Creating A Strong Foundation for Change

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES
Office of Family Assistance

TANF Works!

Integrating Innovative Employment & Economic Stability Strategies into TANF Programs

COACHING FOR SUCCESS SERIES | 2019 - 14

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Introduction

This guide is designed to be a resource for programs working with low income families to use when anticipating or implementing a new approach, such as coaching, to doing business. It helps you to systematically – and honestly – look at your foundational readiness for change, so that the improvements you want to make will take root and grow in fertile ground. Making time and space to look deeply into your organization can offer the opportunity to reconsider what quality service delivery looks like, help you discover how coaching (or other techniques) could be a tool, and plan efficiently on where it fits best into your existing context.

Before Implementing a New Approach

A change in leadership, a government mandate, or a strategic planning process – these are incidents that often inspire programs to pause and ask themselves: Why do we do the work we do? What are we achieving? How do we want to change our approach to have even greater impact? An early thoughtful process to organizational change can increase the success of any new initiative.

After Starting a New Approach

If you are already implementing a new approach like coaching, it is still worthwhile to pause and ensure you have a solid foundation for the changes you are making. You can take time now to revisit and see the connections between how you are operating and how it affirms your assumptions about impact. Other questions during implementation can include: What gaps do we have now? How faithful are we being to the plan we're implementing?

APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY AS A TOOL FOR ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

Appreciative inquiry is an approach to organizational development that has been used to build capacity and bring about positive change. It is based on the simple idea that human beings move in the direction of what we ask about. A focus on problems inadvertently magnifies them. Groups that study human values and achievements tend to see an increase in these.

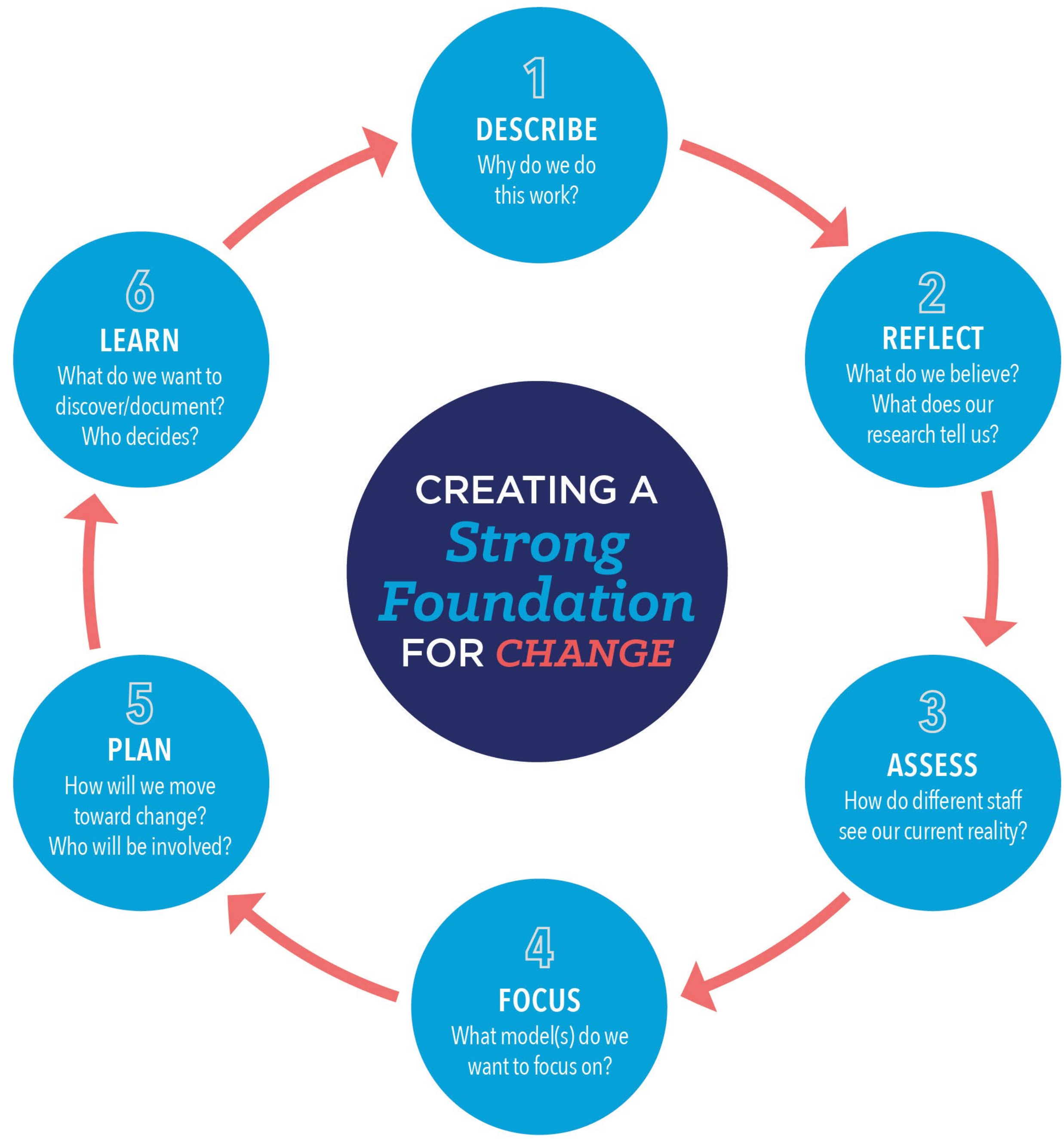
Appreciative inquiry deliberately asks positive questions to ignite constructive dialogue and inspire action. Change research shows that innovative methods that evoke stories and positive images of the future have the greatest potential to produce deep and sustaining change.

You will find suggestions for appreciative inquiry questions in boxes, like this one, throughout the document. For more information about the principles of appreciative inquiry and how to craft appreciative inquiry questions on your own, see **Resources.**

OVERVIEW

Creating a Strong Foundation for Change

This graphic lays out six (6) stages that organizations or programs can use to prepare themselves as they embark on a significant change to how they approach their work. Descriptions of each stage are on the next page with examples following.



OVERVIEW

Creating a Strong Foundation for Change

1

DESCRIBE THE IMPACT YOU WANT TO HAVE

Why do we do this work?

It is important to periodically step back and clarify, with a few words, why you do the work that you do (even if you think that is clearly understood by everyone). This creates a critical foundation for all the other stages in the change process.

2

REFLECT ON YOUR EXPERIENCE AND BELIEFS

What do we believe? What does our research tell us? Where can we begin?

Strong organizations are clear about their underlying beliefs and driving philosophy. Addressing beliefs in a safe environment can reduce staff resistance and improve uptake of new ideas. Examine what experience and research say about the impact a new approach might have on your program and clients.

3

ASSESS YOUR OWN READINESS

How do different staff see our current reality?

Before jumping into a new approach, begin an honest and comprehensive assessment of readiness with all levels of staff. There are a variety of tools to help you do this more generally or with a specific focus in mind.

4

FOCUS ON A MODEL THAT SUITS YOUR CONTEXT

What model(s) do we want to focus on?

For long-lasting impact, decide on one approach or one component of a model and implement with high quality. For example, coaching models look similar, but vary in terms of their implementation structures. Find the one that works in your context with your resources.

5

PLAN FOR STARTING SMALL

How will we begin to move toward this change? Who will be actively involved?

Before going big with a new approach, start small by testing out discrete components of the new approach within one corner of your program. In a short timeframe, with a small group of people, you can learn an enormous amount and make tweaks for the next phase.

6

LEARN ALONG THE WAY

What do we want to discover/document as we go? Who decides?

When programs or organizations want to test out a new approach, they are often operating with (unspoken) assumptions about the effect that change will have. Name those assumptions in the form of learning questions and discover the answers as you test them out.

AN EXAMPLE
Family Independence Initiative

This page illustrates how the steps may play out for an organization devoted to poverty reduction. Family Independence Initiative (FII) believes that: "The war on poverty has made living in poverty tolerable – but has not made it escapable."
Visit **www.fii.org.**

1 DESCRIBE THE IMPACT YOU WANT TO HAVE

Why do we do this work?

We do this to help families exit poverty.

2 REFLECT ON YOUR EXPERIENCE AND BELIEFS

What do we believe? What does our research tell us? Where can we begin?

We believe that low-income people can support and inspire each other to move out of poverty. We believe that funds do more when put directly into the hands of these families than when invested in programs that prescribe what families ought to be doing.

3 ASSESS YOUR OWN READINESS

How do different staff see our current reality?

We talk with each organization interested in this approach to explore whether they share the philosophy that undergirds this entire approach and are willing to embrace it fully.

4 FOCUS ON A MODEL THAT SUITS YOUR CONTEXT

What model(s) do we want to focus on?

We focus on a cost-effective anti-poverty approach that combines supportive social networks, benchmarking of progress, and personalized paths out of poverty. This approach has been tested by FII in several cities around the U.S. and proven to have great potential.

5 PLAN FOR STARTING SMALL

How will we begin to move toward this change? Who will be actively involved?

The FII model has been implemented in a variety of contexts with established principles and guidelines for implementation. Begin with education of staff and leadership on the radical principles behind the model and using an organizational goal-setting process to choose program components to start.

6 LEARN ALONG THE WAY

What do we want to discover/document as we go? Who decides?

Learning Questions: What would happen if low income families we work with had access to some of the funds traditionally spent on professionals to help families? What would be the result if families were encouraged to turn to friends and social networks for help and direction?

1 DESCRIBE THE IMPACT YOU WANT TO HAVE

Why do we do this work?

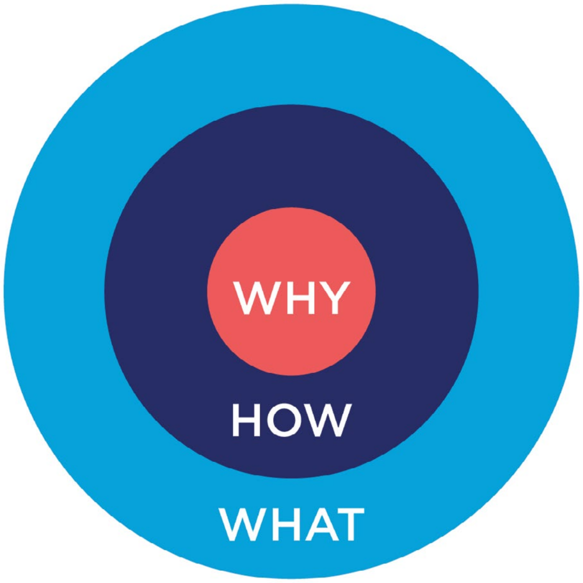
It is important to periodically step back and clarify, with a few words, why you do the work that you do (even if you think that is clearly understood by everyone). This creates a critical foundation for all the other stages in the change process.

Asking the "why" question pulls us out of the day to day demands and re-connects us with our motivational driver. Your answer to the "why" question will generate a vision – a vision of what will be better in the world because of the work you do. The Golden Circle developed by Simon Sinek shows the power of starting with why. **(www.startwithwhy.com)**

Research on the 100 top nonprofits in the US underscores the importance of vision statements that are: inspirational, clear, memorable, and concise (average 10 words, but can be as short as 3 words).

Here are a few to get you going:

- A hunger free America
- A world without Alzheimer's
- Our children have a place to play, everyday



WHAT
Every organization on the planet knows WHAT they do. These are products they sell or the services they offer.

HOW
Some organizations know HOW they do it. These are the things that make them special or set them apart from their competition.

WHY
Very few organizations know WHY they do what they do. WHY is not about making money. That's a result. It's a purpose, cause or belief. It's the very reason your organization exists.

2013 Simon Sinek, Inc.

Have the conversation with colleagues at all levels of the organization who will be involved in this change. Hear people's own visions and let this drive your ongoing work together. This information can help you make decisions on the mindset of your organization, show if leadership and staff are on the same page, and help guide your communications about proposed changes.

To help colleagues get their thoughts away from the day-to-day responsibilities and measures, try using the appreciative inquiry questions below. These kinds of questions can warm people up to what they believe about themselves, the clients, and the organization.

APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY QUESTIONS

Describe the Impact You Want to Have

- Without being humble, describe what you value most about yourself, your work, your organization.
- Describe three concrete wishes for the future of this organization or for yourself.
- How do you stay professionally affirmed, renewed, enthusiastic, and inspired? Describe your three concrete wishes for the future of your profession.

2 REFLECT ON YOUR EXPERIENCE AND BELIEFS

What do we believe? What does the research say? Where can we begin?

Strong organizations are clear about their underlying beliefs and driving philosophy. Addressing beliefs in a safe environment can reduce staff resistance and improve uptake of new ideas. Examine what experience and research say about the impact a new approach might have on your program and clients.

1 *Name assumptions about the change you want to make*

To get at assumptions as a team, delve into questions such as the Appreciative Inquiry Questions below for ideas. Some assumptions around coaching you may hear include:

- Through coaching, customers will visualize where they want to be and be encouraged to make their own choices
- Coaching will move staff's attention away from placement/ performance data
- Coaching will take longer and therefore will serve fewer clients better

2 *Find relevant research*

Whether or not staff ask for the data, they deserve to hear it. What is the evidence base for this approach? What have other programs discovered when making this change? See **Resources** for a sample list of Research-Based Approaches for Program Change that you might want to use as a jumping-off point for your own research. Reach out to other programs that have experimented with this approach and ask for their insights.

3 *Examine your clients' experience and determine where change can begin*

Map the client experience. Get input from staff and clients to make this picture shine with reality. Wrestle with ideas across the meeting table and share stories to uncover assumptions and possibilities for change. Challenge processes that might be operating on auto pilot, and explore which program constraints are fixed and which you might reconsider. Such an analysis creates the way for change.

Below are some appreciative questions useful at this stage in the change process.

APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY QUESTIONS
Assumptions and Beliefs

These can be used in meetings, surveys or focus groups:

- Describe an incident when you or someone you know went the extra mile to deliver what the customer wanted when they wanted it. How did it make a difference to the customer?
- Describe a time when you were part of a team that had a high level of trust and respect among the members. What made it possible to establish trust in that group?
- Think of a person for whom you had a great deal of respect but didn't always agree with. What made it possible for you to maintain respect for that person?

3 ASSESS YOUR OWN READINESS

How do different staff see our current reality?

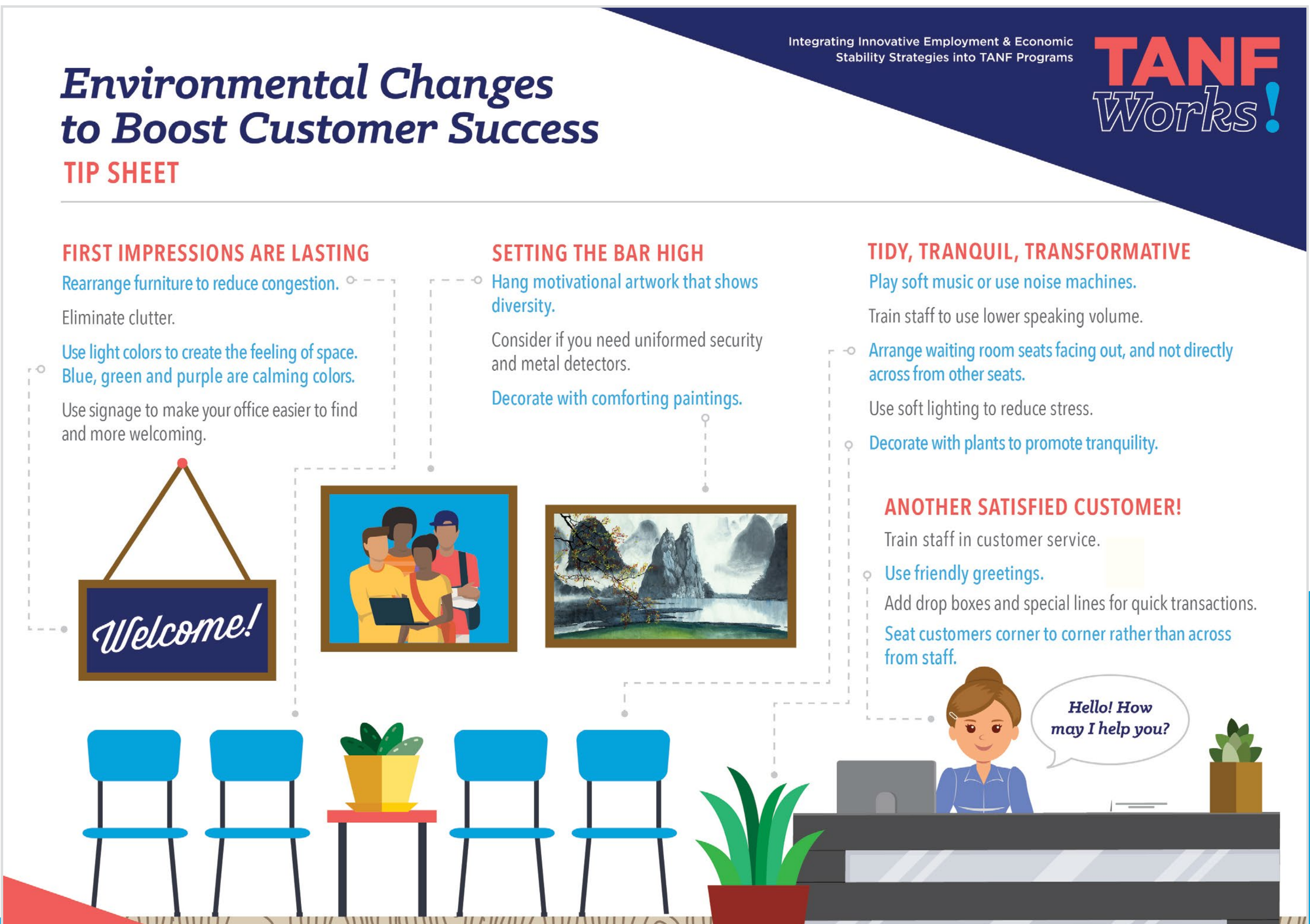
Before jumping into a new approach, conduct an honest and comprehensive assessment of readiness that benefits from staff's multiple perspectives. This assessment will be ongoing as your program and the use of this approach evolves.

Readiness Assessment Tools

There are readiness tools (usually called organizational assessments or self-assessments) already available that you can use in whole or in part for this purpose. See **Resources** for matrices of available tools.

The most important piece is that staff at every level are exposed to the readiness assessment tools. Many administrators and high-level leadership are surprised that their vision isn't always making it to the ground. There may be exceptional work done in planning and program design, but if the people doing the work aren't having the same experience, there will be a functional mismatch between vision and reality. No new effort will succeed without considering staff members' current accountability measures.

1. Choose one or two sections of an assessment tool and give that to a cross-section of staff.
2. Ask them to complete the assessments individually and bring to a meeting to share results.
3. Use an appreciative inquiry question such as "Tell a story that illustrates why you feel your program is especially strong (or not yet strong) in this area."   A story contains so much more than mere statistics and descriptions. Stories convey information and evoke emotion. Look for and study moments of accomplishment, triumph, and perseverance.



Consider creating a drawing to illustrate what staff and clients have shared in organizational assessment conversations. The example above, develped by the IIEESS team, tells a story about what the client experience looks like and feels like.

4 FOCUS ON A MODEL THAT SUITS YOUR CONTEXT

What models do we want to focus on, given our experience and research?

For long-lasting impact, decide on one approach or one component of a model and implement with high quality. For example, coaching models look similar, but vary in terms of their implementation structures. Find the one that works in your context with your resources.

Keeping the context of your organization in your community at the forefront is key for a successful implementation. Consider all the pieces that might interfere with or contradict your plans such as business processes, data systems, contradictory messages, culture, numbers, and skills of staff, etc.

There is a temptation to grab the latest, most-talked-about new approach. Many new initiatives have not succeeded because insufficient time was spent examining the connection between the proposed change and the outcome desired. Experts recommend that you don't start any change until you fully understand the problem, the organizational readiness, and the mindset of leadership and staff.

Going back to the WHY, the HOW, and the WHAT from the Golden Circle on page 5 can help you keep your vision in front of you as you make decisions.

WHY	**Impact we want to have**
HOW	**Beliefs about what will have impact**
WHAT	**Small incremental change we want to have now**

Get Everyone on the Same Page with a Clear Message

Once you decide on your focus, develop a communication plan and message. Identify a champion or group of leaders with a vision and a sense of reality to move the organization beyond conversations to action. As you begin to test a new approach in one corner of the organization, invite your whole team to learn along with you and keep the enthusiasm high with consistent messages! A clear and genuine message can help build enthusiasm and willingness for change, especially amid competing priorities and limited resources. Keep these communication guidelines in mind:

- Use familiar words that both make sense to you and are familiar in your organization.
- Provide multiple, early opportunities for staff to hear clear messaging about a coming change.
- Link values and principles of a new approach with your organizational values and mission.
- Clarify what the approach is by comparing it to what it is not. For example, customize a comparison of case management and coaching.
- Illustrate the values and principles of the new approach by using real stories and examples from your organization.

5 PLAN FOR STARTING SMALL

How will we begin to move toward this change? Who will be actively involved?

Now that you're ready, how do you manage the change process?

If you want to someday run a marathon, you don't tell your friends and neighbors you're about to go 26.2 miles on day one. You'd start with a mile and see how that goes. If your coaching training introduces three or four resources that might address a pain point in the client's experience of your program, you might start with one using a small road test to see how it goes.

Testing Out the Change on a Small Scale

Talk with staff and clients directly about where to start implementing a change on a small scale; their experience and enthusiasm can indicate a successful starting location. Start in a place where you are likely to see some successes so that you can work out the glitches before moving to a more challenging place or group. Find fertile ground for your change and spread the growth from there.

"Learn – Innovate – Improve" Cycle

Mathematica Policy Research (with the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation) has elaborated on a practical process for "starting small" and has supported programs to use this process as they test out new approaches before bringing them full scale. Resources on this **Learn, Innovate, Improve (LI²)** process are available to support your early efforts to implement change.

The Road Test Process

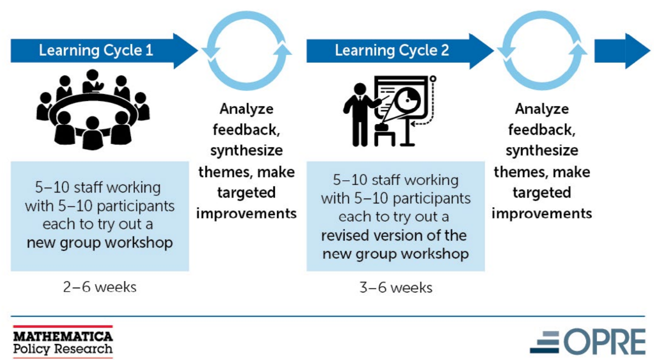
A key part of the "IMPROVE" piece of the LI^2 cycle is to do a "road test." Here are a few words about road testing from the **Guide to Planning and Implementing a Road Test** from CalWORKs 2.0, an initiative of the County Welfare Directors Association of California:

CWDA Advancing Human Services for the Welfare of *All* Californians | CalWORKs 2.0 | Next Generation

A road test is a structured process that helps strengthen the design and implementation of a new program strategy before scaling. It begins by implementing the new approach on a small scale, in a contained practice setting. Often, small numbers of staff and clients participate over a short period and provide structured feedback about their experience. This feedback is then used to refine the strategy itself, improve its implementation, and examine the contextual factors that might influence outcomes.

A road test often includes two or more feedback periods, known as learning cycles, in which a carefully selected strategy is used for about four to six weeks and then refined based on feedback from staff and program participants.

See the **graph** from Mathematica Policy Research below.



If trying coaching, train supervisors first.

Consider a "train the trainer" approach with supervisory leadership to embed coaching as a living part of the organization. Coaching is not just a tool for staff to use with clients; it is an agency-wide approach to doing business. Even if priorities shift within the organization, a champion and trained supervisors can keep coaching alive and the organization moving forward throughout the lulls and flow of organizational life.

6 LEARN ALONG THE WAY

What do we want to discover/document as we go? Who decides?

When programs or organizations want to test out a new approach, they are often operating with (unspoken) assumptions about the effect that change will have (see Stage 2 of the process outlined on page 6). Translate your assumptions into learning questions and discover the answers as you test them out.

Learning questions are questions you want to answer for yourselves such as: What effect does it have on X if we change how we do Y? By answering your learning questions, you are testing your hypotheses with an open mind. Sincere curiosity is at the heart of a learning question!

Learning questions can come from funder mandates or leadership. You can convert internal debate among staff (about how a new process will affect change) by working together to name a few learning questions. Together, you will discover what works by pursuing answers to your learning questions.

Example learning questions:

- How does this new approach affect the length of our client sessions?
- How do these new tools impact staff's relationships with customers?
- Does the new approach influence a client's decision to return?
- How does this new curriculum affect clients' outcomes?

You will need to be clear about who plays what role in deciding the learning question for each road test. Include your clear, specific learning question in your ongoing communication materials when sharing the results of each of your testing or pilot periods.

See **Resources** for tips on a thoughtful approach to making decisions in the workplace.

Honest and transparent language about the results of your pilots will engender buy-in from staff who may be inspired with ideas about why something did or did not have the outcome that was planned. An appreciative inquiry approach in your messaging will also help staff move beyond fear of failure to an eagerness to understand what is happening in the client experience and what might be tweaked for the next round.

RESOURCES

MATRIX A | READINESS TOOLS SUMMARY

TOOL TITLE	TYPE OF AGENCY					UNDERLYING APPROACH						COMPONENTS ASSESSED								
	All Human Service Agencies	Welfare to Work	TANF	Early Childhood	School Age	Behavioral Science	Executive Function Skills	Goal Achievement	Trauma Informed Care	Coaching	Whole Family / Two Gen(eration)	Physical Environment	Coaching	Program Approach	Service Delivery	Staffing	Performance Management	Continuous Quality Improvement	Partnerships	Culture / Mindset
1. Family Centered Coaching Organizational Assessment	•				•				•	•	•	•	•	•	•				•	•
2. CalWORKs Business Process Assessment		•	•			•	•	•			•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
3. CalWORKs 2.0 Self-Assessment		•	•			•	•	•			•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
4. CalWORKs 2.0 Fidelity Assessment		•	•			•	•	•			•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
5. IIEESS Environmental Changes to Boost Customer Success	•					•						•								
6. IIEESS Pathway to Coaching for Success			•							•	•	•	•			•				•
7. American Institutes of Research Trauma-Informed Organizational Capacity Scale	•								•						•			•		
8. National Council for Behavioral Health Adoption of Trauma-Informed Care Practice	•								•					•	•		•	•	•	•

MATRIX B | READINESS TOOLS DESCRIPTION

TOOL TITLE	SUMMARY	DOWNLOAD LINK	FORMAT
1. Family Centered Coaching Organizational Assessment	Open-sourced tools for any human service agency to shift from a focus on one person to the whole family, and from a transactional approach to coaching mindset, where the participant takes the lead in identifying goals for defined family.	www.theprosperityagenda.org/familycentered-coaching	Downloadable PDF and online survey tool
2. CalWORKs Business Process Assessment	Guide designed for welfare-to-work programs in California to shift from directive case management to customer-led case management focused on goal achievement. The business process looks at all facets of the organization.	www.calworksnextgen.org/tools	Downloadable PDF or Word checklist
3. CalWORKs 2.0 Self Assessment	Guide designed for welfare-to-work programs in California to shift from directive case management to customer-led case management focused on goal achievement. The self-assessment is an initial assessment.	www.calworksnextgen.org/tools/county-administrative-tools	Downloadable PDF or Word checklist – can download the individual tool or the guide
4. CalWORKs 2.0 Fidelity Assessment	Guide designed for welfare-to-work programs in California to shift from directive case management to customer-led case management focused on goal achievement. The fidelity assessment is a more robust assessment for measuring progress.	www.calworksnextgen.org/tools/county-administrative-tools	Downloadable PDF or Word checklist – can download the individual tool or the guide
5. IIEESS Environmental Changes to Boost Customer Success	Tip sheet that uses behavioral science and trauma-informed care to examine first impressions and safety in your office setting.	See Resources	Tip sheet graphic
6. IIEESS Pathway to Coaching for Success	An approach to activities for taking on coaching in the TANF environment developed by Public Strategies and MDRC.	See Resources	Graphic flow chart
7. American Institutes of Research Trauma-Informed Organizational Capacity Scale	Our proprietary Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) Scale is the first psychometrically validated instrument to gauge the extent to which health and human service organizations provide trauma-informed care.	www.air.org/resource/trauma-informed-organizational-capacity-scale	Online – contact organization for access
8. National Council for Behavioral Health Adoption of Trauma-Informed Care Practice	This proprietary assessment is designed for organizations that want to improve their policies, procedures, practices, and social and physical environment to reflect the core principles and values of a trauma-informed organization.	www.nationalcouncildocs.net	Contact organization for access

10 TIPS FOR MAKING DECISIONS IN THE WORKPLACE

By Valerie Uccellani

Through our years of teaching SURE-Fire Meetings, we've discovered how valuable it is for organizations to have a thoughtful approach to making decisions. Here are 10 tips.

1 Get perspective on how important and urgent a decision it is. Most of us live in a rushed work world. Every decision has to be made as soon as possible. Really? Step away and check out how important, and how urgent, a decision really is.

2 Consider a range of possible decision-making options. Any of the following options are perfectly valid, depending on the nature of the decision and people involved. For example: single-person decisions, subgroup decisions, vote is used, consensus is sought.

3 When seeking consensus, define what you mean up front. For example, you might continue to explore and debate until everyone is fully supportive of the final decision, regardless of the time spent on the process. Or you might seek consensus for a defined period of time, after which you use another decision-making option.

4 Get clear on the current situation that calls for a decision. For example, if you're going to decide on a new client survey form, make sure everyone involved is clear about the current form, how it has been used, the challenges with it, etc.

5 Include the right people in the process. It's a problem when the only people charged with making a decision are doing so for political reasons, or by default. Think through who would be the best people to involve in the decision.

6 Explain whether people have consultative or decisive voice. When you get people involved, let them know if you want them to be part of the final decision (decisive voice), or if you are inviting their consultative voice (i.e., their opinion, their suggestions, their perspective).

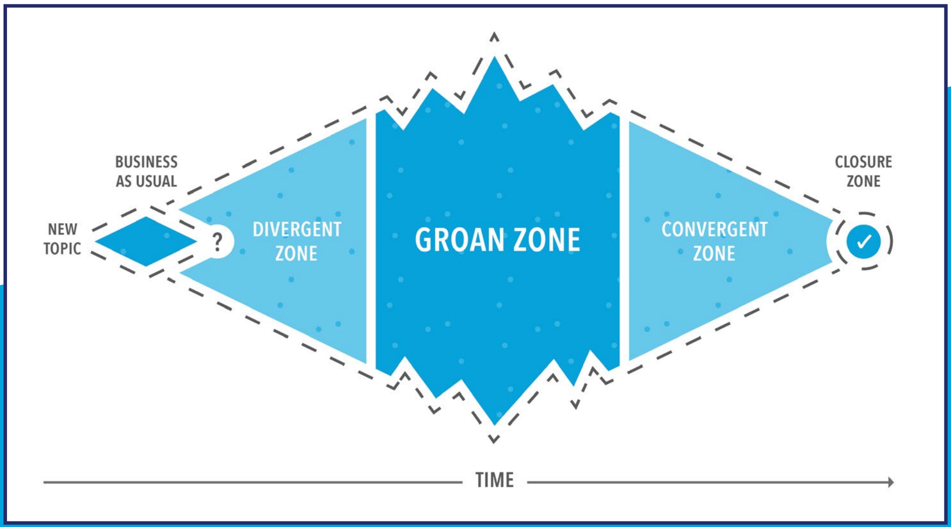
7 Make all the data available and know that's never all of it. Get all the data at hand to help inform a decision. If you're stuck, you need more. And remember: Data not only includes numbers, but also includes people's fears, wishes, sense of security, etc. This is all data, and all plays into a decision.

8 Estimate when a decision will be made and let people know that in advance. If a decision gets delayed for whatever reason, give people an update to keep them on the same page. When the decision is made, make sure everyone knows.

9 Expect and embrace struggle. Sam Kaner offers a great model for participatory decision-making, recognizing the inevitable "groan zone" of the process. We prefer to call it the "growth" zone because, as uncomfortable as it may be, this phase of a decision-making process is invaluable.

10 Check out some great resources on the topic, including the Heath brothers' book *Decisive: How to Make Better Choices in Life and Work* (2013).

For more information, go to **http://www.globallearningpartners.com/**



CREATING TRAUMA-INFORMED SPACES THAT SUPPORT LEARNING

Four things to keep in mind to ensure enough safety is present to foster learning:

1

Ensure everyone feels "safe enough."

We know from the research of James Zull and Barbara Fredrickson that positive emotions are far more effective in helping us learn. When the fear centers in the brain are triggered, we are not in the learning part of the brain. Being trauma-informed isn't about being so safe and comfortable that you don't have authentic and meaningful dialogue. It's about feeling safe enough to actually engage in challenging discourse in the first place.

2

Create a safe learning environment

When working with people who have experienced trauma (which is just about everyone, even though impacts and experiences will vary greatly), facilitators can think even more deeply about ways in which they can support participants to feel at ease. Transparency helps to create trust and safety. It can be done in many ways, including providing an outline ahead of time, so that the participants know just what they can expect. This helps a person who has experienced trauma to manage their own needs and responses effectively.

3

Offer choices.

This can be as simple as offering options during activities and letting participants decide where to sit. Many victims of sexual assault and first responders prefer to face the door.

4

Make the beginning count.

It is critical to ensure a positive and safe space from the beginning of your activity that respects the learner and his/her needs. The first minutes of your time with a group will set the tone to the end.

Participants may experience some discomfort as they begin meaningful conversations, but they won't feel unsafe.

Adapted from:

https://www.globallearningpartners.com/blog/creating-trauma-informed-spaces-that-support-learning/

PRINCIPLES OF APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY	RESOURCE LINKS
CONSTRUCTIONIST: What we focus on becomes our reality. Shift away from "problem-finder" and toward a focus on what has worked. SIMULTANEITY: As we explore something, we change it at the same time. The questions we ask are key, as they lead us in a given direction. POETIC: Words matter. We can choose words that enlighten, inspire, and engage to foster positive change. ANTICIPATORY: We are best equipped to envision the future when we analyze all aspects of the actual past. This calls for including perspectives from all "corners" of a system. POSITIVE: Movement and sustainable change require a general positivity, especially where groups and communities are in conflict. Hope, excitement, and inspiration generate the space for creativity and openness to new ideas.	***Positivity Strategist*** positivitystrategist.com/appreciative-inquiry-overview ***The Thin Book of Appreciative Inquiry*** thinbook.com/the-thin-book-of-appreciative-inquiry ***AI Practitioner Journal*** aipractitioner.com ***Appreciative Inquiry Commons – Introduction to Principles of AI*** appreciativeinquiry.champlain.edu/learn/appreciative-inquiry-introduction

HOW TO CRAFT APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY QUESTIONS

Appreciative Inquiry questions focus on what has life, meaning, and value. When groups use Appreciative Inquiry, they share in a way that stretches collective vision because they are sharing stories of what has been possible and worthwhile.

Bringing valued experiences into consciousness encourages action aligned with those values. People learn to see themselves as subjects of a system they can actively transform rather than as objects of a system that limits their imagination or determines their action.

To design good appreciative inquiry questions, remember to:

1. Ask about ultimate concerns (e.g., What do you value most?)
2. Use positive questions that build on positive assumptions (e.g., What about this neighborhood makes you especially glad you live here?)
3. Give a thought-provoking, appealing definition of topics (e.g., "Seeing the world through the experiences of people different from us can inspire new ways of thinking.")
4. Present questions as an invitation using expansive, positive, feeling, and experiential words. (e.g., What has inspired you to get engaged? What do you most hope to contribute?)
5. Enhance the possibilities of storytelling by asking questions about trusted personal experience. (e.g., Thinking back on your year, please share a high point when…)
6. Phrase questions in a conversational, friendly tone (and listen eagerly, as you would to a friend.)
7. Ask open questions to which you do not know the answer and expect to learn something interesting and important. (Open-ended questions cannot be answered with "yes" or "no.")
8. Good questions invite thinking—they stretch the imagination and inspire new thoughts without evoking defensiveness or hostility. Reach for the "um"!

Adapted from Imagine Chicago, Bliss Browne:

imaginechicago.org/docs/ai/Crafting%20Appreciative%20Questions.doc

RESEARCH-BASED APPROACHES AND RESOURCES FOR PROGRAM CHANGE

GOAL ACHIEVEMENT

Rethinking Positive Thinking: Inside the New Science of Motivation. By Gabriele Oettingen. 2014. The Penguin Group.

www.woopmylife.org

WOOP (Wish, Outcome, Obstacle, Plan) is a "practical, accessible, evidence-based mental strategy that people can use to find and fulfill their wishes and change their habits." The WOOP My Life website has a wealth of resources and tools specifically for use in human service settings. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities has created materials with Dr. Oettingen so that programs can integrate the carefully-sequenced WOOP sequence into their day-to-day work with staff and clients.

Goal Plan Do Review Revise (GPDR/R): An Executive Function-Informed Goal Achievement Framework for Use in Human Service Programs

www.buildingbetterprograms.org/2017/11/11/goal-plan-do-review-revise-materials

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) has produced a manual that provides staff with information and tools to integrate the GPDR/R framework into their existing programs. The manual includes information on the principles and concepts underlying the model and materials for implementing GPDR/R, including staff guides, participant tools, and instructions for workshops and group activities. The manual is available as a word document so that you can tailor the materials to fit the needs of your program. The guide is available through CBPP's useful site "Building Better Programs."

TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE

The Trauma-Informed Organizational Toolkit, a product of American Institutes for Research's (AIR) National Center on Family Homelessness.

www.air.org/resource/trauma-informed-organizational-toolkit

This toolkit gives programs a road map for becoming trauma informed. It offers concrete guidelines for organizations to assess whether they are responding appropriately to the needs of families who have experienced traumatic stress.

National Council for Behavioral Health's Trauma-Informed Care Organizational Self-Assessment

www.nationalcouncildocs.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/OSA-FINAL_2.pdf

This assessment is designed for organizations that want to improve their policies, procedures, practices, and social and physical environment to reflect the core principles and values of a trauma-informed organization.

Description and Resources for ACE's - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/acestudy/index.html

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) is the term used to describe all types of abuse, neglect, and other potentially traumatic experiences that occur to people under the age of 18. This resource includes links to training and tools to help ACEs from happening in the first place and minimizing their effects.

COACHING

Coaching for Economic Mobility from EMPath

s3.amazonaws.com/empath-website/pdf/Research-CoachingForEconomicMobility-1015.pdf

This is an overview report of the benefits of coaching in the context of poverty, which includes specific ideas, resources, and steps for human services agencies.

Family-Centered Coaching Toolkit

www.theprosperityagenda.org/familycentered-coaching/

This is a free, downloadable toolkit and organizational assessment to help you understand the steps toward integrating coaching into your organizational environment.

Co-Active Coaching

www.coactive.com/resources/

This free toolkit includes forms and resources to use with coaching and in conjunction with the book, Co-Active Coaching: Changing Business, Transforming Lives (Kimsey-House, Kimsey-House, Sandahl, and Whitworth, 2011).

International Coach Federation (ICF)

https://coachfederation.org/core-competencies

The ICF coaching competencies are a well-known national standard for skills and knowledge related to coaching.

BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE

The Practitioner's Playbook for Applying Behavioral Insights to Labor Programs report

www.mathematica-mpr.com/our-publications-and-findings/publications/practitioners-playbook-for-applying-behavioral-insights-to-labor-programs

The Department of Labor Behavioral Interventions project created this playbook to provide social programs an overview of how to use insights from behavioral science to improve the effectiveness of programs and services.

Behavioral Economics and Social Policy Designing Innovative Solutions for Programs Supported by the Administration for Children and Families report

www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/Bias%202014%20Report%20Technical%20Supplement.pdf

This report focuses on how to design innovative solutions within programs that serve poor and vulnerable families in the United States. It includes a thoughtful meta-analysis of field studies that have applied behavioral interventions in the following areas: charitable giving, consumer finance, energy/environment, health, marketing, nutrition, voting, and workplace productivity. By organizing the findings around 12 behavioral interventions, the report is a handy reference of what we know–and don't yet know–about each of them.

Ideas 42 website

www.ideas42.org/learn/

This website offers reports, TED talks, and behavioral science 101 for an array of interesting resources around applying behavioral insights to large social problems.

Family Independence Initiative article

www.nytimes.com/2017/08/15/opinion/poverty-family-independence-initiative.html

This article is a launching pad for delving more deeply into the work of the Family Independence Initiative, an organization that is challenging some of the core assumptions that have prevailed in social service work for decades. One of the ways in which this initiative honors behavioral science is through its focus on "social signaling"–when we see people like us doing something, we are more likely to do it.

EXECUTIVE FUNCTION

Building Better Programs website

www.buildingbetterprograms.org/category/executive-function

This website from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities has a very well-stocked section on Executive Function "materials that describe what executive function skills are, provides examples of programs that build executive function skills or use executive function principles in their program designs and provides other resources for programs interested in using executive function principles to improve their work and other human service programs."

Using Brain Science to Design New Pathways out of Poverty paper from EMPath, 2014.

s3.amazonaws.com/empath-website/pdf/Research-UsingBrainScienceDesignPathwaysPoverty-0114.pdf

"Moving out of poverty is no longer a short process of following a simple roadmap to a good job. It has become a lengthy, complex navigational challenge requiring individuals to rely on strong executive function (EF) skills (impulse control, working memory, and mental flexibility) in order to effectively manage life's competing demands and optimize their decisions over many years. Improvements in executive functioning are likely to positively impact outcomes in all areas of life, including parenting, personal relationships, money management, educational attainment, and career success."

Smart but Scattered – and Stalled. By Dick Guare, Colin Guare, and Peg Dawson. Guilford Press, 2019.

http://www.smartbutscatteredkids.com/books

This latest book from Dick Guare, his son Colin, and his associate Peg Dawson offers a fresh perspective on the causes of young adults who are stalled on the journey to independence. They present a 10-step plan that helps grown kids and parents work together to achieve liftoff. Learn why brain-based executive skills such as planning, organization, and time management are so important to success, and what you can do to strengthen them.

Environmental Changes to Boost Customer Success

TIP SHEET

FIRST IMPRESSIONS ARE LASTING

Rearrange furniture to reduce congestion.

Eliminate clutter.

Use light colors to create the feeling of space. Blue, green and purple are calming colors.

Use signage to make your office easier to find and more welcoming.

SETTING THE BAR HIGH

Hang motivational artwork that shows diversity.

Consider if you need uniformed security and metal detectors.

Decorate with comforting paintings.

TIDY, TRANQUIL, TRANSFORMATIVE

Play soft music or use noise machines.

Train staff to use lower speaking volume.

Arrange waiting room seats facing out, and not directly across from other seats.

Use soft lighting to reduce stress.

Decorate with plants to promote tranquility.

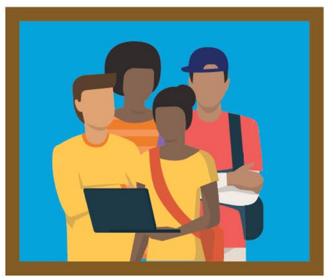
ANOTHER SATISFIED CUSTOMER!

Train staff in customer service.

Use friendly greetings.

Add drop boxes and special lines for quick transactions.

Seat customers corner to corner rather than across from staff.



Pathway To **Coaching For Success**

	Lay of the Land		Building the Foundation		Pathway to Success		
MILESTONE	PROJECT LAUNCH AND LONG TERM VISION	UNDERSTAND CURRENT SYSTEM	REVIEW FINDINGS	DEVELOP IMPLEMENTATION PLAN	IMPLEMENT PLAN	LAUNCH PILOT	SUPPORT AND MONITORING
ACTIVITY	• Complete Playbook and set goals • Create a planning team • Hold launch meeting to identify key stakeholders, indentify priorities and assess readiness for change • Establish vision, goals, and objectives, and identify potential obstacles • Create implementation team	• Select pilot sites • Understand program flow and forms, and service delivery strategies • Understand staff and client interactions, client outcomes • Introduce coaching; discuss options for aligning coaching with currents program requirements (e.g. WPR) • Build relationships; create staff buy-in	• Summarize and reflect findings back to staff at all levels • Identify program and staff readiness for coaching • Use findings to devise a plan for interim training to acclimate staff to coaching mindset • Identify opportunities to incorporate coaching; specify desired outcomes and cost considerations	• Develop written plan to integrate coaching into current system • Customize model and training materials for locality • Develop communication strategy for new services and culture change • Develop quality assessment strategy • Establish implementation timeline	• Conduct staff training • Continue building staff buy-in • Monitor implementation progress; trouble-shoot issues	• Implement quality assessment strategy • Promote links across other pilot sites to support peer-to-peer learning	• Provide booster training as needed • Provide tools and strategies for self-monitoring and ongoing quality improvement • Summarize lessons learned and share with stakeholders • Plan for scaling up

STAGE	MILESTONES	HOW	RECOMMENDED RESOURCES
Lay of the land	**Project Launch & Long term vision**	• Form a planning team to include representatives from management, direct-service staff, data team, and quality control. This team will organize and convene a launch meeting with key stakeholders to introduce the idea of coaching, get reactions, identify priorities, build a long-term vision, and build buy-in with stakeholders and leadership. • Create an implementation team to help move the work forward at each step. • Survey all staff to assess site readiness. • Bring key staff from pilot sites together to introduce the coaching initiative.	• IIEESS Project Launch Playbook • IIEESS Creating a Strong Foundation for Change Multi-page guide
	Understand the system	• Select a subset of pilot sites. Think about who might best represent your initiative. Consider location, level of site readiness, and/or site demographics. Consider asking for volunteers. • Use site observation, staff interviews, or focus groups to understand staff and client interactions, and client outcomes. • Use strategies to map out your program flow and service delivery, and identify strengths and challenges. • Review program flow and TANF forms to identify opportunities and roadblocks to coaching.	
Building the Foundation	**Review findings**	• The implementation team summarizes and reviews findings from observations and staff surveys, and set long-term and short-term goals. • Bring key staff together to reflect on findings and share learning.	
	Develop Implementation Plan	• Implementation team develops an action plan for short-term, mid-term and long-term activities to implement. • Consider strategies for addressing barriers and challenges to implementing coaching. • Identify ways of changing forms. • Develop specific interventions that support a client-centered approach to pilot. • Review coaching models and approaches and determine what aspect of coaching to use. • Identify metrics (and data sources) that will be used to measure effect of pilot activities (develop benchmarks and quality assurance process). • Develop a timeline and plan for staff training.	• IIEESS Environmental Changes tool • IIEESS Half Time Report Playbook • IIEESS Webinar: Set, Measure, Report, Using Data to Improve Client Success • MDRC Practitioner Blog – Setting Strong Benchmarks. **https://www.mdrc.org/publication/setting-strong-benchmarks**

STAGE	MILESTONES	HOW	RECOMMENDED RESOURCES
Pathway to Success	**Implement Plan**	• Set launch date. • Train staff on new procedures, coaching model, and coaching skills to continue building staff buy-in.	• Online Motivational Interview training https://www.hetimaine.org/motivational-interviewing • IIEESS Webinar Presentations and tools: • Coaching Supervision – Sessions 1 & 2 • Communication to Enhance Coaching Relationships • Coaching Relationships: Changing Mindsets • Environmental Changes to Boost Client Success • Co-regulation and Self-Care
	Launch Pilot	• Implement coaching supervision for direct service staff. • Encourage regular contact between pilot sites in the form of conference calls, webinars, and in-person meetings.	• IIEESS Webinar: Coaching Observation for Supervisors of Direct Service Staff and tools
	Support, and Monitoring	• Obtain feedback from participants and staff. • Review data in comparison to benchmarks. • Make necessary changes or build on successful strategies based. • Continue ongoing monitoring process. • Build new implementation teams to help support scale-up efforts. • Review lessons learned from pilot. • Identify champions/staff from pilot to share experiences with larger program. • Develop timeline and plan for all staff training. • Develop timeline and plan for full scale implementation. • Build larger peer-to-peer learning network.	• IIEESS Webinar: Introduction to Learn, Innovate, Improve (LI^2) • MDRC TANF Data Collaborative https://www.tanfdata.org/tdc-framework.aspx • IIEESS Season Highlights and What's Next Webinar

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Global Learning Partners (**www.globallearningpartners.com**) is a small, women-owned business that supports organizations trying to have a positive impact in the world by applying proven principles of adult learning to a wide range of initiatives. The GLP team has experience offering staff training, consulting, and mentoring services in an array of sectors and across different cultures.

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