# Authenticity & The Authenticity Paradox
## Worksheet

### What is Authentic Leadership?

Authentic leaders can be described as:

– Leaders who act according to their purpose, values and commitments
– Leaders who are consistent in their actions
– Leaders who show deep self-awareness

Research by Harvard Business School and others provides evidence that Authentic behaviors are strongly correlated with more effective leadership. It can also help create trust, improve relationships and lead to better and more collaborative decision making.

### What is the Authenticity Paradox?

The paradox of Authenticity is that it requires trained professionals such as doctors to sometimes show "weakness" by disclosing lack of knowledge or uncertainty in complexity which can be uncomfortable or counter-intuitive.

– Traditional professional training focuses on achieving tasks and outcomes
– Accordingly, we are conditioned to hide vulnerabilities like a lack of knowledge or uncertainty
– For many professionals, such personal disclosure feels like a weakness
– But research shows Authenticity correlates strongly with leadership effectiveness
– The Authenticity Paradox requires us to share strengths AND vulnerabilities as leaders

### Exercise

The "Johari" window is a well-established behavioral model that allows us to identify our level of disclosure towards others, as well as where we may have blind spots to fill or untapped potential to explore and be more powerful leaders. The model has four quadrants.

1. Arena - what is known by the person about him/herself and is also known by others
2. Blind spot - what is unknown by the person about him/herself but which others know
3. Facade - what the person knows about him/herself that others do not know
4. Unknown - what is unknown by the person about him/herself and is also unknown by others

Understanding and increasing the "Arena" can be achieved through asking for feedback on the one hand and offering greater self-disclosure on the other.

Populate the matrix below with as many aspects of yourself you can identify including behaviors, beliefs, and habits. Then use the questions for reflection to begin identifying ways to enlarge your "Arena".

## Ask: Solicit more feedback
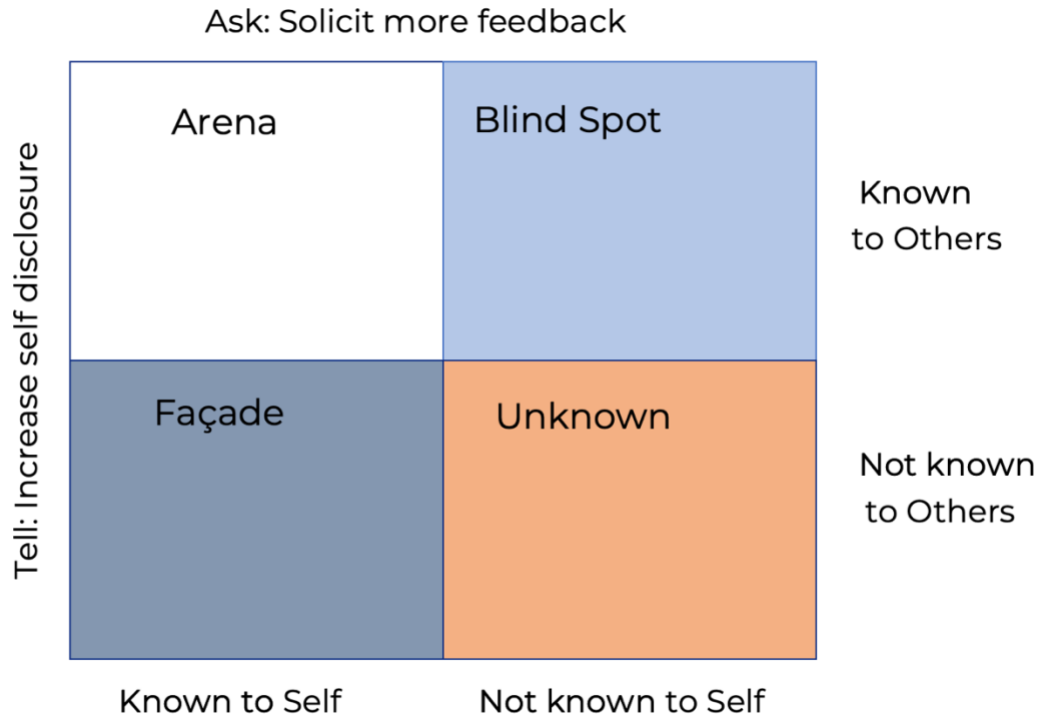


## Questions for Reflection

- What is currently in your Arena and how could you increase it?
- How could more self-disclosure strengthen your leadership and relationships?
- Do you have undisclosed attributes that could become powerful leadership skills?
- Who might give you the deeper feedback that can eliminate your blind spots?
- What can you imagine is your hidden potential and how might you start discovering it?