

What?

The networking building toolkit highlights the six key elements that are central to any network's success. Each area contains a number of useful questions to help you think about your network and how you might build or develop it.

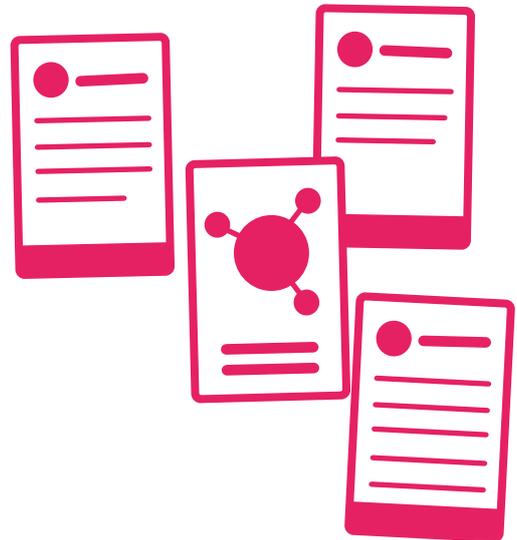
Why?

The purpose of this is to get you talking in a structured conversation to help you identify the strengths and weaknesses of your network and where and how you might want to develop it. Discussing these key elements in a group will help you to identify areas where you might not all agree, or where you might have assumptions that are not shared. Exploring all of the elements with your members will allow you to identify any gaps or issues, identify questions you want to explore further and start forming actions to move forward.

Toolkit Workshop

How?

There are several ways to run this workshop depending on what you want to achieve, how much time you have and how many people are involved. Below are some examples of how you could run it to; engage network members in a full diagnosis of how your network is operating, a partial diagnosis of key elements that participants feel are the highest priority, or to analyse some issues that you or others have already identified as needing to be addressed.



In each case the coordinator, or the network member who has convened the meeting should make a short presentation setting out:

- how the network began,
- what it is like now,
- what the future looks like,
- and introducing the 6 elements of network building set out on the toolkit overview

A: Full diagnosis



2-4
hours

12-60 people
(2-10 per group)

You want the input of your members to help identify actions and questions in relation to every element.

- Lay out the cards- have each element on a different table (see the key themes overview)
- Divide your participants into six groups - one for each element. You might divide them up or allow them to self organise around their area of interest.
- Each group should work through the questions on the cards, making notes on the back or using post its. Identify clear actions or questions that need further exploration and use the blank question & action cards to record these.
- If you have a shorter amount of time each table can feed back to the whole group and questions or actions can be amended following input from everyone.
- If you have longer you might get participants to rotate around to each table to read, amend and add to the actions and questions.
- Undertake an action planning activity to agree which actions will get taken forward, how and who by.

B: Partial diagnosis



2-3
hours

4-60 people
(2-10 per group)

you don't have time for a full diagnosis and you want to focus the input of your members to help identify actions and questions in relation to only a few elements.

- After presenting undertake a prioritisation exercise with participants to decide which elements are most important to explore, e.g. voting with sticky dots.
- Lay out the cards for the elements you have chosen to prioritise- have each element on a different table (see the key themes overview)
- Divide your participants into groups - one for each element. You might divide them up or allow them to self organise around their area of interest.
- Each group should work through the questions on the cards, making notes on the back or using post its. Identify clear actions or questions that need further exploration and use the blank question & action cards to record these.
- If you have a shorter amount of time each table can feed back to the whole group and questions or actions can be amended following input from everyone.
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C: Analysis



1-2
hours

4-60 people

You have already identified which elements of your network need work and want your members to help identify the key questions or actions required.

- As part of your presentation set out the elements you want to address at the meeting and your reasoning why.
- Lay out the cards for the elements you have chosen to address- have each element on a different table (see the key themes overview)
- Divide your participants into groups - one for each element. You might divide them up or allow them to self organise around their area of interest.
- Each group should work through the questions on the cards, making notes on the back or using post its. Identify clear actions or questions that need further exploration and use the blank question & action cards to record these.
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Key themes overview

Purpose & identity

What is your network's mission? How do members identify with each other? What are the culture and values of the network?



- Values & culture
- Purpose
- Shared identity

Value creation & exchange

What value does the network create and for whom? What are the products and services and benefits of joining? How does the network's value grow and spread?



- Key activities
- Value creation
- Connections
- Innovation
- Scaling
- Peer support

Infrastructure & resources

How do you communicate with members and with people outside the network? What assets do you have? What do you need to keep the network going (funding, roles, time)?



- Communications
- Sustainability
- Assets & infrastructure
- People
- Roles

Governance & power

What is the structure of your network? How is it managed? How are decisions made and how do people work together?



- Typologies & structures
- Leadership
- Decision making
- Operations and processes

Measuring impact

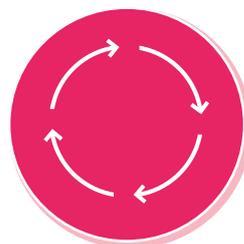
How does your network measure progress towards its mission? Who does it engage with, and how well? How do you know how far the impact of the network reaches? How does your impact measurement inform your strategy and operations?



- Connectivity
- Wellbeing
- Results

Managing change

How does your network adapt to change? How are new people brought in? How do external factors affect the network? How is risk approached and managed in the network?



- Competitors
- Transition
- Managing change