RISE Recipe Testing Worksheet

Applying the RISE Recipe to a Real Situation

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A practical reflection tool for examining the conditions within which experiences occur—and what those conditions make possible, difficult, or unsustainable.

Using This Worksheet

This worksheet is designed to help you use the RISE Recipe to examine a real situation—not simply to describe what happened, but to explore the conditions within which it happened and what those conditions make possible, difficult, or unsustainable.

The aim is not to determine whether an organization is a "healthy" or "trauma-informed" organization. The aim is to see what becomes visible when a situation is examined systemically.

This is a working reflection tool, not a validated assessment or diagnostic instrument. Its questions are intended to support inquiry, discussion, and learning.

The inquiry moves through eight parts

- 1. Start with the lived experience
- 2. Apply the six system conditions
- 3. Look across the ingredients
- 4. Consider cross-cutting conditions
- 5. Ask what the Recipe revealed
- 6. Move from recognition toward change
- 7. Test the Recipe itself
- 8. Reflect on what the case teaches us about the Recipe

Throughout, consider what is present as well as what may be missing, misaligned, or constrained. Distinguish what is known from assumptions and unanswered questions. The goal is not to force a conclusion, but to notice patterns and remain open to what the case reveals.

1. Start with the Lived Experience

Before applying the Recipe, describe the situation as you understand it.

What is happening?

What occurred or is occurring?

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Who is experiencing or affected by it?

Consider the people directly involved as well as others who may be affected.

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What makes this situation important?

Why does it matter?

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What do you know—and what remains uncertain?

Separate what is known from assumptions, interpretations, and unanswered questions.

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What is your initial understanding of the situation?

Before using the Recipe, what do you think is happening?

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2. Apply the Six System Conditions

For each ingredient, consider both what is present and what may be missing, misaligned, or constrained.

What does this ingredient help you see that may not have been visible in the original story?

1. Select and Develop People for the Responsibilities They Carry

- Who carries formal leadership responsibilities?

- How were people selected for those responsibilities?
- What capacities do those responsibilities require?
- What development and support are available?
- Who exercises leadership within less formal roles?
- What knowledge, experience, relationships, capacities, or potential do people bring?
- Does the system recognize and make meaningful use of those capacities?
- What happens when someone's knowledge or experience reveals a problem, challenges an assumption, or calls for change?

What does this ingredient help you see?

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2. Align Responsibility, Authority, Accountability, Resources, and Support

- Who is responsible for what?
- What authority do they have to influence the relevant outcomes?
- What resources, time, information, relationships, supervision, and development are available?
- Where are responsibility and authority aligned? Where are they not?
- Is someone being asked to navigate or solve a problem that is partly created by the system itself?
- Is responsibility for navigating the system becoming a substitute for the system providing the conditions needed to carry that responsibility?

What does this ingredient help you see?

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3. Create Conditions for Meaningful Participation

- Who is able to participate?
- How can people contribute, question, influence, learn, reflect, and remain engaged?
- Is participation more than consultation or one-time input?
- Do people have different pathways for participating based on their roles, capacities, knowledge, resources, or available time?
- What information is needed for participation to be meaningful?
- Can people continue to participate when circumstances change?
- What pathways exist for participation to lead to greater contribution, recognition, influence, or belonging?
- Who can participate formally but not meaningfully?

What does this ingredient help you see?

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4. Build Health and Wellbeing into the Operating System

- What conditions affect people's capacity to function, participate, and contribute?
- How do workload, staffing, schedules, rest, flexibility, environment, relationships, and development affect the situation?
- Is wellbeing treated primarily as an individual responsibility or as part of the system's infrastructure?
- How does the system respond to illness, caregiving, disruption, or changing capacity?
- Could the system's response to a disruption itself become part of the conditions affecting wellbeing?
- Are formal supports available but difficult or burdensome to access?

What does this ingredient help you see?

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5. Build Relationships That Support Belonging, Trust, and Shared Purpose

- What relationships matter in this situation?
- Where are connection, trust, belonging, mutual responsibility, and honest communication present?
- Where have relationships been disrupted?
- How does the system respond when relationships are strained or broken?
- Can people hold different perspectives, identities, forms of knowledge, or disagreements while remaining connected to a shared purpose?
- What is happening in the relationship between people and the institution itself?
- What happens to that relationship during conflict, harm, transition, or exit?

What does this ingredient help you see?

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6. Create Capacity for Recognition, Restoration, Learning, and Adaptation

- What has the system noticed?
- What has it recognized?
- Whose experience, contribution, strengths, disruption, or harm has been made visible?
- At what level has recognition occurred: something happened; a person experienced something; or a pattern or condition produced or sustained the experience?
- What response followed recognition?
- What has been restored—or not restored?
- What has the system learned?
- What has changed as a result?
- What happened to information once it entered the system?
- Is the system able to learn from people's experiences and change structures or practices in response?

What does this ingredient help you see?

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3. Look Across the Ingredients

The six ingredients are interconnected. Step back and look for relationships among them.

Where do you see connections among the ingredients?

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For example:

- Does a problem with authority also affect participation?
- Does a participation barrier affect relationships or wellbeing?
- Does a failure of recognition contribute to mistrust?
- Does a wellbeing problem reveal an issue with responsibility, resources, or system design?
- Does the system's response to disruption reveal something about its capacity for learning and adaptation?

What patterns become visible across ingredients?

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_____

4. Consider Cross-Cutting Conditions

These are not additional ingredients. They are conditions that may shape how the six ingredients are expressed, supported, constrained, or sustained.

Power

Who has authority, influence, access, or decision-making power? Who carries consequences without equivalent influence?

Notes

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Incentives

What is the system rewarded for? What does it have incentives to preserve? What might it risk by changing?

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External Systems

What larger systems, policies, institutions, professional norms, funding structures, laws, markets, or social conditions influence what is possible?

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Resources

What resources are available—or unavailable? How do resources shape participation, wellbeing, leadership, or change?

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Institutional Norms

What is treated as normal, expected, acceptable, or exceptional? What assumptions are built into ordinary practices?

Notes

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Information and Visibility

What information is available to whom? What is visible to the system? What remains invisible? Who is expected to do the work of making something visible?

Notes

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Purpose and Operating Conditions

What does the system say its purpose is? What conditions does it actually create? Where do those conditions support the stated purpose? Where might they undermine it?

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5. What Did the Recipe Reveal?

Return to the original story and consider what has become visible.

What became visible through the Recipe that was not apparent from the story alone?

Be specific.

_____

_____

What systemic patterns became visible?

What conditions, relationships, structures, or processes appear to contribute to the situation?

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What conditions help sustain the situation?

Consider conditions that may continue even if individual people change.

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What is an individual being asked to carry that may actually be a system function?

For example: navigating fragmented processes; coordinating information; documenting problems; advocating for change; absorbing consequences of system gaps; maintaining relationships; repeatedly explaining the situation; adapting to conditions that the system has not changed.

_____

_____

Where do responsibility, authority, accountability, resources, and support align?

Where do they diverge?

_____

_____

Where do stated purpose and operating conditions align?

Where do they diverge?

_____

_____

What does the system do with what people bring or reveal?

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6. From Recognition Toward Change

The RISE movement can be understood as an ongoing, interconnected movement—not a sequence of fixed stages. Recognition, restoration, integration, and emergence can recur, overlap, and influence one another.

Recognition

What needs to become visible or acknowledged? What has already been recognized? At what level?

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_____

Restoration

What has been disrupted? What relationships, participation, capacity, meaning, trust, or other conditions need attention? What would restoration involve?

_____

_____

Integration

What has been separated that may need to be brought into greater relationship? Consider people, perspectives, knowledge, relationships, structures, resources, responsibilities, authority, and purpose.

_____

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Emergence

What new possibilities might become available if the relevant conditions are changed? What cannot yet be known or designed in advance?

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_____

7. Test the Recipe Itself

This section is as important as the case analysis. The Recipe is being tested through use. It does not need to confirm what you already believe.

Does applying the Recipe move you from lived experience → systemic understanding → possibilities for restoration and change?

_____

Does the Recipe help you see something you would not have seen—or would have been less likely to see—by simply telling the story? If so, what?

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What did the Recipe make easier to see?

_____

What did it make harder or more confusing?

_____

Where did two ingredients seem to overlap?

_____

Did any ingredient seem unnecessary in this case?

_____

Did anything important remain invisible?

_____

Did you have to introduce concepts from outside the Recipe to understand the situation? If so, what concepts?

_____

Did the Recipe lead toward possibilities for changing conditions, or primarily toward describing the problem?

_____

Did the Recipe help distinguish:

- the individual's experience from the conditions surrounding it?
- an individual response from a system response?
- recognition from restoration?
- receiving information from learning from it?
- formal participation from meaningful participation?
- individual resilience from changing what requires resilience?

8. What Does This Case Teach Us About the Recipe?

Use this section to distinguish what is working, what needs clarification, and what requires further testing. Not every observation needs to lead to an immediate change.

Keep

What is working and should remain?

Notes

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_____

Clarify

What is useful but could be expressed more clearly?

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Test Further

What raises an important question that needs more cases?

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Potential Gap

What appears genuinely absent from the Recipe?

Notes

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_____

What should not be changed yet?

Are there findings that may be important but are not sufficiently supported to warrant changing the Recipe?

Notes

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_____

Final Reflection

Complete these sentences.

Before using the Recipe, I understood the situation as…

_____
_____
_____

After using the Recipe, I understand the situation as…

_____
_____
_____

The most important thing the Recipe helped me see was…

_____
_____
_____

The most important thing the Recipe did not help me see was…

_____
_____
_____

A condition that may need to change—not simply an individual's response—is…

_____
_____
_____

One question I would carry into the next case is…

_____
_____
_____