

IIESS Coaching Affinity Group

Introduction to Learn, Innovate,
Improve (LI²) and Implications for
Coaching Interventions

March 26, 2018

Agenda

- Introduction to Learn, Innovate, Improve
- Learn: clarify purpose of and opportunities for change
- Innovate: create a roadmap for change
- Improve: road tests
- Findings from road tests of coaching interventions
- Q&A

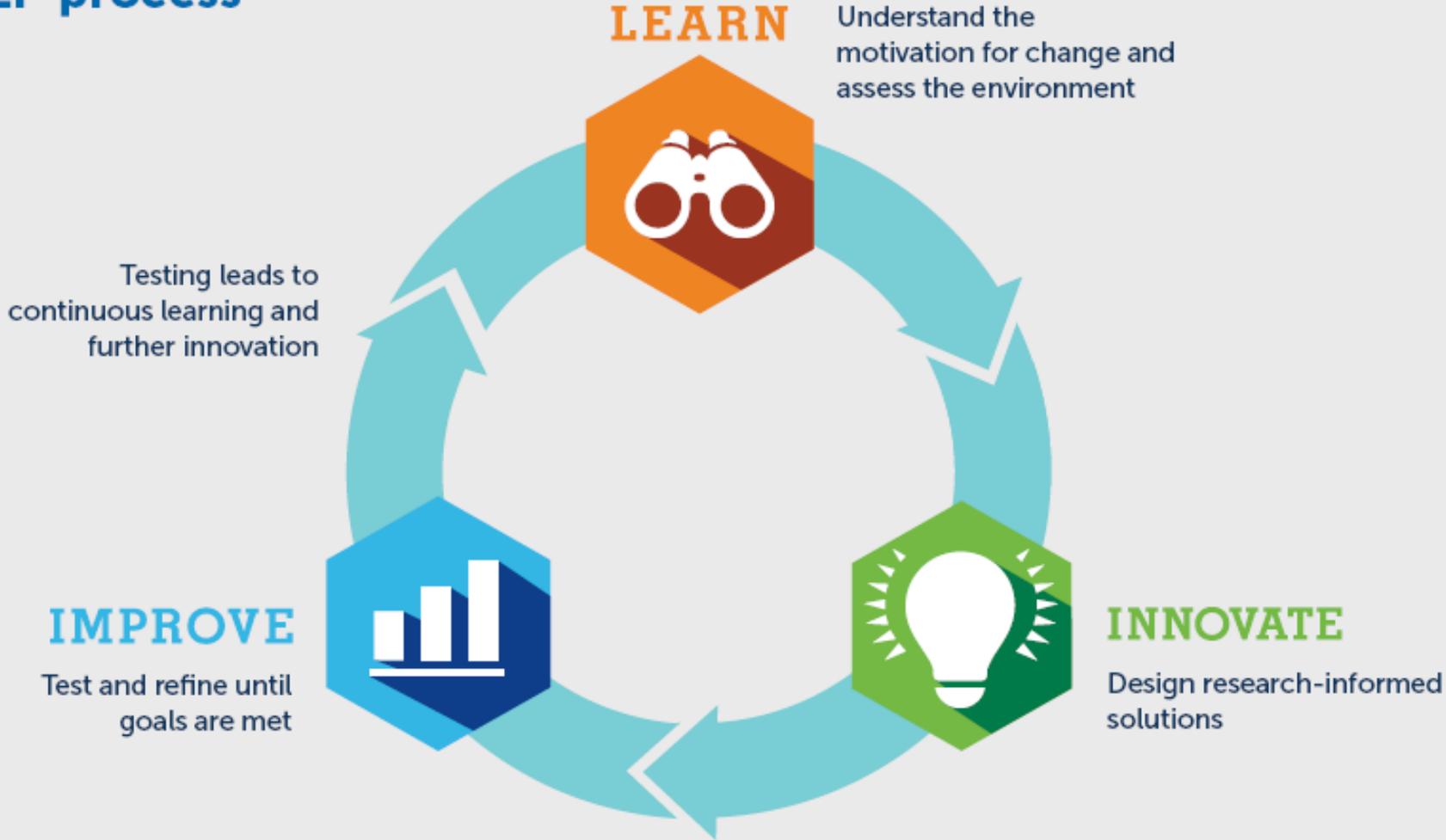
Introduction to Learn, Innovate, Improve

What is Learn, Innovate, Improve (LI²)?

- A change management process
- A framework for continuous quality improvement that embeds analytic methods into the process of designing and implementing changes
- LI² comprises three phases of replicable, evidence-informed improvement activities marked by close collaboration between practitioners and researchers

Learn, Innovate, Improve

The LI² process



How was LI² Developed?

- In partnership with ACF's Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation
- Adapted from the *Translational Science Model*, created by the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University
 - A process for integrating research evidence into intergenerational programs/services design
- Mathematica has used it extensively in TANF and workforce development programs, including numerous programs implementing coaching approaches

Key Features of LI²

- **Close collaboration between the TA team and program staff**
 - **Co-creative process: TA team inspires and supports program improvement but the program owns it**
- **Strong evidence and analytic approaches at every stage**
- **Capacity building to institutionalize the improvement process within the program environment**

Learn

- **Objective: Assess program environment and clarify the reason for making a program change**
 - Problem to be solved
 - Desire to innovate
 - Environmental readiness for change
- **Methods: TA team conducts qualitative assessments of the program environment, in person or by phone**
- **Results:**
 - Common understanding of the motivation for change
 - Assessment of program's readiness for change, including factors that could drive or inhibit change

Innovate

- **Objective:** Explore and design evidence-informed solutions that satisfy the motivation for change
- **Methods:**
 - Strategic planning with program leadership and staff to ensure that solutions map to desired outcomes
 - Analyze existing evidence and other resources to make informed design choices
- **Results:** A “road map for change” that defines the intervention in detail, specifies the desired program changes and corresponding outcomes, and articulates the causal links between them

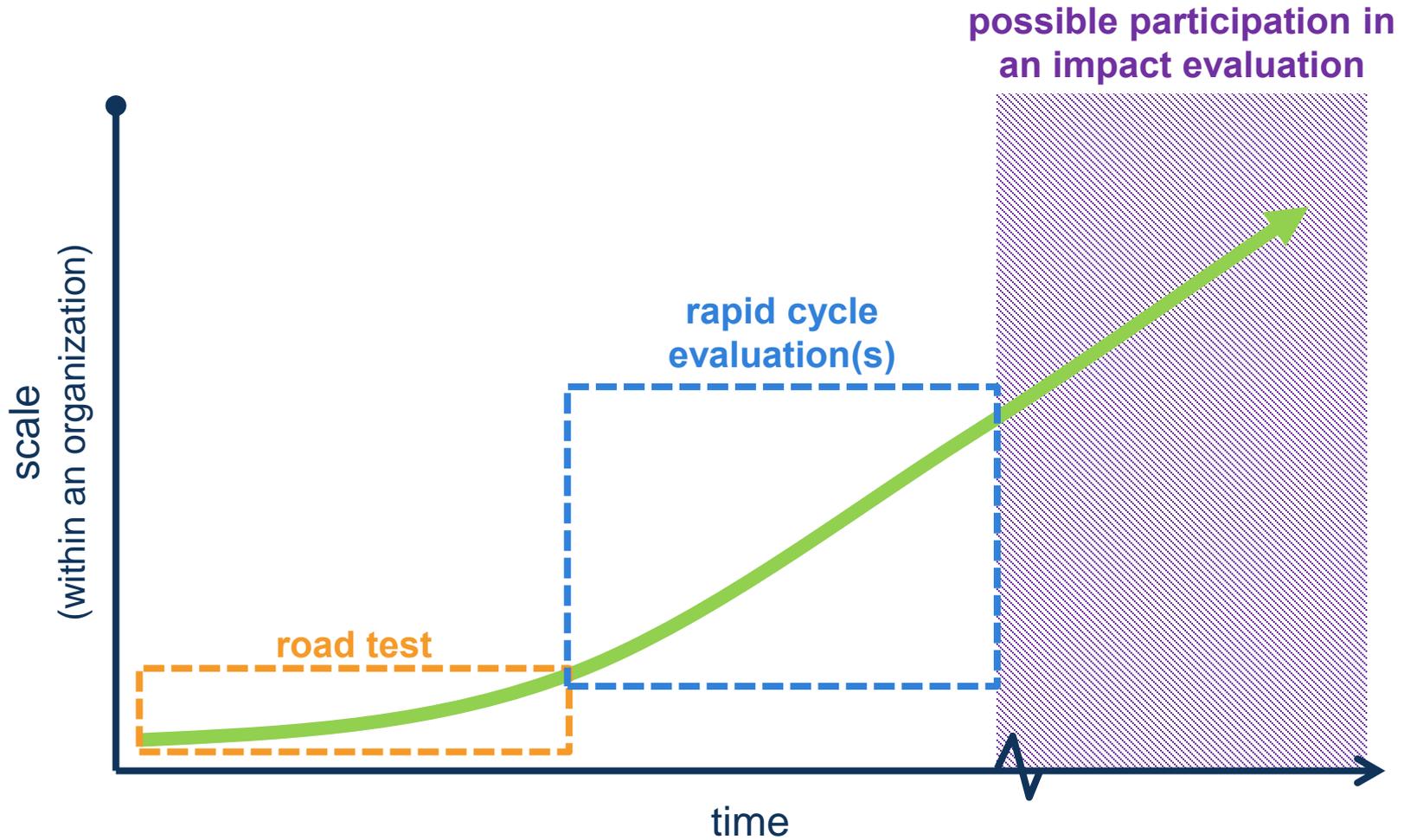
Tips for Successful Innovation

- **Innovation requires...**
 - Time to think
 - Space to try
 - Safety to fail
- **Drawing upon the best available**
 - Research evidence
 - Science of human behavior
 - Practice wisdom
- **Get the right mix of people involved and in the room**
 - Movers and shakers (program administrators and managers)
 - Keepers of the culture (supervisors, mid-level experienced staff)
 - Frontline (direct service staff)

Improve

- **Objectives:**
 - Execute a series of small-scale, analytic piloting processes, or “road tests,” to gather feedback and refine the intervention
 - Build the program staff’s capacity to collect, analyze, and use data for everyday decisions and continuous improvement
- **Methods:** Conduct iterative testing of interventions using a variety of methods for gathering feedback
- **Results:** Identify promising practices and suggest adjustments to strengthen the intervention
- Then test again...and again...

Continuous Improvement and Scaling



Learn: Clarify Purpose of and Opportunities for Change

Learn

- **Assess the commitment to and readiness for program change at all levels within the organization(s)**
- **Look for opportunities to streamline the program environment**
- **Focus on adaptation and integration**

Innovate: Create a Road Map for Change

Road Map for Change

- **Simply put, a “road map for change” is a plan for achieving a program’s goals**
- **The road map is the best case for why the innovation is going to be successful—like a story, a narrative**
 - **What will we do?**
 - **How will it change people or circumstances?**
 - **What will success look like?**

A “Recipe”

- Think of a road map as a recipe
 - Success hinges upon the clarity and specificity of the recipe
 - How do we get from these raw ingredients to a delicious pie?
 - Sometimes, you need to experiment with the ingredients a bit to achieve the best end product



Components of a Road Map

- **Strategies**
 - What will we do? How will we do it?
- **Targets**
 - What will we change within people or about their interactions?
 - Examples: attitudes, beliefs, relationships, skills
- **Outcomes**
 - What will success look like?
 - A measurable result
- **Moderators**
 - What might get in the way of success?
 - What might support or enhance our chances of success?

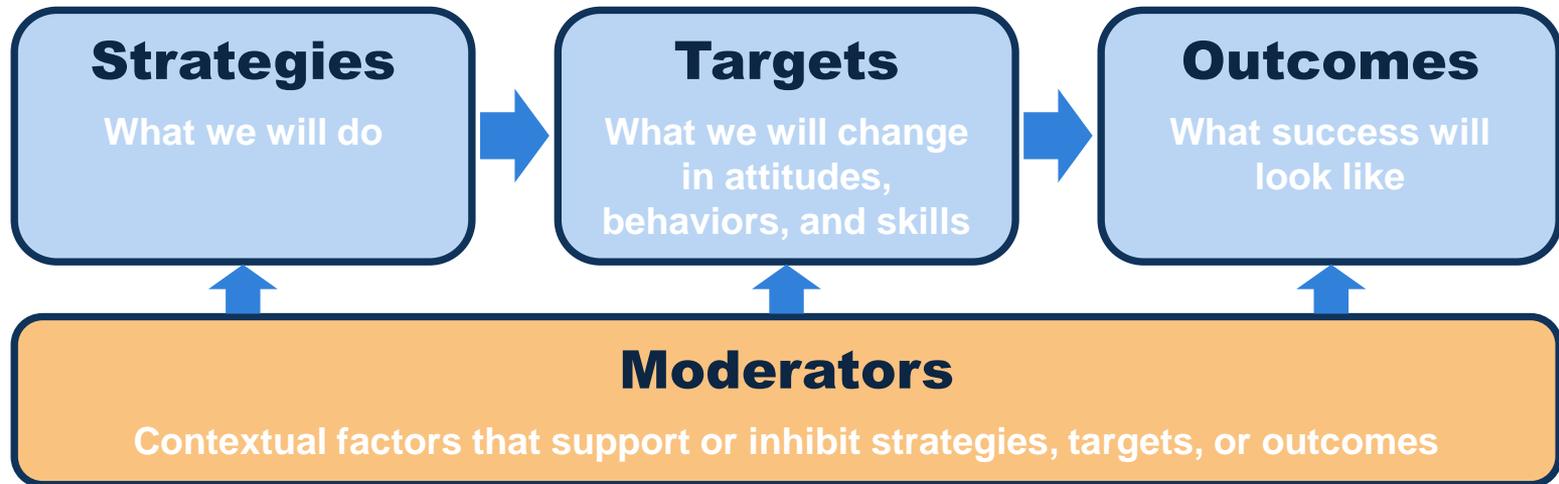
Begins with a Well-Defined Goal

- **What is the overarching goal of the change or innovation?**
 - Be specific and as narrow as possible
- **A goal gives focus to the road map**
 - What is it you're trying to achieve?
 - The answer to this question defines the outcomes (what success will look like) and provides some parameters for the strategies to use and the changes to target

Linking the Components: Causal Logic

- **Why** will these **strategies** targeting these behavioral or cognitive changes (**targets**) lead to these **outcomes**?
 - Is it reasonable to believe that the proposed strategies will lead to (cause) the targeted changes?
 - Is it reasonable to believe that the proposed outcomes will result from (be caused by) these targeted changes within and among people?
 - What might interfere with each of those steps?
- Important to step back and consider the road map as a whole
 - Is it a compelling, realistic story?

The road map



Example: Offering Program Incentives

Strategies

- Offer incentive for coming to orientation within 7 days
- Offer incentive for submitting timesheet on time

Targets

- Early customer engagement
- Client motivation, planning, task initiation, and organizational skills

Outcomes

- Engagement and enrollment in employment services within a week of referral
- Timesheets completed and submitted on time

I Have a Road Map, Now What?

- Use it to design a road test
- Treat the road map as a living document
 - It is meant to be revised and refined over time
- It also serves as a guide for performance management and continuous quality improvement

Improve: Road Tests

What is a Road Test?



Select staff

working with



a few clients each

trying out



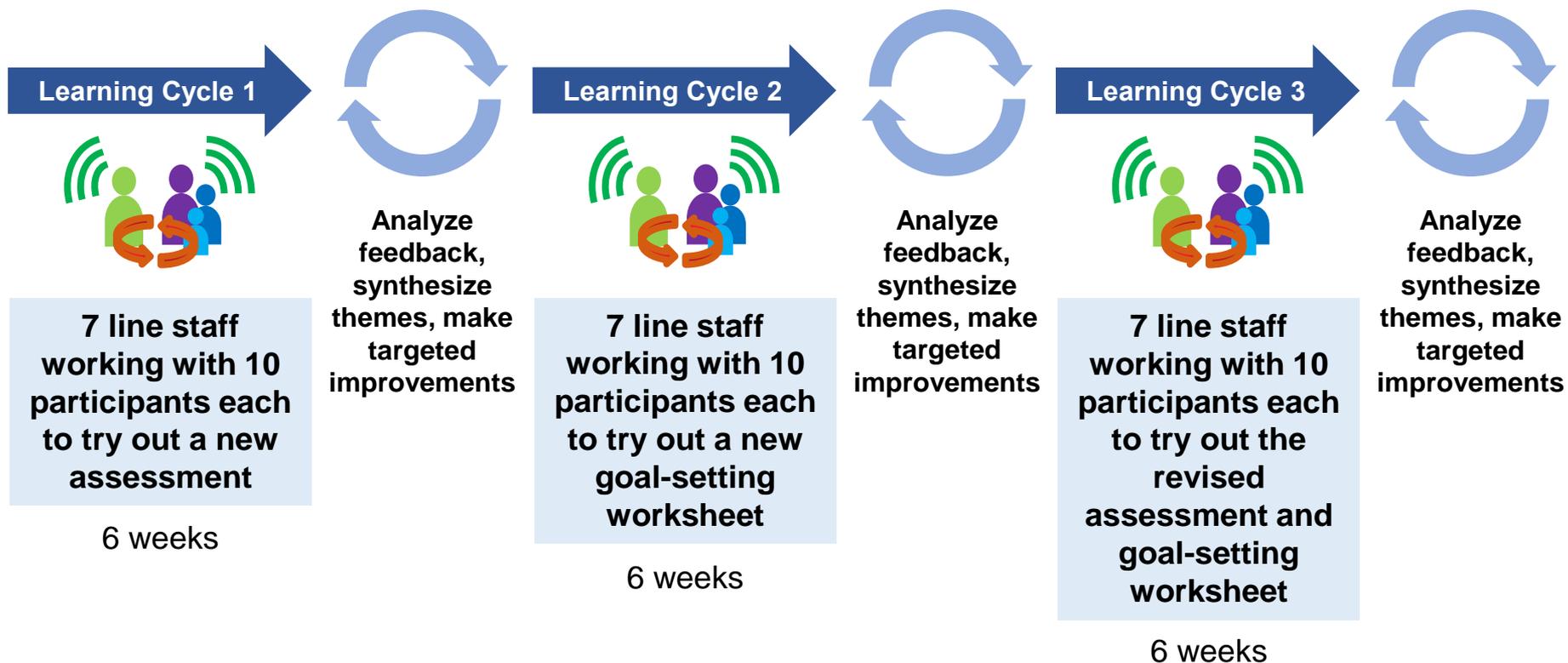
a particular strategy

providing



targeted feedback about their experience

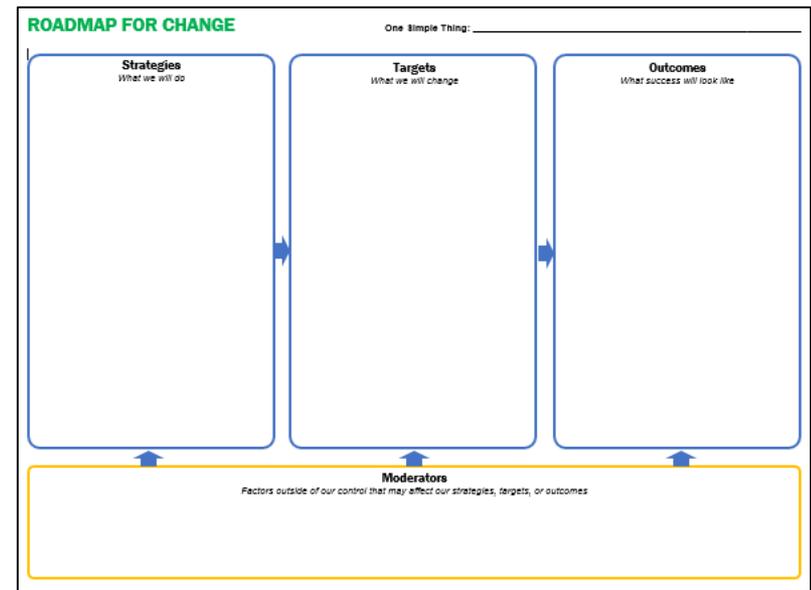
How Does a Road Test Work?



Getting Started

- Define the **learning objectives**
 - What do you want to learn from a road test?
 - Revisit the road map for change:
 - Look at **strategies** and **targets**
 - These are the attitudes, behaviors, and skills you are trying to affect
 - Your learning objectives should focus on these targets

How does *this strategy* affect *this target*? What worked well? What did not?



Timing

- A road test can include one or multiple feedback periods (“learning cycles”)
 - Which strategy or strategies should be road tested first?
 - Which strategy or strategies could be road tested later?
- How long will it take to implement each strategy?
 - This informs how long your cycle should be (typically 4 – 6 weeks)



Gathering Feedback

- **Whose perspectives do you need to understand?**
 - Staff (at which levels?)
 - Clients
 - Other key stakeholders?
- **What is the easiest and most efficient way to collect their input?**
 - Short questionnaires
 - Short interviews
 - Focus groups
- **Are there any interactions that are key to the success of your strategy? Consider observations.**

Gathering Feedback

- **How?**
 - Online tools: **Google Forms, SurveyMonkey**
 - Word documents or hard-copy questionnaires
- **Creating the forms**
 - **Basic information (about the client)**
 - **Specific, nitty-gritty questions about process, implementation, and impressions**
 - How did you do...?
 - To what extent were you able to...?
 - Did _____ require more of your time, less of your time, or about the same?
 - How did the client respond to...?
 - What was easy/challenging about using...?

Gathering Feedback

Example:

Rapid-cycle learning activity	5/30 – 6/3	6/6 – 6/10	6/13 – 6/17	6/20 – 6/24	6/27 – 7/1	7/4 – 7/8
Participant meeting questionnaire	Ongoing through all six weeks					
Observation of counselor by direct supervisor		1 st observation			2 nd observation	
Individual counselor interview		1 st interview			2 nd interview	
Group supervisor interview			1 st interview			2 nd interview
Check-in teleconference with Dr. Guare		1 st check-in		2 nd check-in		
Participant focus group						Focus group

Analyzing the Feedback

- **With the feedback you've gathered, look for...**
 - **Trends: what seemed to work well across the board? What didn't work well?**
 - **Experiences: Did clients generally have a positive, negative, or mixed experience?**
 - **Staff response: Was the strategy easy or challenging to implement? What issues arose? What additional support, training, or clarification would help?**
 - **Revisit your roadmap: Are you seeing the target changes play out as you expected?**
- **A few cautions**
 - **Do not generalize your findings**
 - **Do not assume an "impact" or "causality" (X led to Y)**

Refining the Innovation

- **Discuss the feedback and the trends you identified**
 - What seems to be playing out as you expected?
 - What is surprising or unexpected so far?
- **Are there any clear takeaways about the strategies?**
 - Does anything need to be changed based on an observed trend?
 - Do staff need additional training or support?
 - Are there strategies that should be abandoned or reworked?
- **Do you need to ask different questions to better understand what's going on?**

Findings from Road Tests of Coaching Interventions

Goal4 It!™

- **Behavioral science-informed coaching approach**
- **Explicit focus on incorporating elements of self-regulation and goal achievement within public agencies**
- **Grounded in strategies for improving child and family outcomes**
 - **Strengthen core skills**
 - **Reduce sources of stress**
 - **Support responsive relationships**

Road Tests Conducted

- **Larimer County (Fort Collins), CO and Ramsey County (St. Paul), MN**
 - Six week learning cycles with weekly survey feedback from staff
 - Staff instructed to try out the tools and process with clients
- **San Francisco (Project 500), CA and Jefferson County (Golden), CO**
 - Six week learning cycle followed by two week “boot camp” with daily team meetings (supervisor summary emails) and daily survey feedback from staff (and clients in Jeffco)
 - Staff instructed to use at least one tool during each client meeting

Key Findings

- **Implementing coaching practices in public agencies is often complicated, particularly in systems with complex regulatory environments (e.g., where you add, subtract)**
- **Policies and procedures and performance measures that are not well-aligned with coaching can create mixed messages for staff and customers (e.g., TANF WPR)**
- **For maximum benefit, practice coaching and goal achievement at all levels within the organization, especially with staff**
- **Coaching and goal-oriented exchanges do not necessarily take more time or lower caseloads; instead, it is a fundamental shift in how customers and staff interact**

Key Findings (cont.)

- **Focusing on coaching has implications for staff including hiring, defining staff roles, and training and skill development**
 - **Fixers** – create more focus and discipline with staff customer interactions; keep them out of problem-solving mode
 - **Nixers** – move them from transactional to meaningful, individualized conversations about the customer's goals
- **Goal progress and customer skill building requires frequent and regular follow up with customers**
- **Accountability is central to goal progress and improving staff and customer outcomes**
- **Fail fast!!!**

Discussion / Q&A

For More Information

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