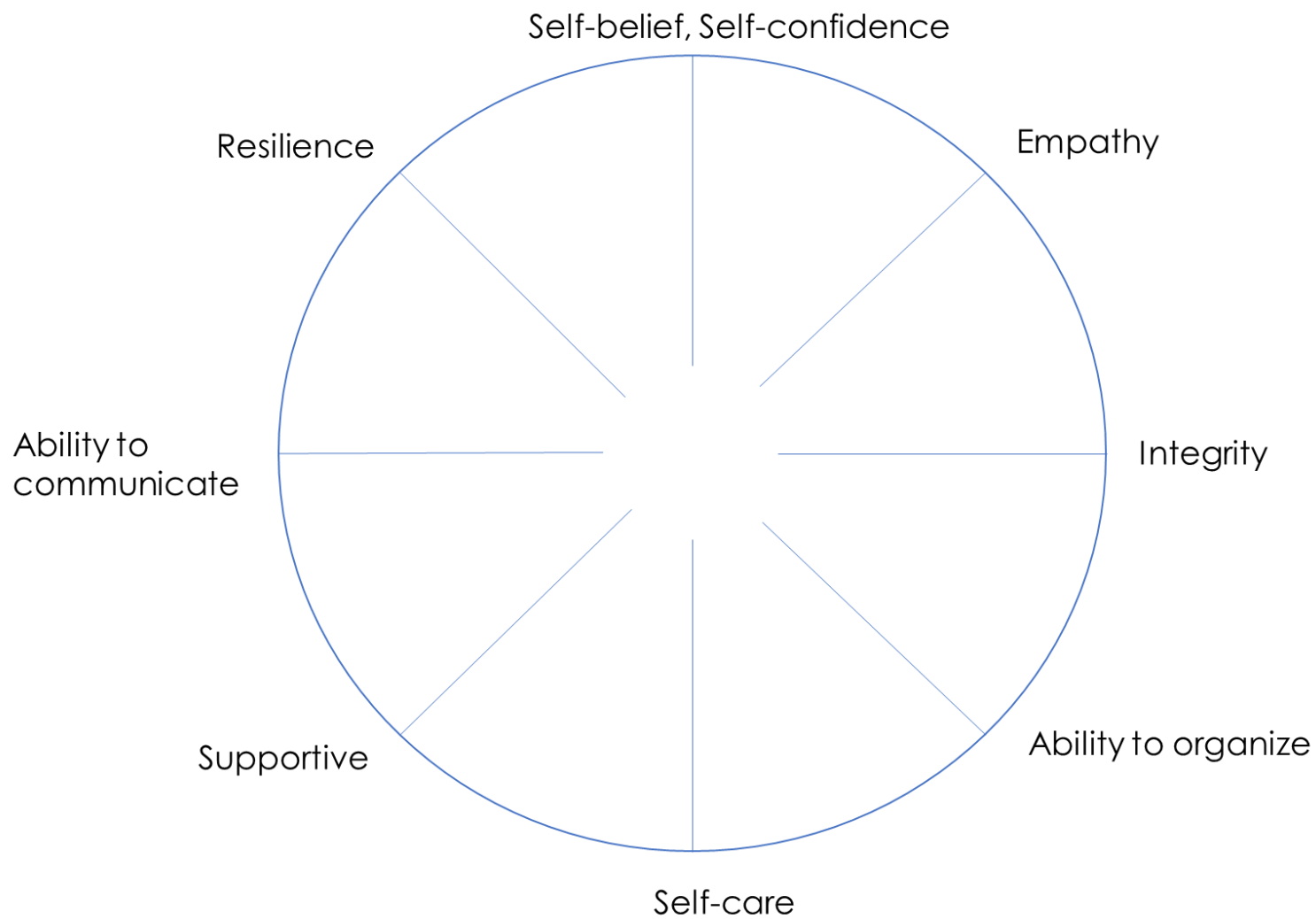


Strong	Charismatic	Commanding
Good communicator	Persuasive	Determined
Visionary	Enthusiastic	Risk taker
Bold	Confident	Good listener
Quiet	Introverted	Thoughtful
Empathetic	Emotional	Forceful
Dominating	Controlling	Decisive
Extroverted	Wise	Experienced





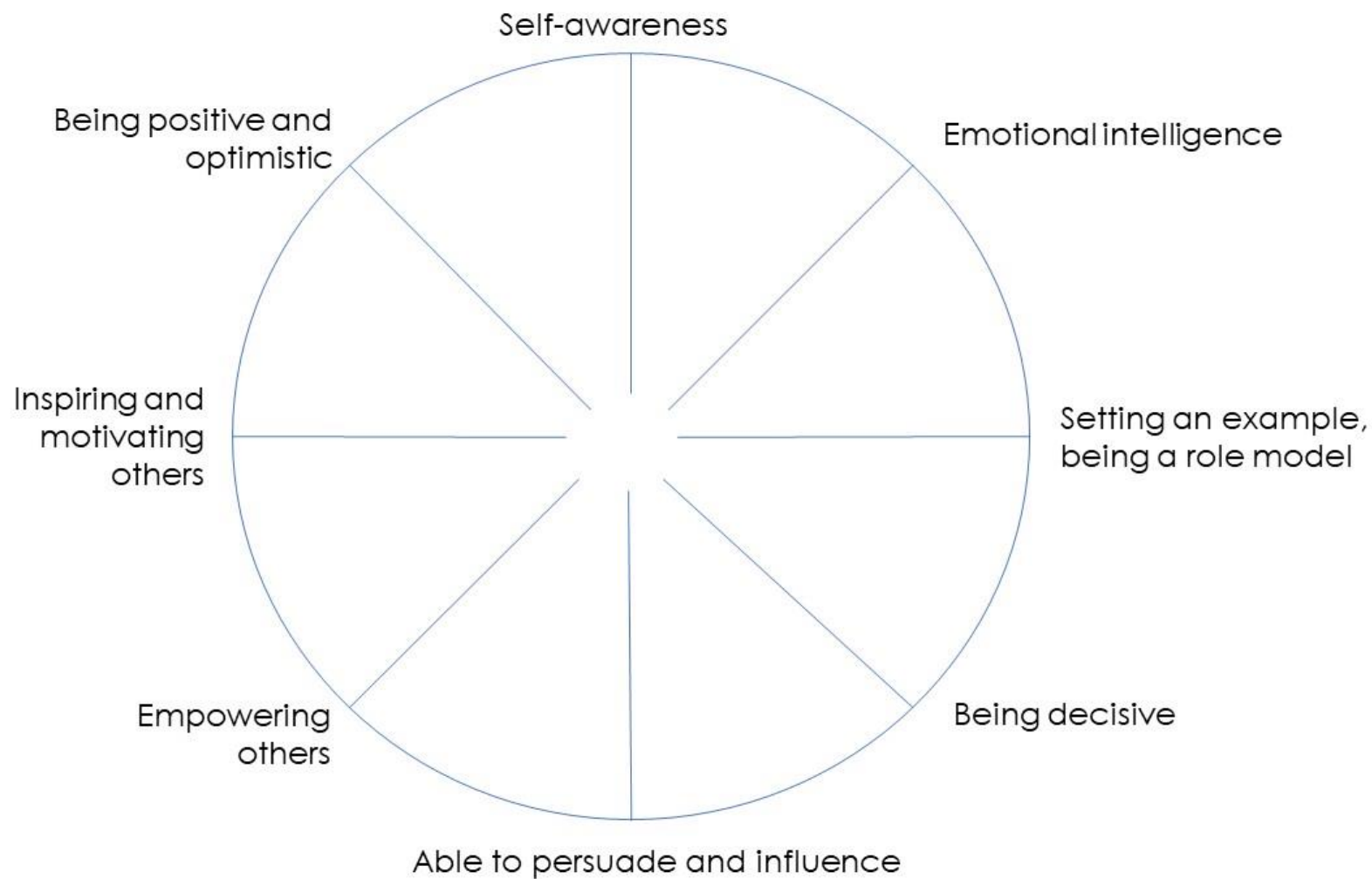
1



Questions to help you score (1)

- **Self-belief, self-confidence:** Do I have confidence in myself? Do I believe I have something to contribute?
- **Empathy:** Am I able to put myself in someone else's shoes?
- **Integrity:** Am I honest and do I try to do the right thing?
- **Ability to organize:** Do I recognize what's important, can I prioritize, plan and organize?
- **Self-care:** Do I look after myself properly?
- **Supportive:** Do I help and encourage others?
- **Ability to communicate:** Am I clear, respectful and assertive when I communicate?
- **Resilience:** Am I able to keep going during and after setbacks?

2



Questions to help you score (2)

- **Self-awareness:** Do I know my strengths and weaknesses?
- **Emotional intelligence:** Can I recognize and manage feelings in myself and others? Do I know how to adapt my behaviour and speech in response to different people in different circumstances?
- **Setting an example, being a role model:** Am I a role model for other people, especially girls and women, in my family or community?
- **Being decisive:** Am I able to weigh up different pieces of information and arguments and make the best decision?
- **Ability to persuade and influence:** Am I able to persuade others to a different viewpoint or take a particular course of action?
- **Empowering others:** Am I able not just to help others but encourage them to recognize and use their own agency?
- **Inspiring and motivating others:** Am I able to inspire and motivate others?
- **Being positive and optimistic:** Do I tend to believe that things can change and that a particular project can succeed?

What could you do differently?

Active listening

Like many women, you may already be empathetic – meaning you can put yourself in other people's shoes. But you can develop this further through everyday situations, such as when a relative or friend comes to you with a problem.

Reflect on the following useful techniques for active listening – which of them do you use? Identify those which you do not and try them out in any conversation: make eye contact; show you understand by nodding, saying yes, uh-huh, or hmm; reflect the other person's feelings back by sharing delight/surprise/sympathy etc; paraphrase what you have heard to show you've been listening and to check your understanding.

It can also be fun to spot whether other people are good 'active listeners'. Do they make eye contact, mirror your emotions, show they understand?

- Practise doing active listening with your partner. Each of you choose a topic you are happy to talk about (your family, a recent trip, your aspirations – anything you like!) and talk to your partner about it. Your partner should practise active listening as described above.
- Then swap roles. Give feedback on each other!

Communicating assertively

Can you think of times when you've not said what you really think in order to be polite and avoid disagreeing? Have you ever started to say something and then had someone talk over you so you couldn't finish? Or have you agreed to do something you didn't want to do, or not asked for something in case you were refused?

That's happened to all of us, especially as women, who tend to have been brought up to be pleasant and agreeable and to place other people's opinions and needs above our own.



Have a discussion with your partner based on the following questions. Share your experiences and see if you can come up with useful strategies for future conversations. You could even try role playing a past conversation!

- Think of a **past conversation or event** where you felt you could have spoken or behaved more assertively.
- How do you think you could have been more assertive? Exactly what words and phrases could you have used to get your points across? How could you have expressed what you thought or needed? If you were interrupted, how could you have managed to finish what you were saying?

In all these situations, what was holding you back from being more assertive? This could be lack of confidence; fear of being seen as over-confident, too talkative or even aggressive; nervousness about behaving differently; fear of saying something stupid. How could you get over that obstacle next time?



Taking action together: creating your own women's group

The issue:

The end goal:

Strategies and activities:



Strategies and activities (continued):

Obstacles:

How to tackle the obstacles:

Name of your group:





Being a mentor

Scenario 1: Which pathway?

A 20-year-old SCE participant needs to decide which SCE pathway to follow. The mentor tells her what she herself did and that she should choose the same pathway as her.

Participant/mentee: "I have to decide between the entrepreneurship and employment pathway. But I really don't know. I like the idea of starting a small business at home so that I have the flexibility to collect my kids from school and work in the evenings. But I also like the idea of developing my skills in a 'proper' workplace with people I can learn from and socialize with. Can you advise me?"

Mentor: "I did the entrepreneurship pathway. It was really great and now I have a really successful business and I make a lot of money every week. I would really advise you to do that because I loved it. All the women who take the employment pathway regret it and they wish they'd done entrepreneurship. They have huge problems finding a job. But the entrepreneurship pathway was really easy. You should start making something you can do at home, like baking and selling cakes. That's what I did and it was really successful. I can give you lots of recipes. Why don't you come over to my house and watch me bake one day?"

Scenario 2: Dropping out

An SCE participant has had a setback and wants to drop out of SCE.

Participant/mentee: "My mother has been ill and I've missed two training sessions. I don't think I can catch up. I also struggle to keep up with the digital skills training. I've never used a computer before and I get really confused and lost. I'm going to drop out because I'm never going to make a success of it. I can't think of anything I can do that would help me start a business and I'm not employable. I don't have any of the skills that an employer needs.



Mentor: "I'm sorry about your mother but you're being ridiculous. How can you possibly give up so easily? You should have listened to the sessions on resilience because you would know that everyone has these kind of doubts. You're just being a bit stupid! And even selfish, because you've already registered so dropping out now will create all sorts of problems for other people."

Scenario 3: Private information

An SCE participant shares a personal concern with her mentor.

Participant/mentee: "There's something I think you should know, but I want it to be just you. I don't want any other member of the team to know because I'm afraid they'll look down on me and think I'm weak and pathetic. The thing is that I have really heavy periods. They are so heavy and I have such painful stomach cramps that I can't get out of bed and am not capable of doing anything. I get quite depressed. I worry about my two kids when that happens but my mother lives with us so she looks after them and they're fine. I'm fine in between but I dread that time of the month. It means I won't leave the house for three days every month. But I don't want anyone else to know about this."

Mentor: "I'm sorry to hear that. This has nothing to do with being weak or pathetic so you shouldn't feel ashamed. Let me know what I can do to support you during those times. You should get professional help by going to a doctor."

Participant: "Maybe you are right but I don't feel ready yet. I'm not sure a doctor would be able to do anything about it. I'll think about it."

[end of conversation]

Mentor [later, to another mentor]: "I want to help one of my mentees, Julia. Do you remember her, the single parent with two children? She's told me she suffers from very heavy periods. She didn't want me to share that with anyone so please don't tell anyone else. She's not a risk to herself or her children. She says there are days when she can't get out of bed. I'm going to ask my doctor friend to contact her, as she could help her manage it better."

