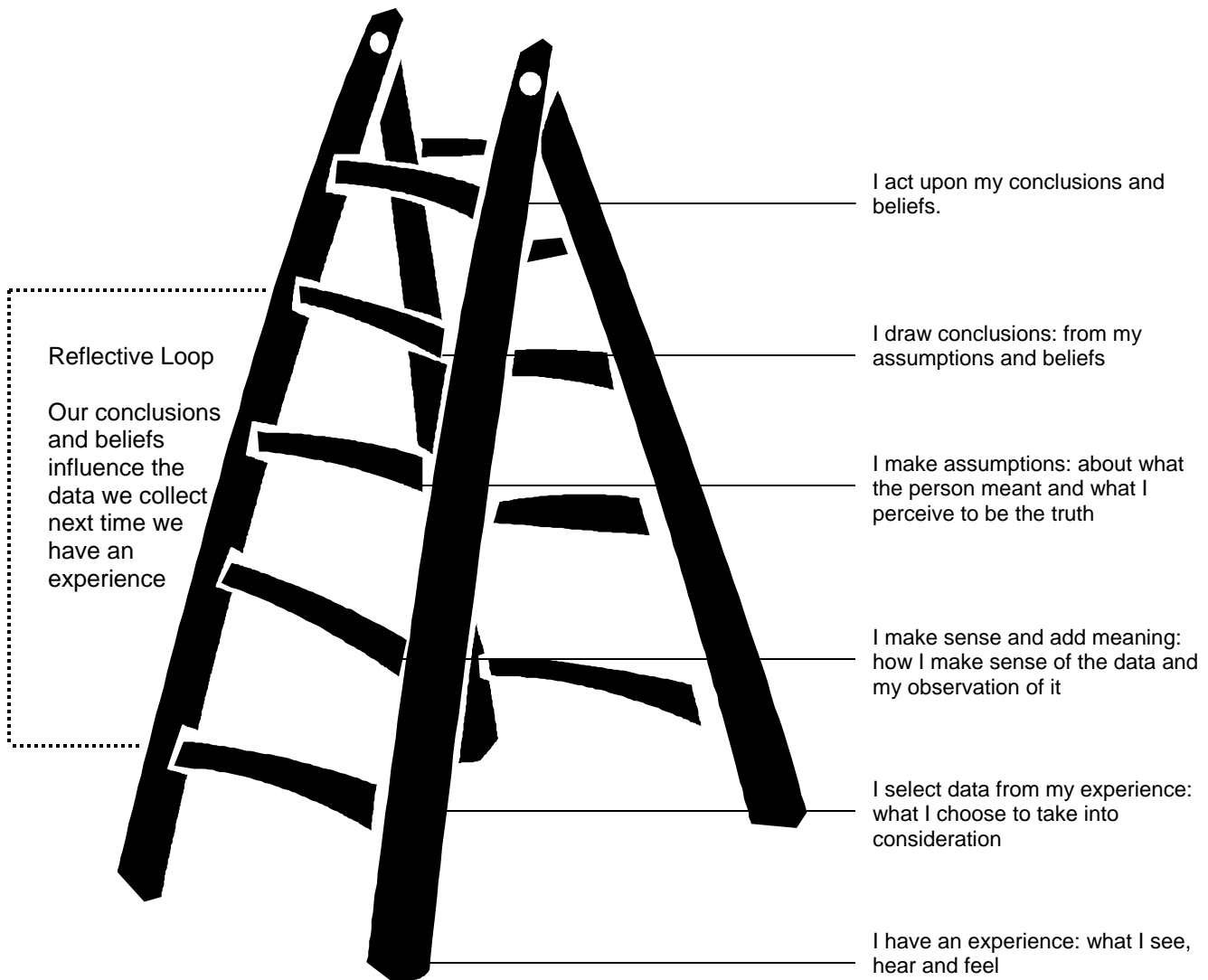


# Aspiring Leadership

## Ladder of Inference Worksheet

Adapted from: The Encyclopedia of Leadership (Heibert & Klatt, 2001)

The foundation for all relationships and the cornerstone for building communities and organizations is clear communication. An essential factor for communicating effectively is the ability to recognize when one is making an assumption. The first step to improving communication with others is to become consciously aware of when you have begun to climb the ladder of inference. To increase your awareness, remember: 1) others can make inferences and assumptions about the same situation, 2) become curious of the other person's data, and 3) reveal your data, assumptions and concerns to the person so they can better understand your thought process.



# Aspiring Leadership

## Ladder of Inference Worksheet

Adapted from: The Encyclopedia of Leadership (Heibert & Klatt, 2001)

The Ladder of Inference is one of the most effective tools in understanding and explaining why we frequently get into conflict and fail to get resolution. This tool is designed to assist you in working through the steps that may have led you to jump to the wrong conclusions and help you identify the facts of your experience.

⑥ Act on conclusions	Looking back can you trace your ladder of inference? Where did you get off track?
⑤ Draw conclusions based on your beliefs	On what basis did you draw your conclusions? What is the basis for your conclusions in general?
④ Make assumptions	As you reflect back, what assumptions did you make? Do you make these type of assumptions regularly? Which of these assumptions are unwarranted?
③ Make sense and add meaning	Of the data you selected, how did you make sense of it? In hindsight, what did you add or what did you spin to make it more real?
② Select data	What did you focus on from all the data available to you. On what basis did you select this data? In retrospect, what did you miss?
① Your experience	What you saw, heard and felt. What did you miss as you reflect back on the experience?