

Foraker Group 2017 Leadership Summit  
***A Path to Resilience: Balancing Stability and Adaptability***  
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## **WORKSHEET: DEVELOPING RESILIENCE**

### **7 ASPECTS OF ADAPTIVE CAPACITY**

*Adaptive capacities are the muscles that support organizations being able to purposefully adapt as circumstances change in a complex manner, where the future is unpredictable. These muscles enable organizations to be resilient in a biological sense, not snapping back to previous forms when stresses are removed, but going forward in those new forms and thriving.*

#### **1. The capacity to question assumptions early and routinely**

*What's one thing we can do to build this capacity in our organization?*

#### **2. The capacity to commit to big ideas and hold them lightly, open to influence**

*What's one thing we can do to build this capacity?*

#### **3. The capacity to adopt an experimental mindset and regularly conduct experiments with radical intent**

*What's one thing we can do to build this capacity?*

#### **4. The capacity to embrace paradox and idea conflict**

*What's one thing we can do to build this capacity?*

**5. The capacity to bring multiple network perspectives together and seek “inexpert” input**

*What’s one thing we can do to build this capacity?*

**6. The capacity to make collaboration part of the organization’s DNA, internally and externally**

*What’s one thing we can do to build this capacity?*

**7. The capacity to regularly give things up to make space for new ventures**

*What’s one thing we can do to build this capacity?*

## **Five characteristic behaviors of resilient organizations**

They maintain a liminal position: Acknowledging the dynamic tension between structure and freedom, they continually create the space necessary for adaptive work to happen.

They are chameleons: Able to change state rapidly when called upon, they can probe, learn and revise repeatedly in the face of complexity, while being able to maintain consistency, efficiency and well-oiled systems when exploiting known environments.

They are highly sensitive to conditions: Knowing that rising organizational performance is never without natural limits, they’ve developed indicators that enable them to hear pre-echoes of the prospective downside, and a culture that responds to those signals with pre-emptive change.

They think and act systemically, not as islands of competition: They value the interdependence and health of the ecosystem over their own organizational or individual self-interest.

They sustain an artistic sensibility in everything they do: Exhibiting creativity in all their organizational processes, they bring an artistic sensibility to how the organization and its offerings are developed.