



Network Health Scorecard Administration and Analysis

Purpose

The Network Health Scorecard (NHS) is a “self-study” tool for an active network (e.g., groups that have been operating for at least one year and meet at least annually) for diagnosing strengths and areas that need further development.

The items represent the basic characteristics of a healthy network, focusing on

- Shared purpose, goals and plans
- Collaboration among members
- Communication among members and with external stakeholders
- Funding
- Decision-making processes
- Accountability of members, and the
- Network’s collective capacities

NHS results are intended for members to reflect on the health of a network or group and to celebrate what is working and identify areas to work on improving. It does not really focus on examining the added value of the network or the outcomes that have been achieved.

Why make the completion of the NHS a regular network practice?

The assumption is that a healthy network increases the probability it will add value to community-based efforts to improve the food system and contribute to the achievement of outcomes that a single individual, organization, or sector could not achieve alone.

Administering the NHS

1. One or two members agree to coordinate the administration of the NHS.
2. Determine who will be invited to participate in completing the scorecard. Who are the current members of the network?
3. Review the items on the NHS and cross-out or delete those items that do not apply to your network.
4. Agree on an administration method that will work best for your group. For example:
 - Send the form to each person in an email attachment, asking them to complete and return it by a certain date.
 - In a virtual meeting ask each person to call out his/her responses while someone tallies them all.
 - In an in-person meeting, distribute copies of the form and ask each person to complete it. Someone collects the completed scorecards and tallies them all. Send members not at the meeting an email with the form attached, asking them to complete and return it by a certain date.
 - Put the scorecard on your meeting agenda and discuss one section per meeting and then agree on ratings as a group. Be sure to put a time limit on discussion and rating (strive for 5 minutes for rating and 15-30 minutes for discussion but recognize it may take practice to get there).
 - If someone has access to Survey Monkey, format the scorecard as a survey and send a link to members in an email. [While it takes some “up front” work, it will allow the tabulation and weighting of responses “in a flash.”]

Tips:

- Someone (or two) needs to become the champion(s) of the NHS. These people stress the importance and benefits of assessing network health and make sure it happens on a regular basis (could be quarterly, every six-months, or annually). Without at least one champion, it just won't happen.
- Membership refers to people who are invited to network meetings and gatherings, even if they do not regularly attend.
- Be ready to try different administration methods to find the one that works best for members.
- Remind members to rate each item on the NHS “as of today.” If they honestly don't know, then skip the item—don't rate it.
- If you administer the NHS as a survey, remember that not everyone will complete it after the first request. Be prepared to send out two reminders to non-respondents.
- For the results to be meaningful, aim for responses from at least 80% of the members. Data can be analyzed and shared if the response rate is 50% or above but

be sure to indicate that given this lower rate, the response patterns should be interpreted with caution because so many members did not complete the NHS. If the final response rate is below 50%, we do not recommend tabulating and sharing the findings because they are probably not representative of the full membership.

- Routinize the process so that it becomes a regular activity. Graphing scorecard results over time helps members see the value of investing in the network over the long term and identifying needed mid-course corrections in operating procedures.

Analyzing the NHS

1. If the NHS was administered as a survey, one or two members agree to summarize the responses and transfer the tabulations into a very brief report. A sample tabulation sheet and report template are attached.
2. If members entered their responses using Survey Monkey, follow the instructions in Survey Monkey to tabulate. Either export the analyses or copy and paste them into the report template.

Tips:

- Consider using Excel to enter responses can create an average for each question. You can use the different tabs in Excel for each administration of the NHS.
- Make sure you give back the results to all members in a timely fashion. The longer members wait, the less interest they will have in the results.
- Looking at the tabulation patterns is key. It is important to see how individual member ratings are distributed. Looking only at the averages won't tell you the degree to which members have different opinions. Averages are best used to answer the question: where are we getting stronger over time?
- Reflecting on the data and deciding on any action is a "team sport" and should involve either all the members or a committee of members responsible for network health.

Instructions for reflecting on the data and deciding on action steps appear in a separate document.

Network Health Scorecard

Response Tabulations

Report for [Insert name of your network or group]

Date: [Insert month/day/year]

Overall response rate: [Insert # responding divided by # invited = ##%]

Assessment Areas & Items		0 <small>(no response)</small>	1 <small>(not so much)</small>	2	3	4	5 <small>(totally)</small>
Network Purpose							
1	All members share a common purpose for the network	**					
2	Together, members have identified strategic goals and objectives for the network						
3	Network plans align with Minnesota Food Charter goals and priorities						
Network Performance							
4	Members are working jointly to advance network goals						
5	Members are adding value to each other's work						
6	Members are creating new knowledge or insights together						
7	The way the network communicates with stakeholders builds support for the network						
8	The network is creating value for the constituents it serves						
9	The network is able to attract additional network funds, as needed						
10	Members honor their commitments to the network						
11	The network is meeting its strategic goals and objectives						
12	Members are achieving more together than they could alone						

**Insert tallied numbers for each response option

Assessment Areas & Items		0 (no response)	1 (not so much)	2	3	4	5 (totally)
Network Operations							
13	Decision making processes encourage members to contribute and collaborate						
14	The network anticipates, surfaces, and addresses conflict when it arises						
15	The network's internal communications systems are serving it well						
16	All members are contributing time and resources to the network						
17	The work of the network is attuned to the comfort and energy levels of members						
18	Members reflect on network experience and adjust network practice accordingly						
19	The network has mechanisms in place to promote accountability among members (e.g., agreements, understandings)						
Network Capacity							
20	As a network, members have the material resources needed to advance network goals						
21	As a network, members have the skills they need to advance network goals						
22	As a network, members have the connections they need to advance network goals						

Patterns in the Tabulated Data

List network strengths (almost or all members rated the item a 4 or 5)

List areas for network growth (almost or all members rated the item a 1 or 2)

List areas needing further discussion because members varied in how they rated the item so there is not a clear pattern).