**Guide for Using the School Reputation Management Readiness Assessment
in Collaborative Settings**

This guide will help school boards and leadership teams use the **School Reputation Management Readiness Assessment** effectively. It is a powerful tool for fostering discussion, building consensus, and developing reputation management strategies. Using a collaborative approach ensures diverse perspectives are considered, creating shared ownership of reputation management initiatives.

1. Prepare for the Meeting.

Pre-Work:
- **Distribute the Assessment**: Share the assessment with all participants a week in advance. Request that they complete it individually and bring their scores to the meeting.
- **Set Objectives**: Define the purpose of the session (e.g., evaluating reputation management readiness, identifying gaps, aligning on priorities, or planning implementation steps).

Materials:
- Printed or digital copies of the assessment for all participants
- A scoring template for recording individual and group averages
- A whiteboard or digital collaboration tool (e.g., Miro) for visualizing patterns
- Current reputation-related materials (e.g., marketing materials, communication plans, stakeholder feedback)
- Recent enrollment and retention data

2. Facilitate the Discussion.

Step 1: Opening
- **Context Setting**: Explain the meaning and importance of reputation management and its impact on school success (both educationally and in market attractiveness)
- **Ground Rules**: Encourage open dialogue, respectful disagreement, and focus on actionable solutions

Step 2: Individual Results Sharing
- Each participant shares their scores for each section

- A designated facilitator records individual scores and calculates the group average for each section
- Note areas of significant score variation for discussion

Step 3: Identify Strengths and Gaps.

Compare group averages to the scoring guide:
- **High Readiness (100-120)**: Discuss successful practices and enhancement opportunities
- **Moderate Readiness (75-99)**: Identify areas needing targeted improvement
- **Emerging Readiness (50-74)**: Focus on foundation-building priorities
- **Early Readiness (Below 50)**: Address fundamental gaps and immediate needs

Step 4: Explore Variations in Perception
- Examine significant differences in individual scores within sections
- Discuss why perspectives differ (e.g., different stakeholder interactions, varying exposure to reputation initiatives)
- Use divergent views to identify blind spots in reputation management

Step 5: Align on Priorities
- Rank sections in order of urgency or strategic importance
- Agree on 2-3 key areas (deemed high impact potential and importance) to address as a leadership team
- Consider both quick wins and long-term initiatives

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3. Action Planning.

Step 1: Define Next Steps
- Form working groups for specific reputation management initiatives
- Develop implementation timelines
- Identify key stakeholders who need to be involved
- Assign clear responsibilities and deadlines

Step 2: Consider External Support
- Discuss whether reputation management support expertise is needed
- Evaluate tools and resources required for implementation
- Consider professional development needs for internal sharing, ownership and skill development

4. Follow-Up and Accountability
- Share meeting notes and agreed actions with all participants
- Schedule regular check-ins to review progress
- Plan for periodic reputation management effectiveness reviews.

Section 1: Strategic Foundations
- "Do we have a cogent and compelling proposition and stated reputational ambition to support our future trajectory?
- How well do our stakeholders understand our school's value proposition and intentionality on reputation?"
- "What evidence do we have that our Vision/Mission provide for a cogent and compelling value proposition, reputational trajectory, and differentiate us from alternative schools/competitors?"

Section 2: Positioning
- "How effectively do we robustly evaluate, track and respond to changes in perception of our reputation?"
- "What do we know about our competitors' reputation management practices?"

Section 3: Communication Infrastructure
- "How consistently over time do we communicate our successes and achievements?
- Is this done with reference and in an effort to align with to our Vision/Mission and desired reputation?"
- "How well prepared are we to handle reputation-related crises?"

Section 4: Stakeholder Engagement
- "How effectively do we maintain relationships with alumni as a professional network that can be crucial to our reputation in various circles?"
- "What mechanisms do we have for systematically gathering, benchmarking, and acting on stakeholder (student, parent, faculty, community influencers, etc.) feedback?"

Section 5: Quality Management
- "How well do we translate quality outcomes into reputation advantage and known benefits of attending our school?"
- "What systems do we have for maintaining consistent and aligned quality across all school operations?"

Section 6: Resource Readiness
- "Do we have the right tools and technology to manage and build our schools reputation?"
- "How well equipped is our staff to support reputation management in collective mindset and initiatives (to recognize their central role to enacting our Vision/Mission and desired whole of school reputation?"

Encourage Continuous Improvement
- Position this exercise as part of an ongoing process of reputation review and enhancement
- Use the results to inform both immediate actions and long-term strategy
- Plan for regular reassessment as the school's reputation evolves

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Tips for Success
- Ensure representation from different stakeholder groups in the discussion

- Focus on specific, actionable improvements rather than general observations
- Document both agreed actions and areas requiring further investigation
- Consider the impact of proposed changes on different stakeholder groups
- Maintain focus on reputation management's role in supporting overall school success (educationally and market attractiveness)

This collaborative approach helps ensure that reputation management initiatives are well-planned, properly resourced, and effectively implemented across the school community.