



Foundations in Implementation Practice

Competencies for Implementation
Specialists

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for Effective
Services

Competencies for Implementation Practitioners

Implementation Science

Implementation science includes **research** and **practice**

Implementation
Research

Seeks to understand the approaches that work best to translate research to the real world

Implementation
Practice

Seeks to apply and adapt these approaches in different contexts settings to achieve outcomes

(Ramaswamy, et al., 2019)

Implementation Practice

Fundamental goal of implementation science:

To integrate research and practice experience in ways that improve the outcomes of those being served.

[Estabrooke and colleagues](#)

Implementation Practice:

The application of evidence emerging from implementation research by people (individuals and teams) with the skills and competencies to tailor implementation frameworks, strategies and approaches to different contexts and settings to meet the unique needs of communities and people and to achieve improved and equitable outcomes.

Equitable implementation:

Occurs when strong equity components (including explicit attention to the culture, history, values, and needs of the community) are integrated into the principles and tools of implementation science to facilitate quality implementation of effective programs for a specific community or group of communities.

Implementation scientists must work with all communities and embrace the diverse experiences that both drive and shape implementation efforts. This requires competent implementation practice and an explicit commitment to equity.

Current Discussions

- Call for a classification system that specifies the implementation actor and implementation target.

(Leeman et al. 2017)

- Actors that have received minimal attention are individuals who provide a system of support for implementation.

(Wandersman et al. 2018)

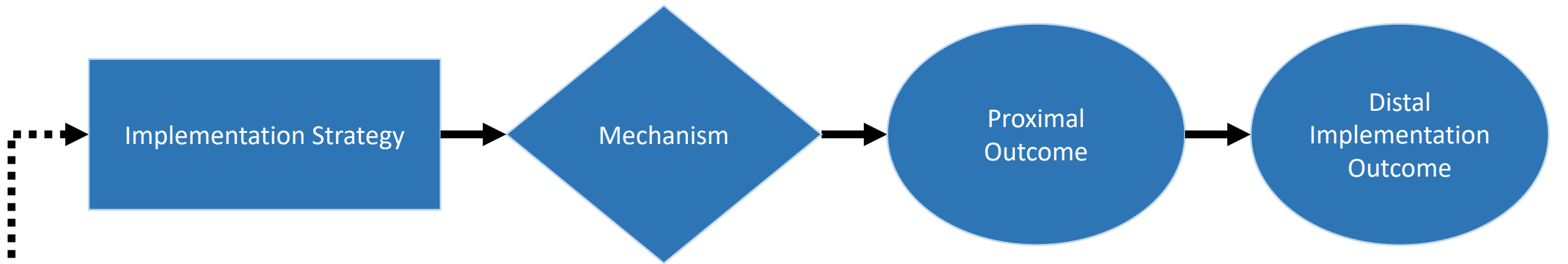
- These actors may be referred to as a technical assistance provider, implementation practitioner or specialist, consultant, or intermediary

- They work inside and r outside of the delivery system.

There is increasing interest in understanding what these actors do, and in what ways the external support they provide relies on specific skills and competencies.

(Metz, Louison, Ward, and Burke, 2018)

Rationale



(Lewis et al. 2018)

Implementation Actor

- Call for advancement of individual and team-based skills to build and sustain opportunities for implementation science to achieve public health outcomes.

(Estabrooks et al. 2018)

- Increasing urgency to build implementation practice capacity.
- Many public health and implementation researchers lack formal training in implementation practice
 - On-the-job training is needed to improve capacity building skills.

Implementation Practice

- Developing competencies
 - Brings clarity to the role of an Implementation Specialist
 - Support reflection and guidance in daily work
 - Assess the quality of work
 - Communicate with partners to build understanding of the Implementation Specialist role
 - Develop workforce
- Framework neutral
- Working hypothesis about what is necessary to support implementation

Defining Implementation Practitioner Competencies

Methodology:

1. Preliminary literature review
2. Initial operationalization of principles and components
3. Content validation survey
4. Systematic scoping review
5. Focus groups
6. Vetting and usability testing

Provide feedback on the Construct definitions and descriptions that are...

Implementation Specialist Practice Profile
Skills and Competencies for Implementation Practitioners

Working Draft, October 18, 2018

Allison Metz
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Katie Burke

Co-Creation: Implementation specialists support the active involvement of stakeholders in the production and implementation process resulting in service models, approaches contextualized and tailored to settings (Metz & Bartley, 2015; Vargo & Lusch, 2015). Contextualization is to ensure there is a match between implementation support skills, and resources of those delivering interventions/approaches, systems stakeholders, and services beneficiaries (Homer, Blitz, & Ross, 2014).

Ongoing Improvement: Implementation specialists support the use of quantitative and qualitative feedback at each stage of implementation, through regular individual, team, and stakeholder debriefings to support improvement (Damschroder et al., 2009). Ongoing improvement includes dedicating time for reflecting or debriefing to promote shared learning and improvements along the way. Ongoing feedback on interventions and approaches should use practical, relevant measures of progress, and organizational learning should be a core value of the implementation setting.

Sustaining Change: Implementation specialists support the sustainability of interventions and approaches by developing a shared vision and mutual accountability, building on existing relationships, problem solving and resource sharing, and maintaining collaboration over time (Green et al., 2016). Implementation specialists seek to understand and address the dynamic changes that occur over time in the use of interventions/approaches, the characteristics of the practice settings, and broader system that establishes how services are delivered (Chambers & Glasgow, 2014). Sustainability has evolved from being considered as the endgame of a translational process to a suggested 'adaptation phase' that integrates and institutionalizes interventions within local organizational and cultural contexts. Interventions and approaches are classified as sustained when the core elements are maintained or delivered with integrity after initial implementation support has been withdrawn, and adequate capacity exists to continue maintaining these core elements (Wiltsey Stirman et al., 2012).

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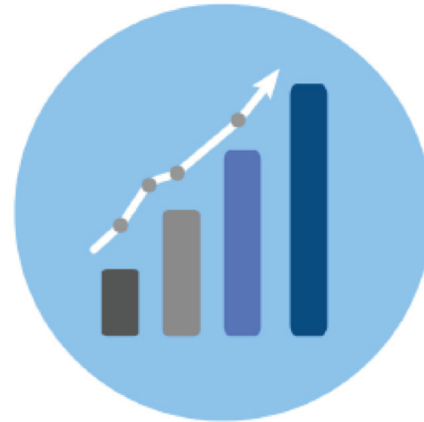
Philosophical Principles

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



Co-Creation	Ongoing Improvement	Sustaining Change
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Co-learning• Brokering• Address Power Differentials• Co-Design• Tailored Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assess Need & Context• Apply and Integrate Implementation Science Approaches• Conduct Improvement Cycles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grow and Sustain Relationships• Build Capacity• Cultivate Leadership• Facilitation

Co-Creation

- Support the active involvement of stakeholders in all stages of the production and implementation process resulting in service models, approaches, and practices that are contextualized and tailored to settings
- Essential Functions:
 - Co-learning
 - Brokering
 - Addressing power differentials,
 - Co-design
 - Tailored support



Ongoing Improvement

- Support the use of quantitative and qualitative feedback at each stage of implementation accompanied with regular personal, team, and stakeholder debriefings to support improvement.
- Essential Functions:
 - Assessing need and context
 - Applying and integrating implementation science approaches
 - Conducting improvement cycles



Sustaining Change

- Support the sustainability of interventions and approaches by developing a shared vision and mutual accountability, building on existing relationships, problem solving and resource sharing, and maintaining collaboration over time
- Essential Functions:
 - Grow and Sustain Relationships
 - Build Capacity
 - Cultivate Leadership
 - Facilitation



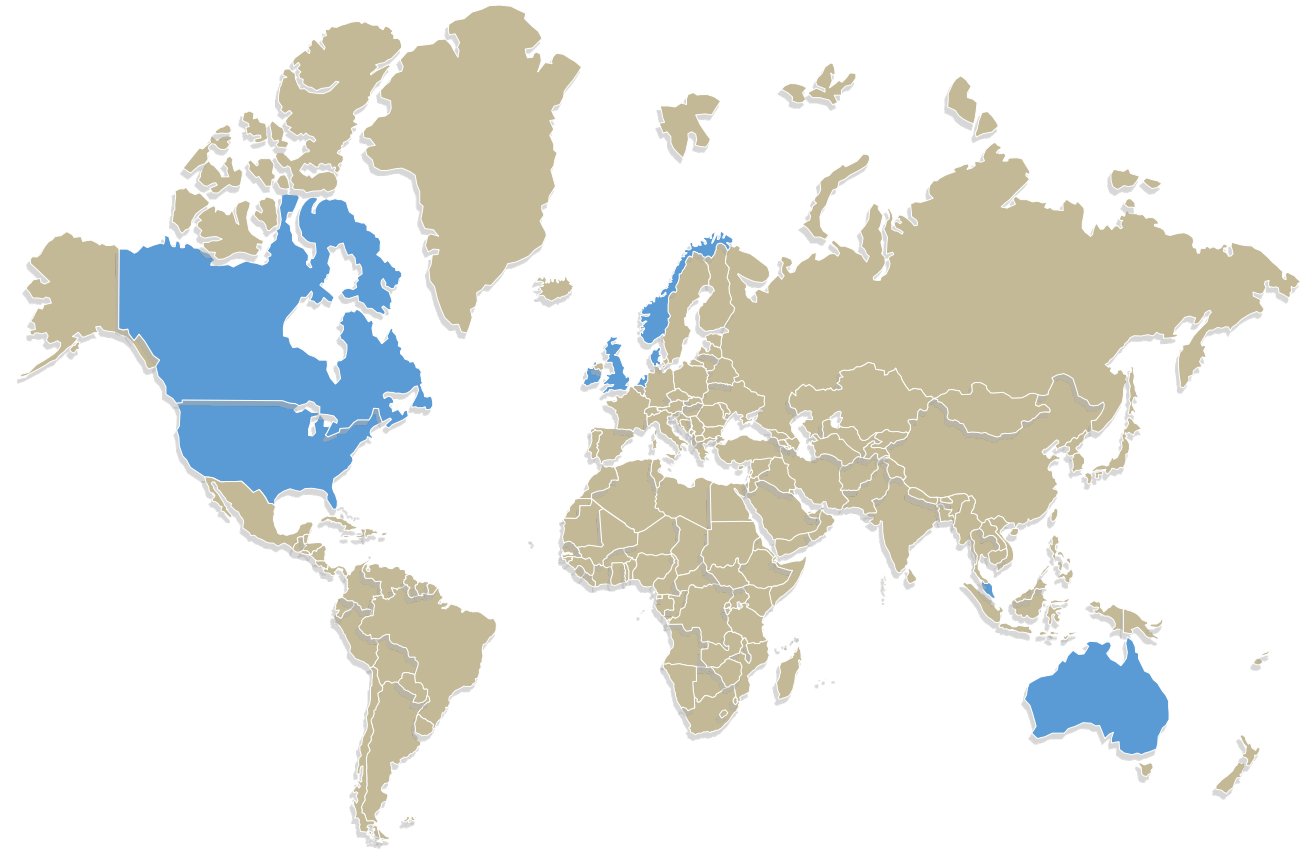
Content Validation Survey

Survey Methodology

- Purposive sample of up to 20 intermediary organisations that support implementation of evidence and innovations at scale to achieve outcomes
- Criteria for the sample included organisations who:
 - Represent diverse contexts and cultures including intermediaries and non-governmental organisations located in North America, Europe, and Australia
 - Support implementation of evidence and innovations in healthcare, social welfare and education settings
 - Have formal connections to the fields of implementation science and practice through conference attendance, membership in local and/or national implementation networks or collaboratives
 - Are providing implementation support on a range of interventions across a number of settings, at scale
 - Are committed to building the competencies of their own team (to build the capacities of others)

Survey Respondents

- 34 respondents
 - 15 intermediary organisations
 - Representation from Europe, the United States, Canada, and Australia
- Total Number of Qualitative Comments: 420
 - Total word count: 10,411
 - 275 comments in the form of a question (36), suggested revisions (217), and affirmations (44)



 At least 1 completed response

Survey Respondents

15 Intermediary Organisations

- Research in Practice
- SickKids Research Institute
- Centre for Evidence and Implementation
- Ontario Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health
- Centre for Effective Services
- Parenting Research Centre
- Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH)
- Evidence-Based and Intervention Support Center (EPIS)
- National Implementation Research Network (NIRN)
- Public Health Ontario
- The Implementation Group
- Colebrooke Centre
- Judge Baker's Children Centre
- Norwegian Centre for Child Behavioral Development
- Netherlands Youth Institute

Survey Results – Overall

- Constructs and Core Components
 - 97 – 100% of respondents stated that definitions were either very or somewhat complete
 - 94 – 100% of respondents stated that definitions were either very or somewhat clear
- Philosophical Principles
 - 97 – 100% of respondents agreed or somewhat agreed with the principles for implementation specialists
 - 94 – 100% of respondents stated that definitions were either very or somewhat clear

Implementation Specialist Role: Expectations and Limitations



“I can see the importance of good leadership, but to me it seems as a task that alone can "exterminate" the specialist... A very big responsibility...”

“This may be hard to do in practice - some power differentials are beyond the scope of an IS consultant to address. May need to tone down the statement a little to allow for real world imperfections.”



“The use of the term "with stakeholders" implies that specialists are integral to sustained relationships, however part of the goal of sustainability is for the intervention and system to thrive beyond and without the specialist...”

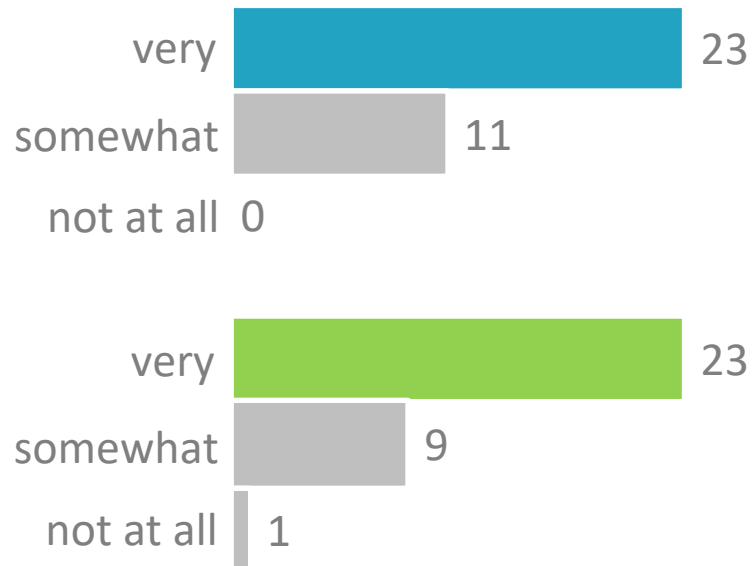
“Again, depending on who the implementation specialist is, and how they are retained/paid, this may need to be handed off at some point to someone within the organisation.”

Survey Results – Constructs

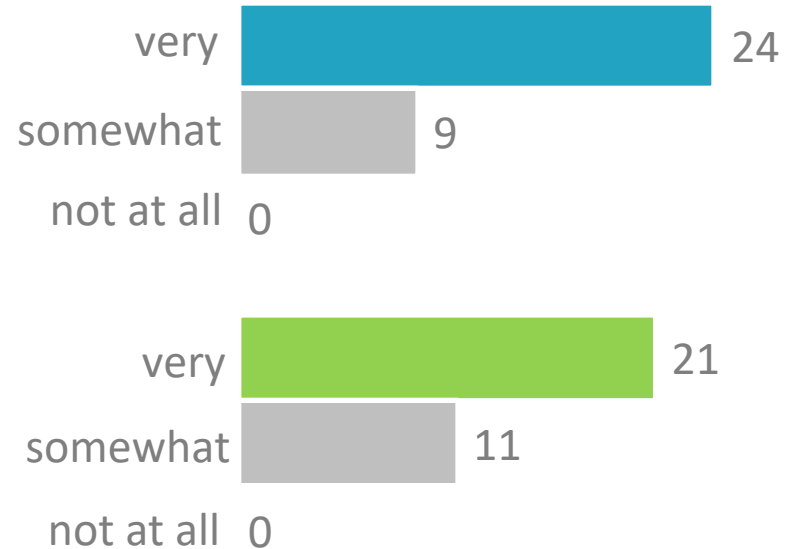
Respondents agreed the definitions of constructs were **complete** and **clear**.



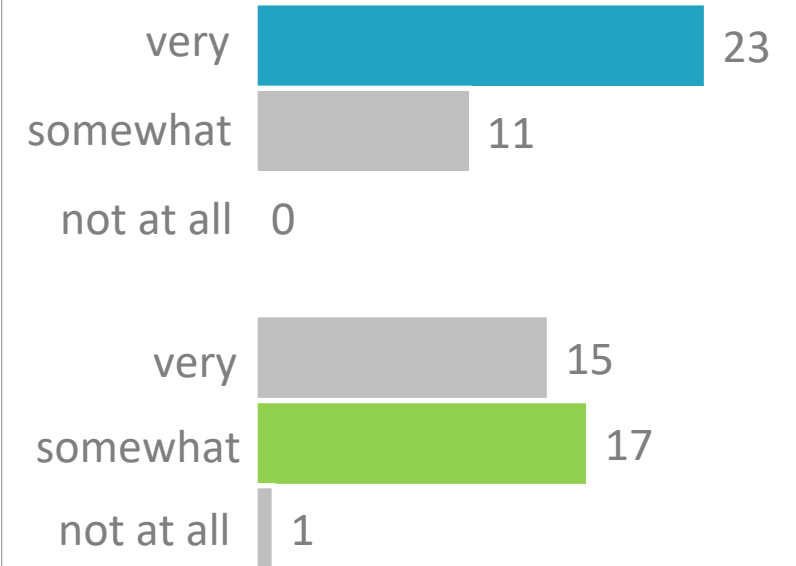
Co-creation



Ongoing Improvement



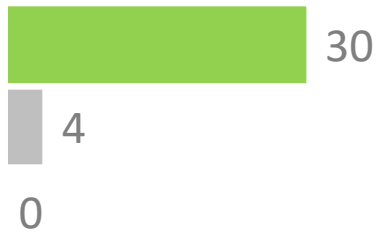
Sustaining Change



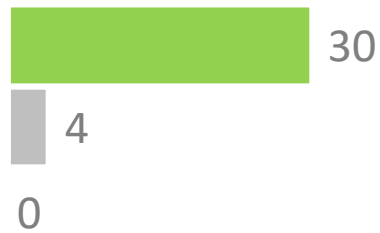
Survey Results – Philosophical Principles

Respondents agreed the **definitions of the philosophical principles were clear**, and **that the principles reflected the practice of Implementation Specialists.**

Empathy



Curiosity



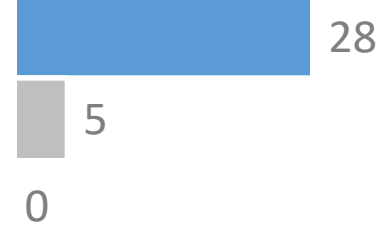
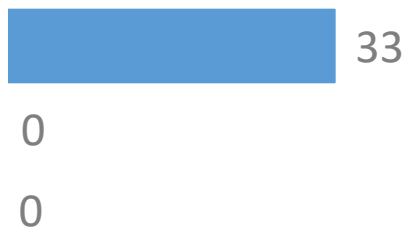
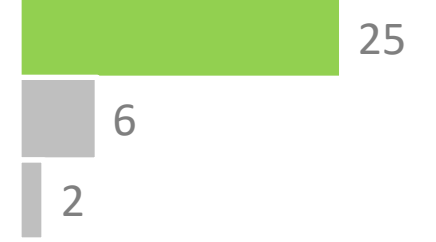
Commitment



Methodical



Transdisciplinary



Qualitative Themes - Strengths

1. The profile is helpful for a variety of functions:

- Brings clarity to the role of an Implementation Specialist
 - Inclusive and current
 - Professionalizes the role
- Reflection and guidance in daily work
- Assessing the quality of work
- Communication with partners to build understanding of the Implementation Specialist role
- Workforce development

“This is a critical step in bringing clarity and consistency to the role of Implementer, particularly in the context in which I work (community-based child and youth mental health).”

“This is a WONDERFUL tool for helping to cultivate, train, recruit and assess performance of Imp Specialists. A great contribution! I would find it very useful.”

“I also think that while this is a helpful document for IS's, it is just as helpful to share with community partners so they better understand the role of the IS. Something that I think is missing sometimes. I'm not sure my partners always completely understand my role. If we have a common description of the IS role that is used across the world (let's dream big!), then there will be better common understanding, not just of the IS role, but also what Implementation Science is trying to achieve.”

Qualitative Themes - Strengths

2. The profile is framework neutral.
3. The profile is a working hypothesis about what is necessary to support implementation.
4. The profile has strong face validity among respondents.

“It is a thorough and comprehensive review of the many different aspects of the work.”

“In my opinion, a synthesis like this is something that I have missed and that it needed in the field. It is based on literature review which is a major strength and necessity.”

Qualitative Themes – Opportunities for Improvement

1. The Implementation Specialist's role in applying an equity lens to the work is critical and should be strengthened.
2. Elevate and define stakeholders. This work is done in partnership with others, and not 'to' or 'for' them.
3. Include the Implementation Specialist's role in building readiness in organizations and systems
4. Consider the limitations of an Implementation Specialist working in complex systems with time-bound constraints.

“Is the focus on the implementation specialist or is the focus on the 'support for impact'. This might be important for our setting. We might not want to use the word implementation specialist, because implementation does feel like a technical or linear process for a lot of people. Constructs like ongoing improvement, support to use evidence, knowledge-broker might be easier to use in our context.”

Discussion



How could you apply Implementation Specialist Competencies in your own work?

- How could the competencies be used to support workforce development?
- How could the competencies be used to reflect on and assess the quality of implementation practice?
- What additional support or resources would be needed to build the capacity needed for effective implementation practice?

BREAK

Co-Creation and Stakeholder Participation

Implementation is a Collaborative Act

Collaboration leads to:

- Knowledge and evidence that is more implementable
- Infrastructure that brings research evidence and implementation closer together
- Attention to local needs and increased relevance and impact of implementation activity
- Enhanced capacity and capability of implementation

Challenges to top down approaches to evidence use:

- Urgent challenges contribute to leaders moving too quickly
- Evidence and data are used to inform, not empower
- Lack of community engagement, trust and relationship building leads to lack of sustainability
- Need to emphasize capacity building for evidence selection, use and improvement

State of the Field – Scoping Review Results

Implementation frameworks in child, youth and family services – Results from a scoping review



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ABSTRACT

Background & objectives: Implementation frameworks are designed to articulate the actions and behaviors considered necessary for successful implementation of interventions, programs or services. Such frameworks have been increasingly used in social services for children, youth and families (which include family and parenting support, out-of-home care (foster care) placements, child protection, family violence, juvenile justice and community services). The purposes of this review were (a) to identify studies employing an implementation framework in this field; (b) map the literature to better understand these frameworks and the ways in which they are being applied; (c) to ascertain the ways in which implementation frameworks are being tested; and (d) to describe the current state of evidence surrounding their use in the field.

Method: For this scoping review, searches of the literature were conducted within PsycINFO, MEDLINE, CINAHL, ASSIA, Embase, Embase Classic, Social Work Abstracts, ERIC and Sociological Abstracts. Databases were searched for published, peer reviewed English language evaluation studies that applied - and reported on this application - implementation frameworks in the child, youth and family service sector. No limits were placed on years. Any type of study design was eligible from single case studies to randomized controlled trials.

Results: Out of a total of 8541 publications located, thirty-three met the inclusion criteria. They included eight frameworks that have been applied in the sector. Few of the identified frameworks were based on rigorous research designs. Common strategies used within the frameworks included staging implementation, key influences (e.g., competencies, organizational factors, leadership), stakeholder identification and engagement, and capacity measurement and building. Rarely were these approaches theoretically grounded or fully developed, and limited information was provided about their characteristics, development or interconnectedness. In short, research underpinning frameworks and their use has been meager, especially considering their proliferation in the field.

Conclusions: This review identifies a need to strengthen the conceptualization of core strategies that are integrated into implementation frameworks, including an articulation of their underlying logic. In the future, implementation science and practice may gain from moving away from comprehensive and complex implementation frameworks towards a more flexible, modular approach to implementation based on the application and combination of effective 'implementation core strategies'. Future research may also draw a more complete picture of the state of implementation frameworks by expanding search terms to also include other sectors and domains into systematic reviews.

Review and analysis of
implementation frameworks

(Albers et. al., 2017)

Scoping Review Results – Analysis

Broad range of stakeholders are involved in implementation process at frontline, organizational, community, and policy level.

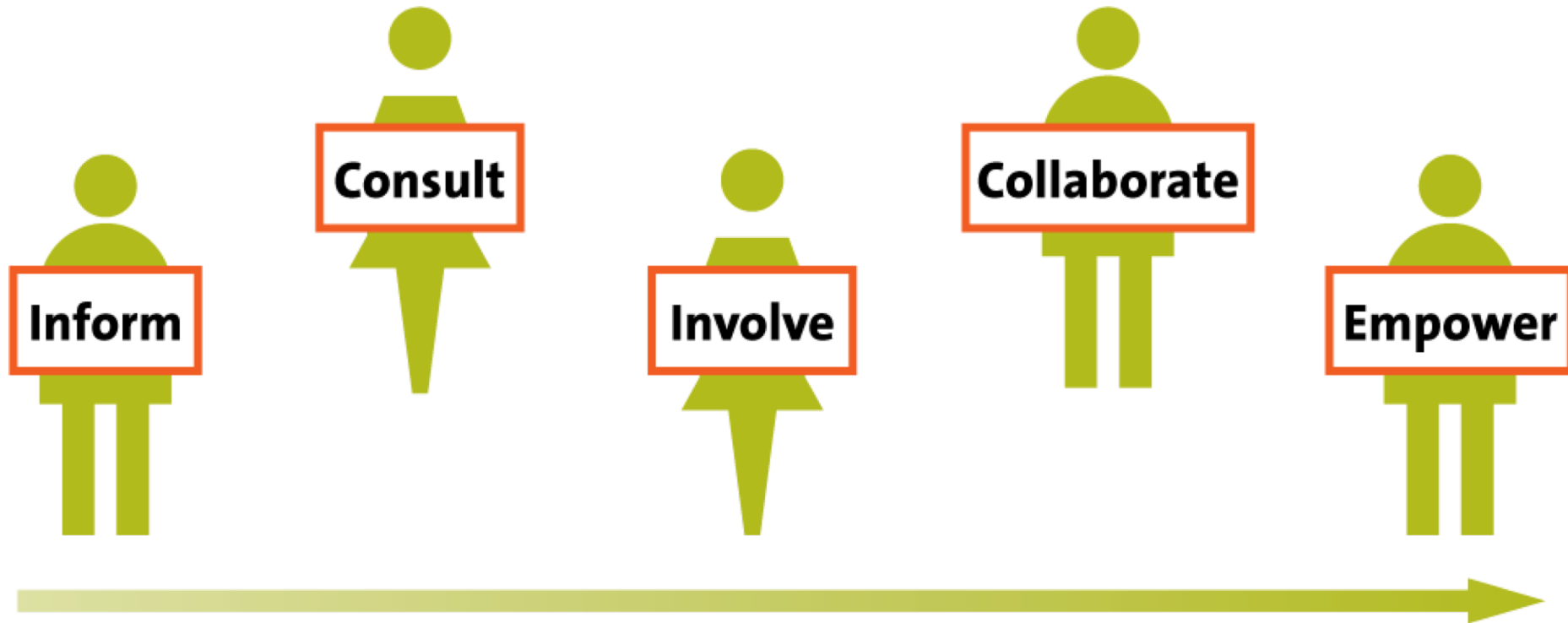
- Variety of stakeholders involved in “real life” implementation
- Different levels of stakeholder involvement in implementation varied among frameworks
- Lack of specificity of who, how, and when to involve different stakeholders including service users

Stakeholders in Implementation Science

Would finding more active roles for stakeholders (including service beneficiaries) in implementation science lead to better outcomes?

How can co-creation strategies address the power dynamics inherent in the development and implementation of evidence and innovations?

IAP2 Spectrum



Defining Co-Creation

Spectrum of Engagement

Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Co-create
To provide information	To obtain feedback	To work with to develop alternatives	To partner in each aspect of decision-making	To empower to make decisions

The Stakeholder Engagement Process

Selection and Evaluation

Involving stakeholders in the selection and evaluation of an intervention...

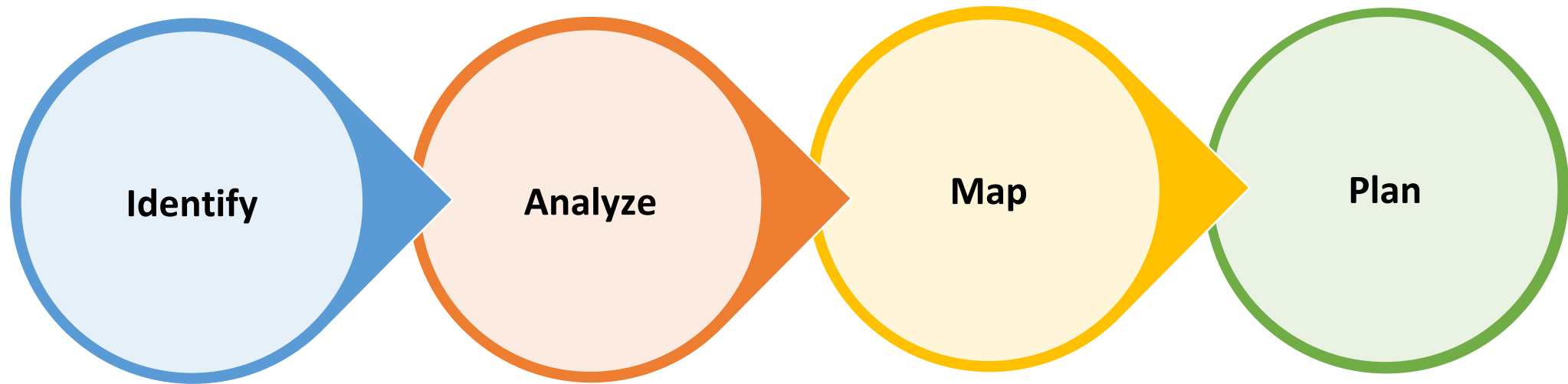
- ✓ Helps create awareness
- ✓ Generates buy-in
- ✓ Identifies and acknowledges any resistance
- ✓ Aids in the assessment of need, fit, feasibility, capacity, and readiness

Creating Readiness

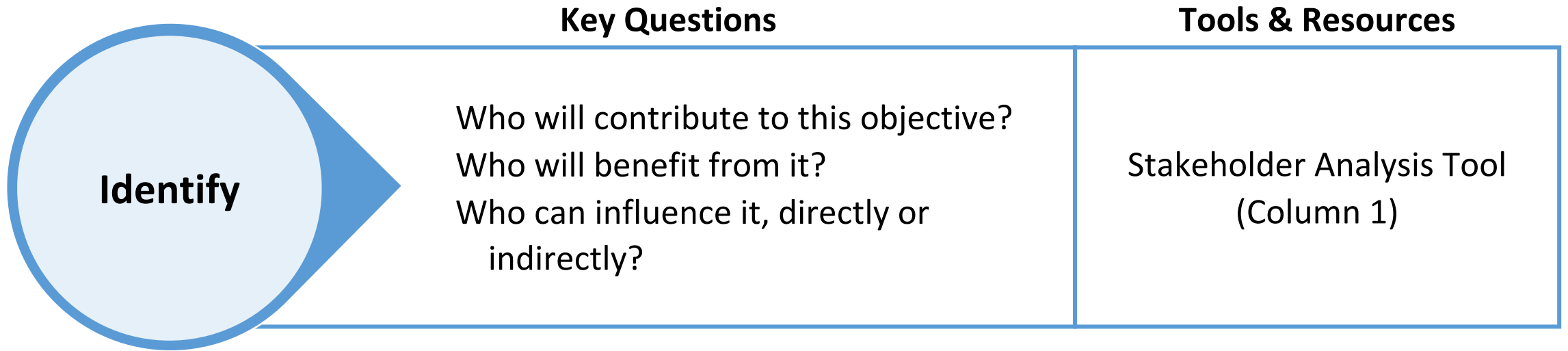
Leaders can create readiness by...

- ✓ Consulting all stakeholders in the decision-making process
- ✓ Giving clear direction on the change
- ✓ Acknowledging and validating any concerns

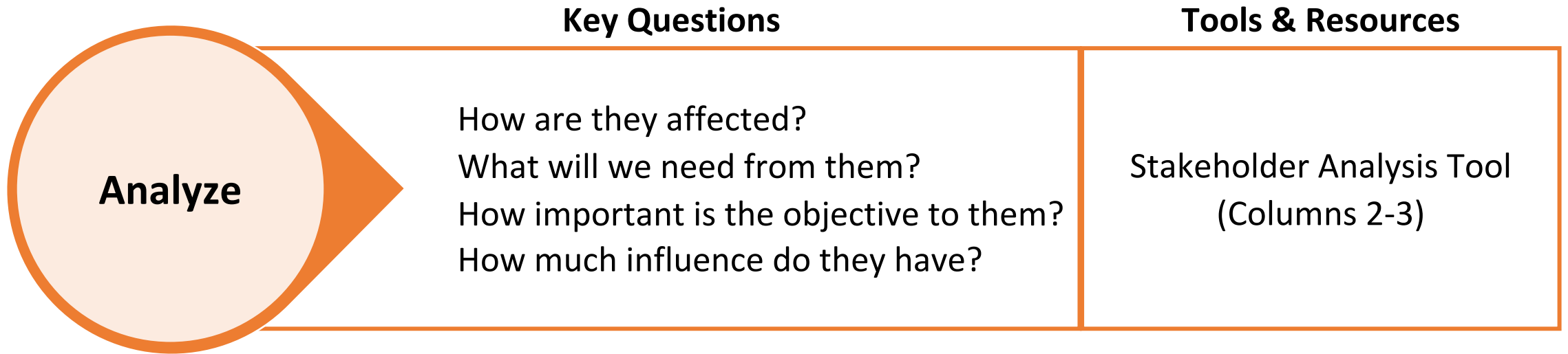
Stakeholder Engagement Process



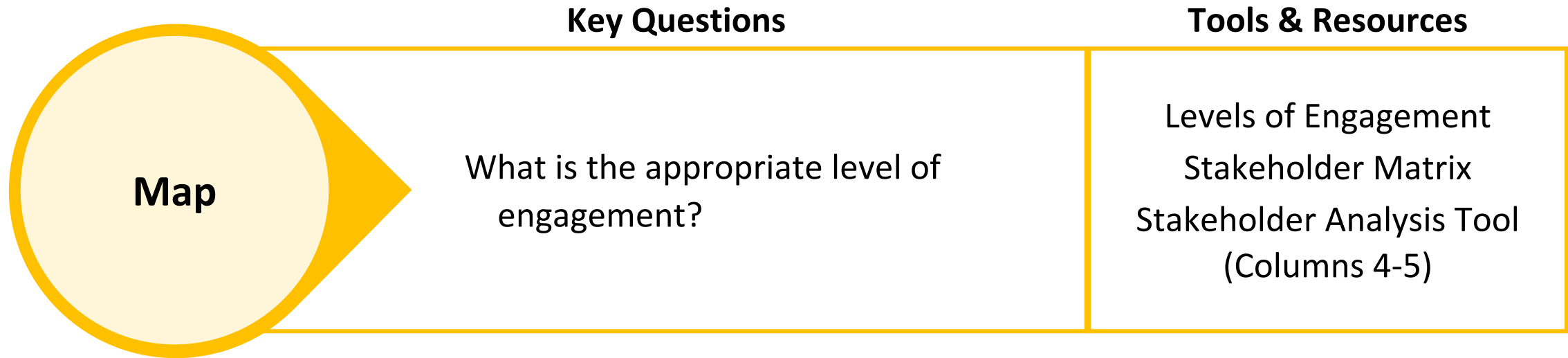
Step One – Identify



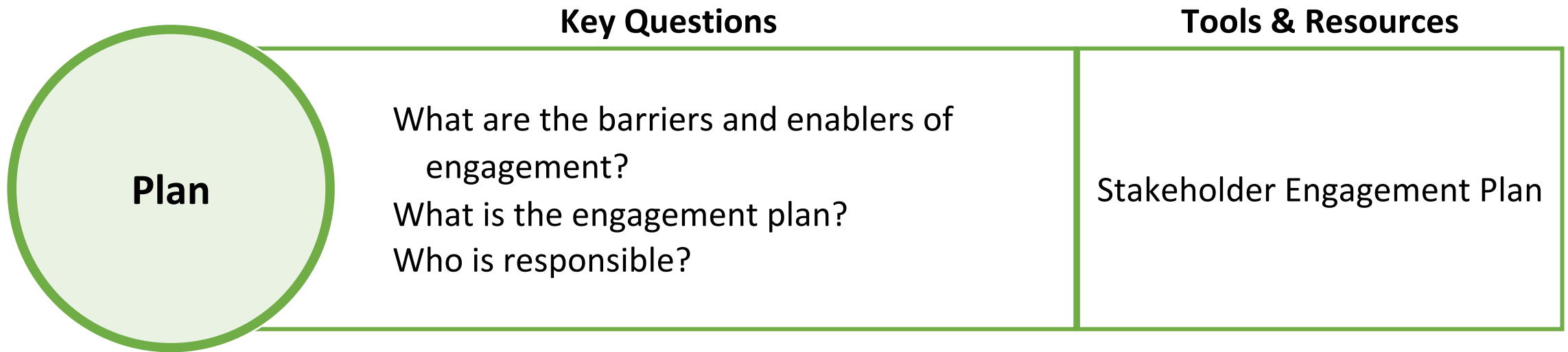
Step Two – Analyze



Step Three – Map



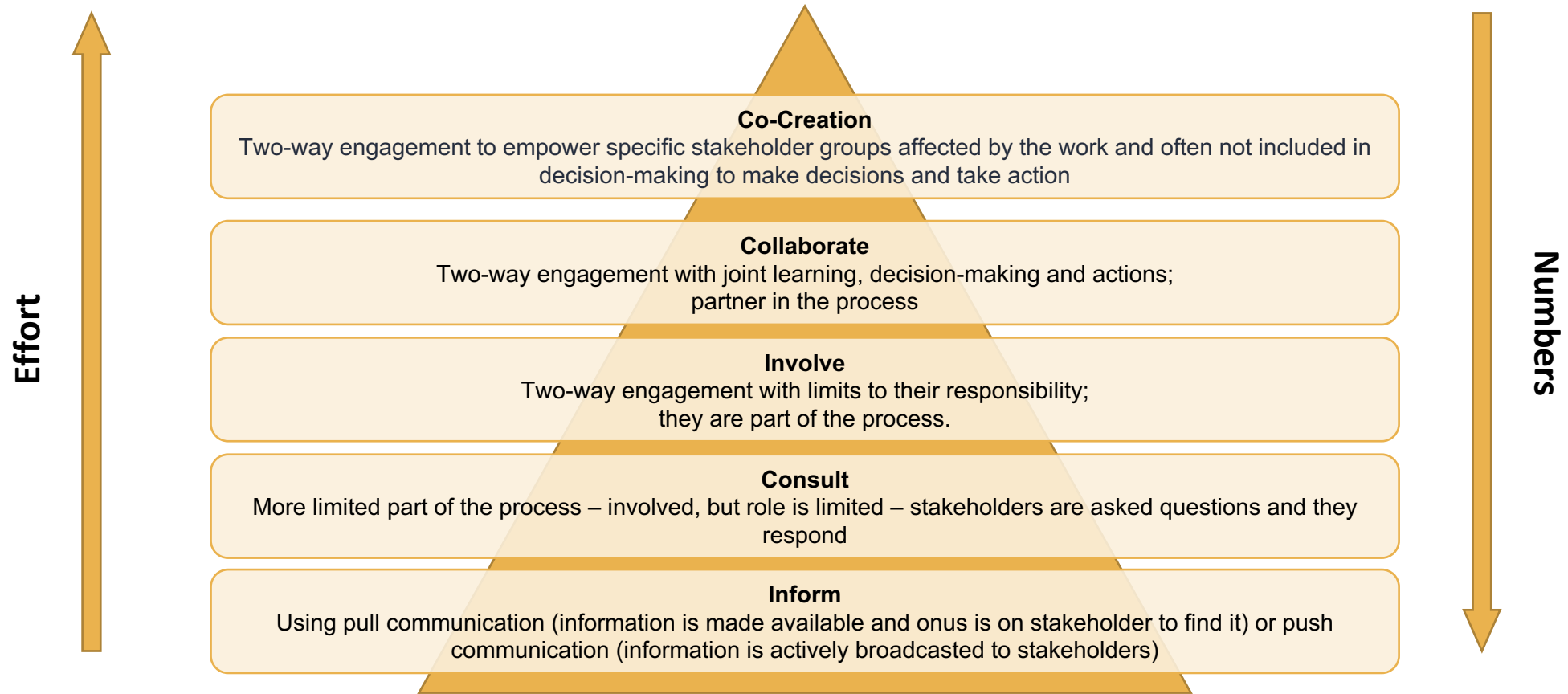
Step Four – Plan



Stakeholder Analysis Tool

Step 1 – Identify	Step 2 - Analyze		Step 3 – Map	
Name of Stakeholder	Stake in Objective(s)	Input Needed	Importance of Objective(s)	Influence over Objective(s)
<i>Stakeholder</i>	<i>How does it affect them/their interests?</i>	<i>What do we need from them for the objective(s) to be realized?</i>	<i>How important is the objective(s) to them? [Low/High]</i>	<i>How much influence do they have? [Inform/Consult/Involve/Collaborate/Co-create]</i>

Levels of Engagement



Stakeholder Matrix

Importance of the objective to the stakeholder

High

Inform or Consult

Collaborate or Co-Create

Low

Inform

Consult or Involve

Low

High

Influence of the stakeholder over the objective

Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Step 4 – Plan					
Stakeholder Name	Level of Engagement	Potential Barriers to Engagement	Potential Enablers of Engagement	Engagement Plan	Responsibility for Engagement
<i>Stakeholder</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Inform <input type="checkbox"/> Consult <input type="checkbox"/> Involve <input type="checkbox"/> Collaborate <input type="checkbox"/> Co-create	Prompts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What could they lose?</i> • <i>Lack of connections to them?</i> • <i>External influences?</i> • <i>Have they previously expressed resistance?</i> • <i>Are they likely to be resistant?</i> • <i>Is significant effort needed from them?</i> 	Prompts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How could they benefit?</i> • <i>Existing connections to them?</i> • <i>External influences?</i> • <i>Have they previously expressed interest?</i> • <i>Are they likely to be interested?</i> • <i>Is minimal effort needed from them?</i> 	With the barriers and enablers in mind, identify engagement activities with associated timings and resources. Activity examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Meetings</i> • <i>Phone calls</i> • <i>Press events</i> • <i>Letters</i> • <i>Newsletters</i> • <i>Websites</i> • <i>Advertising</i> 	<i>Name of individual(s)</i>

Activity



- 1. Identify an implementation challenge you currently face in your work or have experienced in the past.**
- 2. Individually, complete the Stakeholder Analysis plan.**
- 3. Pair & Share with a neighbor. Pick one stakeholder group and discuss:**
 - 1. How are you engaging or did you engage with this stakeholder**
 - 2. What has worked well? What has been unsuccessful?**
 - 3. Use the Stakeholder Matrix to reflect on how you might work with this stakeholder differently.**

Ongoing Improvement and Assessing Need and Context

Ongoing Improvement

Ongoing improvement includes dedicating time for reflecting or debriefing to promote shared learning and improvements along the way.

Implementation specialists support the use of quantitative and qualitative feedback at each stage of implementation, through regular individual, team, and stakeholder debriefings to support improvement (Damschroder et al., 2009).

Ongoing Improvement

Dynamic frameworks for sustainability and scale emphasize that change exists in the use of interventions over time, the characteristics of practice settings, and the broader system that establishes the context for how care is delivered.

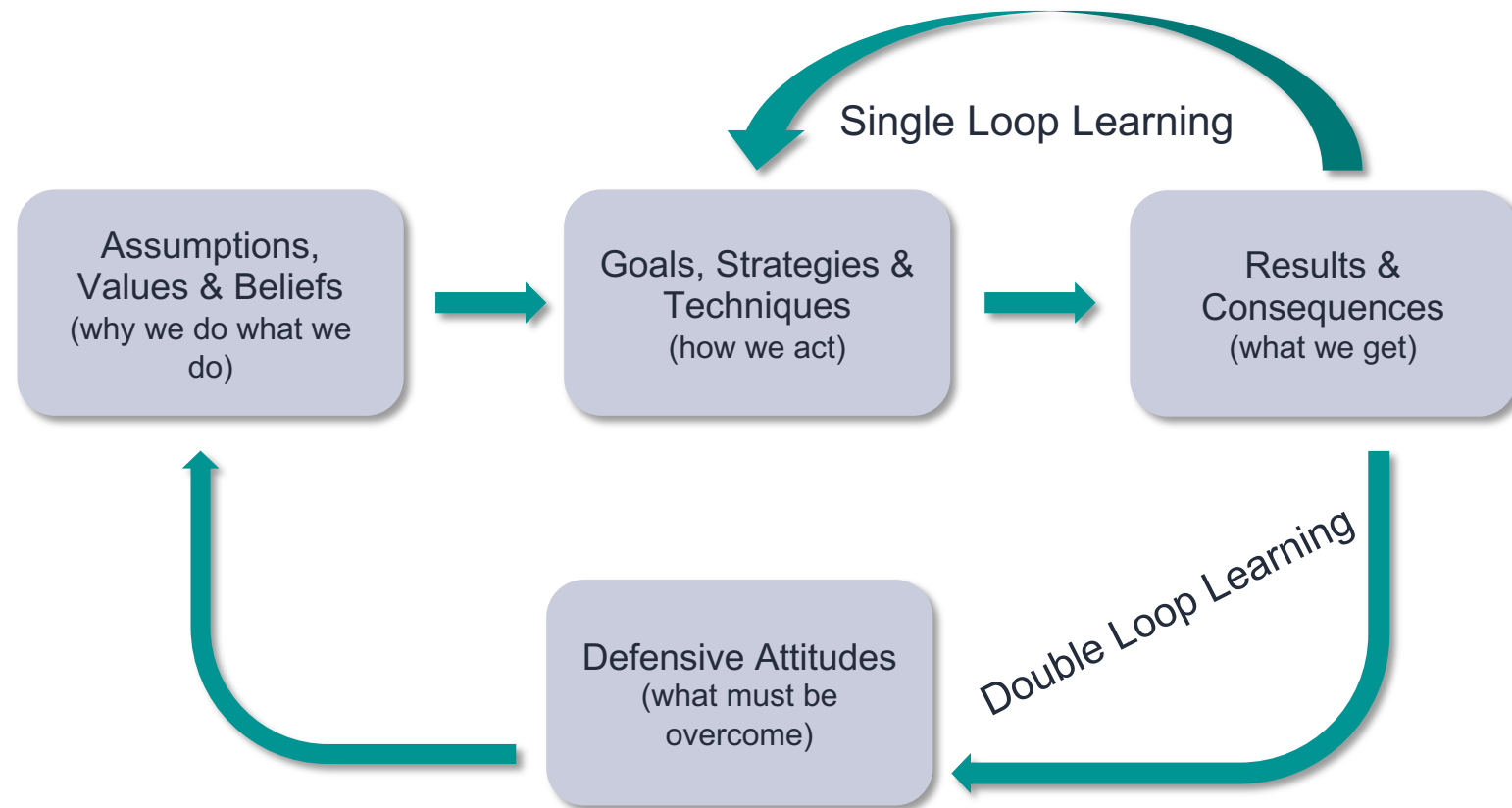
*Evidence is grown in research settings.
Evidence is optimized in practice.*

Improving Evidence – Challenges and Opportunities

Interventions can be continually improved, boosting sustainment in practice, and can enable ongoing learning among developers, interventionists, researchers and patients

Continuous Learning

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



Assessing Need and Context to Improve Change

- Systematic review evidence
- Barriers and facilitators to achieving contextual features that impact uptake and sustainability
- Implications for leaders



1. Organizational culture
2. Networks and communication
3. Leadership
4. Resources
5. Evaluation, monitoring, and feedback
6. Champions

Organizational Culture

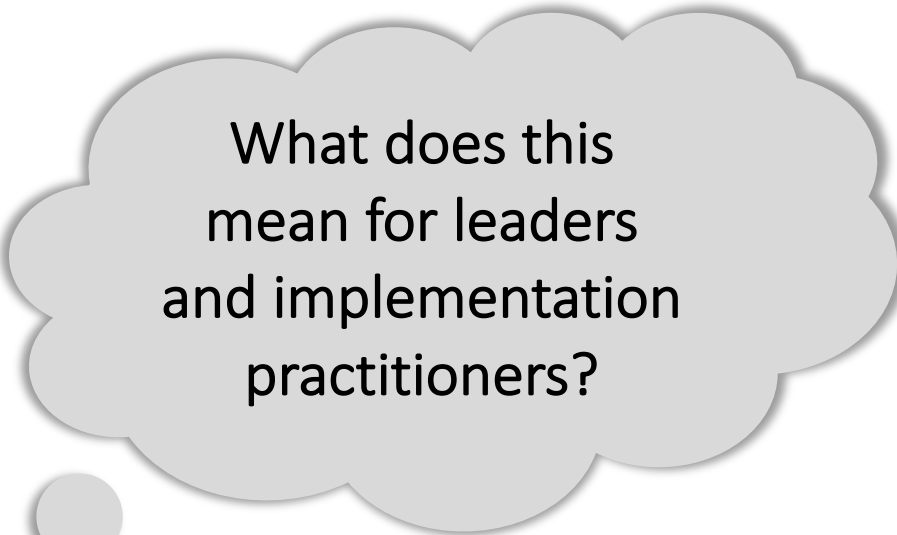


- Openness to trialing new innovations
- Culture of learning
- Culture of innovation
- Positive staff attitudes and behaviors toward initiative



- High level of autonomy in decision-making

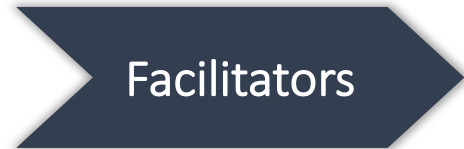
Organizational Culture

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What does this mean for leaders and implementation practitioners?

- Assess staff attitudes and seek to increase motivation
- Develop implementation teams
- Develop team meeting agendas through a learning lens (e.g., use of data and information, shared analysis and problem solving)

Networks and Communication

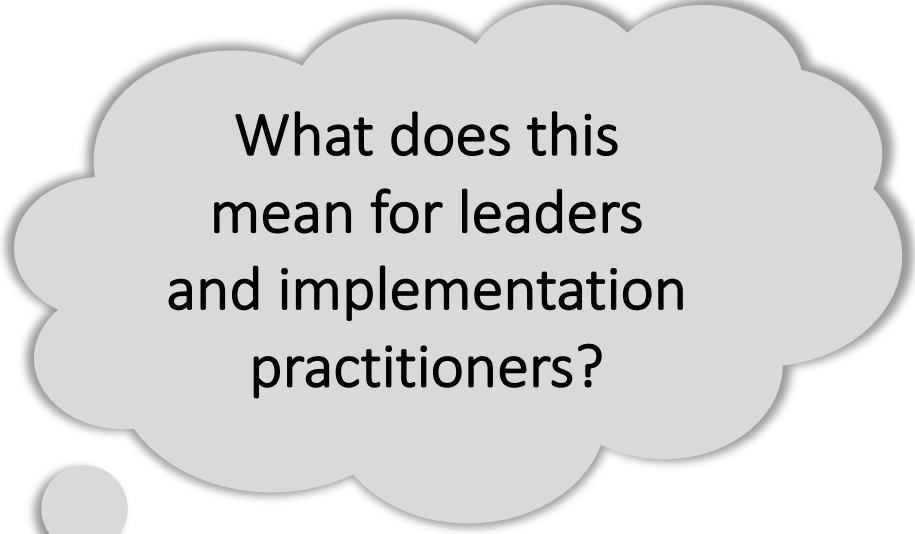


- Materially based partnerships to secure needed resources for implementation
- Symbolically based interorganizational **collaboration** to promote shared understanding of problem and solution and bolster legitimacy
- **Strong teams** with an ability to communicate effectively and capacity to problem solve
- Establishment of systems and processes to more effectively manage information and **communication** about the change initiative



- Poor multidisciplinary **teaming**

Networks and Communication



What does this mean for leaders and implementation practitioners?

- Develop implementation teams
- Identify purpose of partnerships (leverage resources, promote legitimacy, develop consensus)
- Develop and implement communication protocols with key stakeholders including service recipients such as families
- Use formal stakeholder engagement tool (Identify, Analyze, Map and Plan)

Leadership

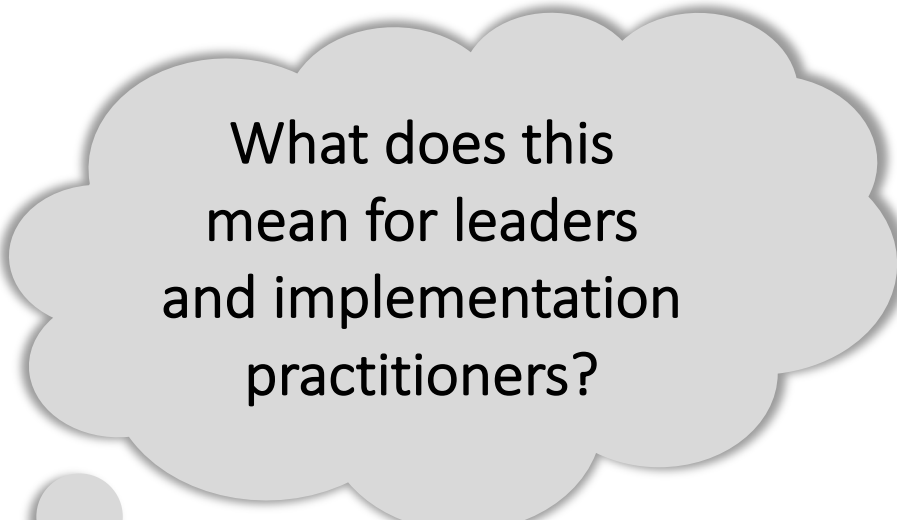
Facilitators

- Transformational leaders who promote clear roles, effective teamwork, and a culture of learning
- Leaders who serve as providers of 'new knowledge'
- Integration of new programs and processes into "business as usual" by senior leaders

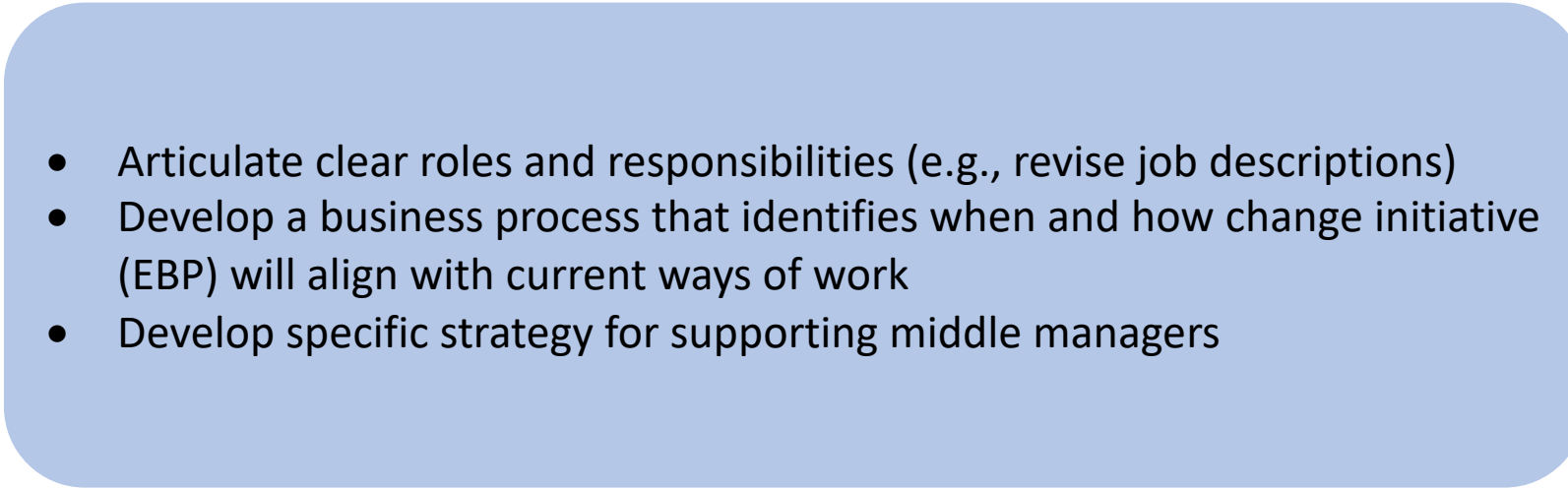
Barriers

- Middle managers who feel unsupported by senior leaders
- Leadership lacking in authority
- Leadership unsupportive of change
- Leadership that neglects to hold staff accountable for the change

Leadership

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What does this mean for leaders and implementation practitioners?

- 
- A light blue rounded rectangular box containing a bulleted list of three items.
- Articulate clear roles and responsibilities (e.g., revise job descriptions)
 - Develop a business process that identifies when and how change initiative (EBP) will align with current ways of work
 - Develop specific strategy for supporting middle managers

Resources



Facilitators

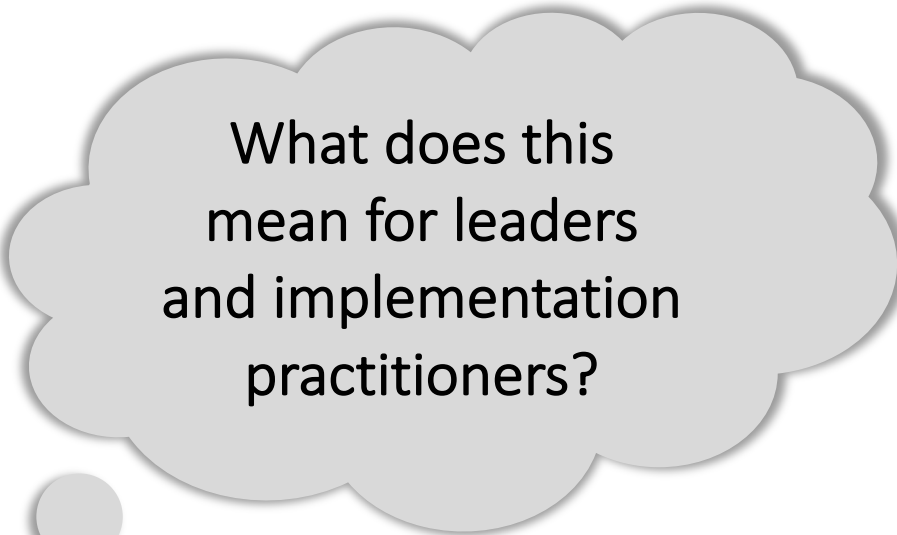
- **Financial resources** in the form of dedicated funding for the change initiative including staff time, training, coaching and monitoring, evaluation, and human resources
- **Staffing (workload)** that includes assigning dedicated staff to implementation activities
- Dedicated **time** for staff to implement the EBP
- **Education and training** that promotes interdisciplinary collaboration
- Continuously offered **education and training** opportunities (all training offered several times)



Barriers

- Insufficient **staffing** is a major implementation challenge for middle managers
- **Time** constraints including more urgent, competing demands for staff
- Unclear **educational materials** and reminders and inconsistent use of educational materials

Resources

A large, light gray thought bubble with a drop shadow, containing the text 'What does this mean for leaders and implementation practitioners?'. Three smaller, light gray circles of decreasing size trail off to the bottom left from the main bubble.

What does this mean for leaders and implementation practitioners?

- Be clear about how much and how many resources will be needed
- Dedicate specific resources (financial, human, and technological) to implementation
- Do not rely on existing resources; carve out what will be needed for staff time, etc.

Evaluation, Monitoring, and Feedback

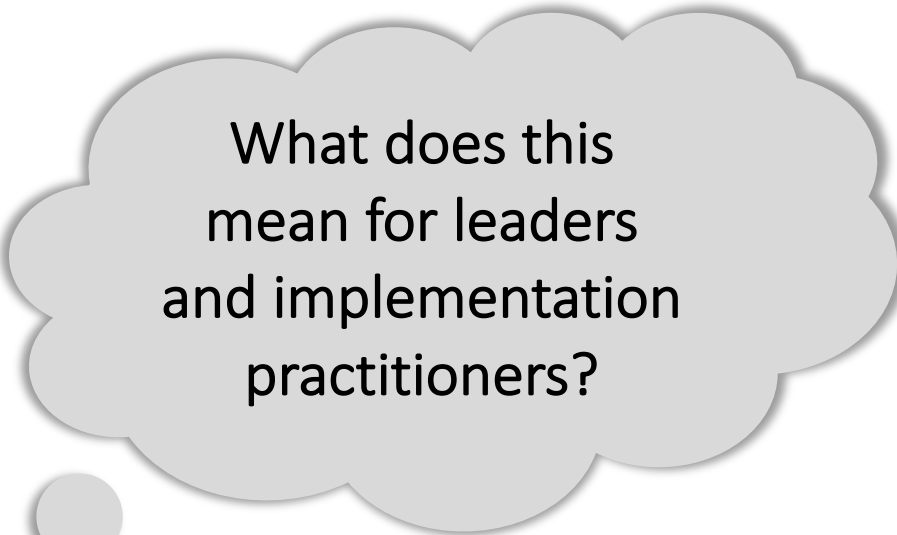


- Appropriate feedback mechanisms that preserve engagement of staff implementing the EBP
- Active and engaged leaders who seek feedback
- Soliciting feedback early from middle managers to assuage concerns



- Leaders who don't seek feedback from middle managers and staff using the EBP

Evaluation, Monitoring, and Feedback

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What does this mean for leaders and implementation practitioners?

- Develop and implement feedback protocols, including processes for both gathering and using feedback

Champions

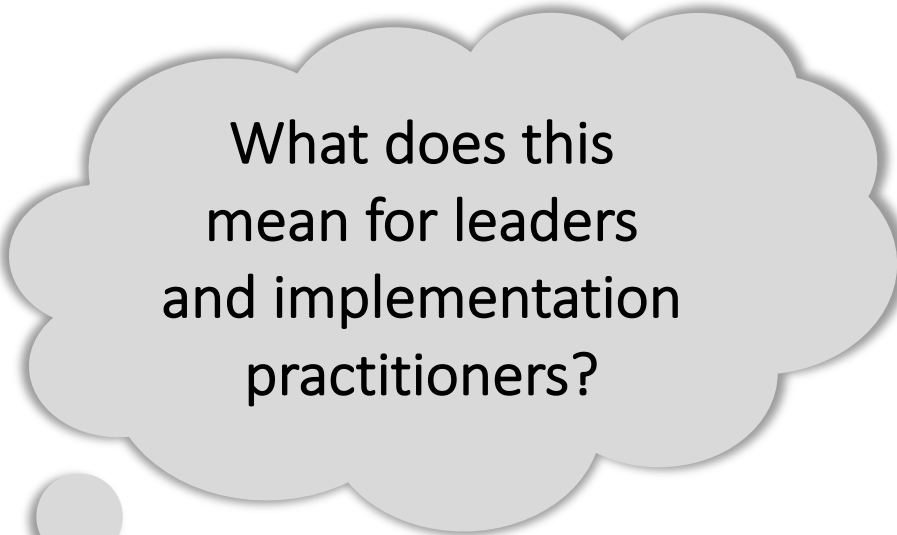


- Internal champions who are experts on the EBP
- Internal champions who are available for troubleshooting and for training other staff
- Champions who provide a sense of familiarity among colleagues and belief in the champion's expertise



- Lack of motivation by staff asked to use the EBP

Champions

A large, light gray thought bubble with a drop shadow, containing the text "What does this mean for leaders and implementation practitioners?". It is connected to the main content area by three smaller, light gray circles of increasing size.

What does this mean for leaders and implementation practitioners?

- Identify internal champions
- Communicate who champions are
- Allocate resources for champions
- Clarify the role of champions (e.g., who are champions supporting)
- Develop a communication plan for champions, implementation teams, and other key stakeholders

Activity



Turn to a neighbor and chose one construct to discuss:

- Organizational Culture
- Networks and Communication
- Leadership
- Resources
- Evaluation, Monitoring and Feedback
- Champions

Discuss:

1. How do the identified facilitators impact this contextual construct?
2. How do the identified barriers impact it?
3. What strategies have you used to address barriers and strengthen facilitators?

BREAK

Sustaining Change and Cultivating Leadership

Sustaining Change

Although a variety of factors create the conditions necessary for initial implementation, their presence or influence may diminish over time

Sustainability

Interventions are classified as sustained when the core elements are maintained or delivered at a sufficient level of fidelity after initial implementation support has been withdrawn, and adequate capacity exists to continue maintaining these core elements.

Even when service systems make the investment in research evidence, sustaining the potential of research evidence over the long-term has continued to be a challenge (Ghate, 2015; Chambers, Glasgow, and Stange, 2013). For example, Saldana (2015) found that only one third of widely disseminated evidence-based models are sustained in the long-term.

Lead to Sustain Change

Attention to collaboration is increasingly essential in publicly funded social service systems. Leaders must support:

- Diffusion of functions and responsibilities across multiple private agencies as the norm
- Effective collaboration and involvement of multiple stakeholders in order to limit the likelihood of chaotic operations, reduced accountability and lack of cohesion



Leading to Sustain Change

- Develop shared vision and mutual accountability
- Build on existing relationships
- Develop research-practice partnerships
- Facilitate problem-solving and resource sharing
- Maintain collaboration over time



Leading for Sustainability

Working in complex systems requires the engagement and influence of multiple stakeholders

This requires a different kind of leadership- moving from solo heroes to collaboration and teamwork

Leaders and Implementation Success

Having at least one effective champion improves the likelihood of implementation process

Having a collective network of leadership, with leaders at multiple levels of a system, is even better

(West et al. 2015)

Requires leadership power to be distributed among various people with expertise, capability and motivation, rather than being concentrated at the top of a hierarchy

Benefits of Effective Leadership

Creating a system where leaders flourish has many potential benefits:

- ✓ If leaders create positive, supportive environments for all staff, those staff are more likely to provide high quality and supportive services
- ✓ Where there is a culture of collective leadership, staff are more likely to intervene to solve problems and promote responsible, safe intervention
- ✓ Even if those directly implementing are not in high-level leadership positions themselves, they can seek to influence those who are, and be champions for the intervention themselves

Leadership – Supporting Implementation

Leaders can support implementation in different ways:

Relationship-oriented Activities

- Communicate with staff about relevant issues
- Provide reminders of important tasks or events
- Encourage inter-agency work and collaboration with specialists
- Recognize and reward efforts to change
- Visibly and symbolically support change

Change-oriented Activities

- Demonstrate commitment to change
- Reinforce vision and goals of change
- Recognize and understand difficulties with change
- Advocate for change internally and externally
- Lobby for additional resources internally and externally

Task-oriented Activities

- Conduct regular leadership meetings
- Clarify roles and responsibilities
- Prepare and modify plans and documentation
- Monitor performance and outcomes, and relay back where appropriate
- Procure resources, education, training and policies to reflect change

Discussion



Individual reflection:

1. As an Implementation Specialist, how do I support and cultivate leaders?
2. What does leadership look like for me in my role?
3. What support do I need to grow my skills to support leaders?

Discussion

Closing

Where do we go from here?



Reflections:

1. What are our next steps as Implementation Practitioners?
2. How can we grow professionally?
3. How can we build our field and understanding of our roles?

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The mission of the National Implementation Research Network (NIRN) is to contribute to the best practices and science of implementation, organization change, and system reinvention to improve outcomes across the spectrum of human services.