Building Trust to Lead Implementation

Allison Metz
Leah Bartley
Learning Outcomes

1. Understand trust and why building trust is important for successfully leading implementation
2. Explore individual perspectives on trust
3. Consider strategies to promote trust
4. Share potential application of trust building strategies in your own work
What Do We Mean By Trust?
What do we mean by trust?

- Trust “implies a certain vulnerability and the belief or expectation that actions or social relationships will cause no harm and/or will provide a benefit” (Maiorana et al., 2012)
- Trust is an aspect of social capital
- Trust is systemic – it impacts our work with agencies, leaders, communities and consumers
Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Trust

Intrapersonal Trust: “Allison is a trustworthy professional”

Interpersonal Trust: “We have a trusting partnership with our implementation support team”

(Palinkas & Soydan, 2012)
Why is trust important?

✓ Implementation relies on collaborative learning, taking risks, and failures. At the center of this is vulnerability and trust  (Dovey, 2009)

✓ Trust plays a critical role in how policymakers, agency leaders and practitioners vet, interpret and appraise research evidence

✓ When trusting relationships exist, information is more readily exchanged and both members exert influence  
  (Bogenscheider & Corbett, 2010)

✓ Trust is the cornerstone for effective partnerships. Trust engenders faith that partners can rely on each other to come through on agreements and to understand – and even anticipate – each other’s needs and interests.
  (Tseng, Easton, & Supplee, 2017)

(W.T. Grant Foundation http://wtgrantfoundation.org/ )
What Do We Know About Trust?
Trust in Implementation is Critical and Fragile

- Trust between researchers and practitioners is often lacking
- Trust for intermediaries is also challenging
- Trust in public institutions and overall has been declining in the U.S.

Source: US General Social Survey (2016)
Activity

Mental Models for Building Trust

What do you think are key contributors to trust?
What are the outcomes of trust?

1. Draw or describe on paper your trust mental model (7 minutes).
2. Share with a partner (7 minutes).
How Do We Build Trusting Partnerships?
Building Trust to Lead Implementation

So, how do we build trusting partnerships?

There seems to be some clues, including:

1) Explicit, clear, and comprehensive communication
2) Long-term commitment
3) Making the time for frank conversations

_Trust is built through micro interactions_
Philosophical Principles

The specific values and principles that guide Implementation Specialists’ day-to-day work:

- Empathy
- Curiosity
- Commitment
- Methodical
- Transdisciplinary
Implementation Specialist Competencies

Implementation Specialist Practice Profile: Constructs, Core Components and Core Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Co-Creation</th>
<th>Ongoing Improvement</th>
<th>Sustaining Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Co-learning</td>
<td>• Assess Need &amp; Context</td>
<td>• Grow and Sustain Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Brokering</td>
<td>• Apply and Integrate Implementation Science Approaches</td>
<td>• Build Capacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Address Power Differentials</td>
<td>• Conduct Improvement Cycles</td>
<td>• Cultivate Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Co-Design</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Facilitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tailored Support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How Do We Ensure Explicit, Clear, and Comprehensive Communication?
Communication

1. Boundaries
   • Respecting boundaries shared
   • When you’re unclear, you ask
   • You’re willing to say no and yes

2. Vault
   • You don’t share information or experiences that aren’t yours to share

3. Nonjudgement
   • I can ask for what I need, and you can ask for what you need. We can talk about how we feel without judgement

(Brown, 2012)
How Do We Promote Long-Term Commitment?
Demonstrating Commitment

1. Reliability
   - Keep promises
   - Respect deadlines
   - Go the extra mile!

2. Accountability
   - Own your mistakes and make amends

3. Integrity
   - Choose courage over comfort
   - Choose what is right over what is fun, fast, or easy
   - Practice your values

---

**Philosophical Principles**

Implementation specialists are guided by specific values and principles in their day-to-day work, including:

- **Empathy** – approach the change facilitation process with regard for others as legitimate, respected, and valuable contributors to the development and growth of the model and associated processes and outcomes (Jordan, 2016)

- **Curiosity** – ask questions, engage with evidence and ways of knowing across content areas and disciplines, tolerate uncertainty

- **Commitment** – bring patience, resilience, and willingness to challenge the status quo in the process; create readiness, and invest in building effective teams (Farn, Smith, & Cordell, 2016)

- **Methodical** – access and integrate scientific findings to make informed decisions for stakeholders and service beneficiaries (Shapiro, 2002)

- **Transdisciplinary** – embrace and use different ways of knowing, different ways of being, and diversity of discipline (content) expertise to bring about mutual and transformative learning
How Do We Make Time For Frank Conversations?
Making Time for Frank Conversations

1. Create safe space
   • Ask how partners experience empathy

2. Be Generous, Employ Empathy
   • Extend the most generous interpretation possible of intentions, words and actions

3. Non Judgment
   • Restrict assumptions and blaming

“Leaders must either invest a reasonable amount of time attending to fears and feelings, or squander an unreasonable amount of time trying to manage ineffective and unproductive behavior.” - Brené Brown
Double loop learning where cycles of inquiry lead to a transformation of underlying mental models (i.e., assumptions, values, beliefs) to facilitate meaningful and sustainable systems change.
Case Study on Trust Building
Example: Sustainability Planning in NYC

Why was trust important?

- Different perspectives on what was worthy of sustaining
- Limited resources for sustainability
- High-stakes decisions that impact vulnerable children and families
- Critical to understand all aspects and voices
- Investments had been made
Example: Sustainability Planning in NYC

How did we engender trust?

Prior to Planning Meetings
- Demonstrated long term commitment
  - Showed we were reliable and dependable
  - Dealt with adaptive issues openly and with integrity
  - Gathered more information when needed to answer critical questions
- Fostered bi-directional communication – regular intervals

During the Planning Meetings
- Used structured facilitation: nominal group processes to ensure communication
- Used a structured agenda that allowed participants to ask clarifying questions and promoted boundaries in contributions
Example: Sustainability Planning in NYC

What did we achieve?

• Created a safe space for open dialogue
• Generated empathy for different perspectives
• Developed a shared understanding of sustainability issues and possible scenarios
• Made it possible for final decisions to be made
Activity

15% Activity

What is your 15%? Where do you have discretion and freedom to act in building trust to lead implementation? What can you do without more resource or authority?

1. Think individually (3 minutes)
2. Small group discussion (7 minutes)
3. Report out (10 minutes)