

# **IIESS Coaching Affinity Group**

Introduction to Learn, Innovate,  
Improve (LI<sup>2</sup>) 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

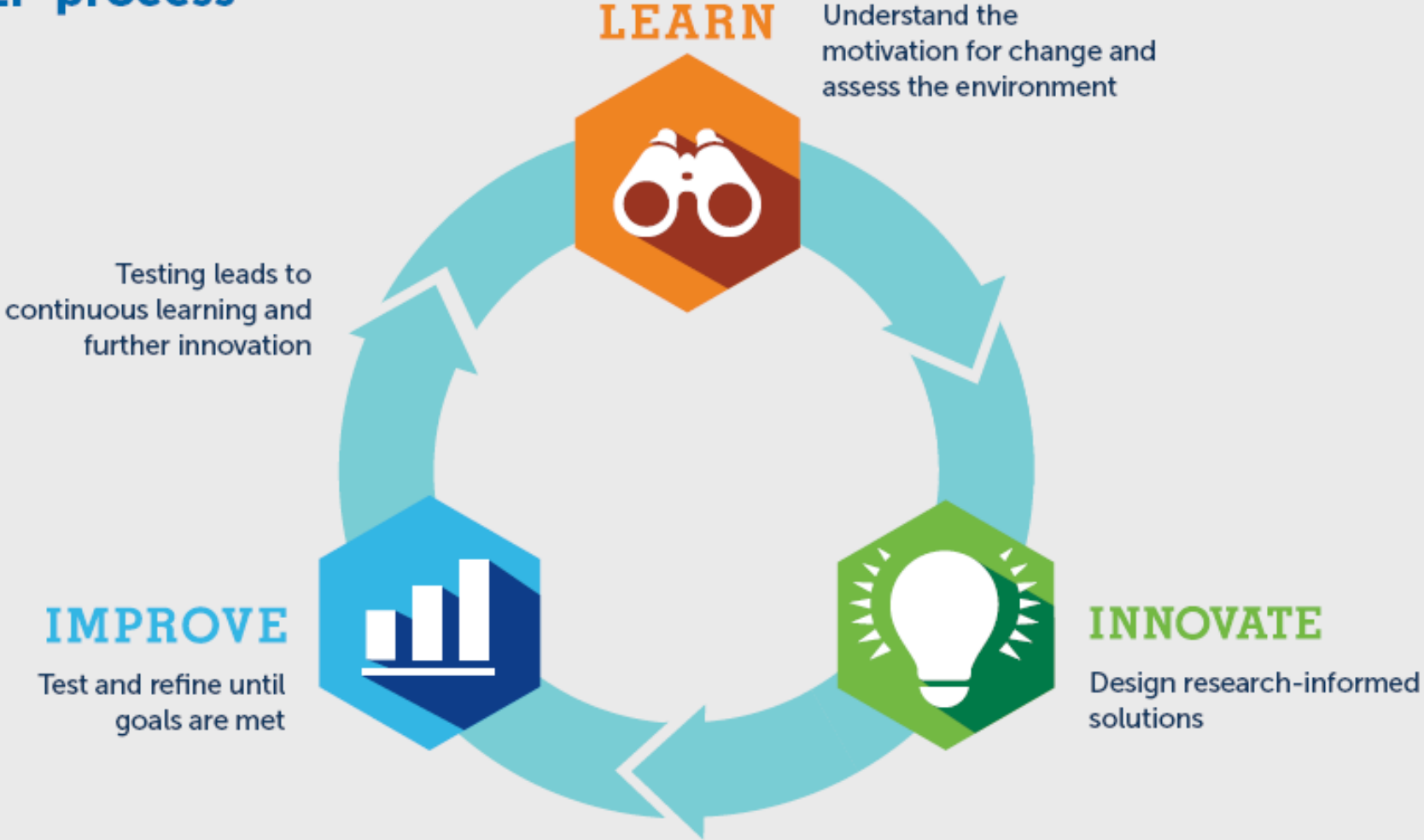
# What is Learn, Innovate, Improve (LI<sup>2</sup>)?

---

- A change management process
- A framework for continuous quality improvement that embeds analytic methods into the process of designing and implementing changes
- LI<sup>2</sup> comprises three phases of replicable, evidence-informed improvement activities marked by close collaboration between practitioners and researchers

# Learn, Innovate, Improve

## The LI<sup>2</sup> process



# How was LI<sup>2</sup> 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 LI<sup>2</sup>

---

- **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

---

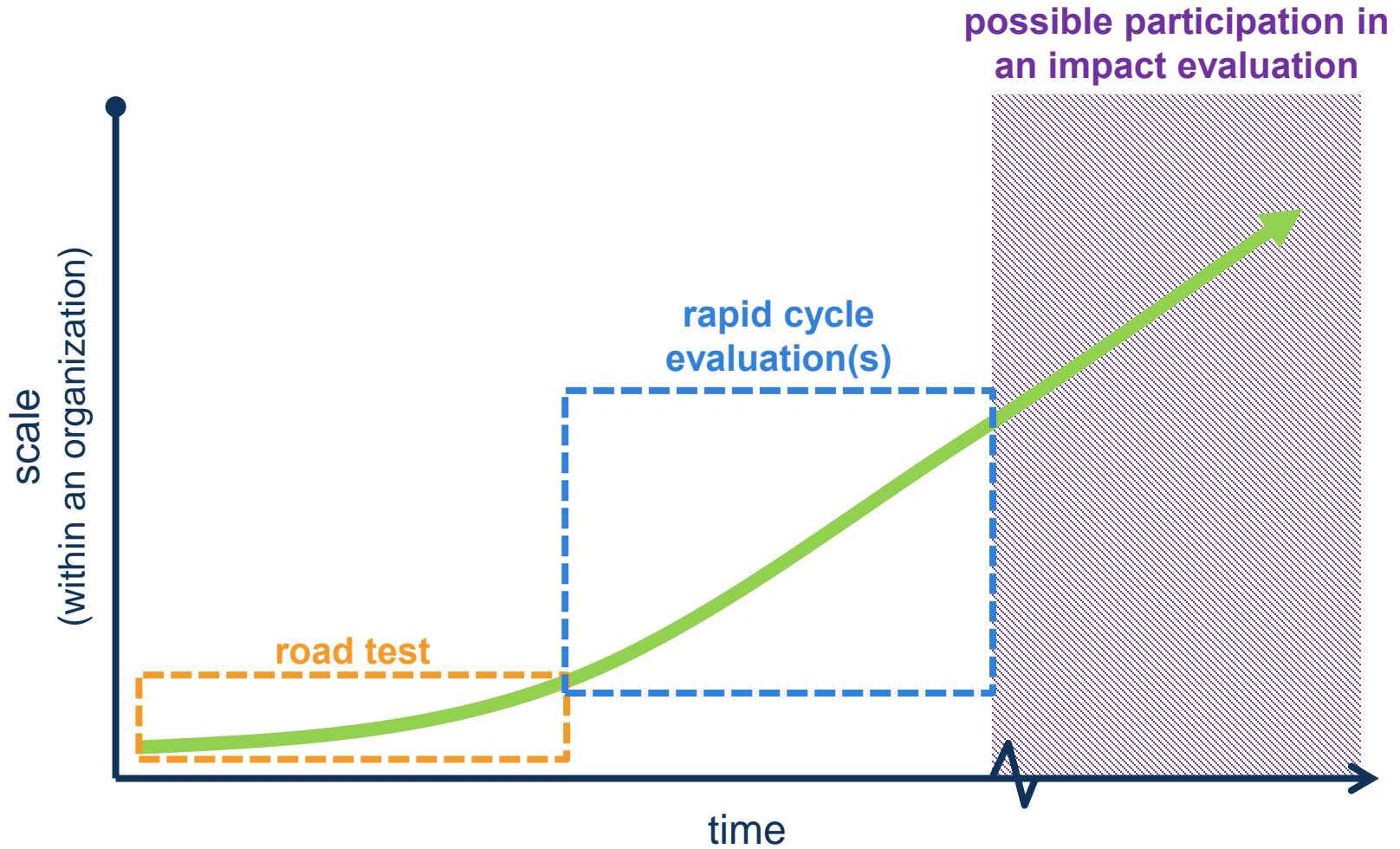
- **Innovation requires...**
  - Time to think
  - Space to try
  - Safety to fail
- **Drawing upon the best available**
  - Research evidence
  - Science of human behavior
  - Practice wisdom
- **Get the right mix of people involved and in the room**
  - Movers and shakers (program administrators and 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

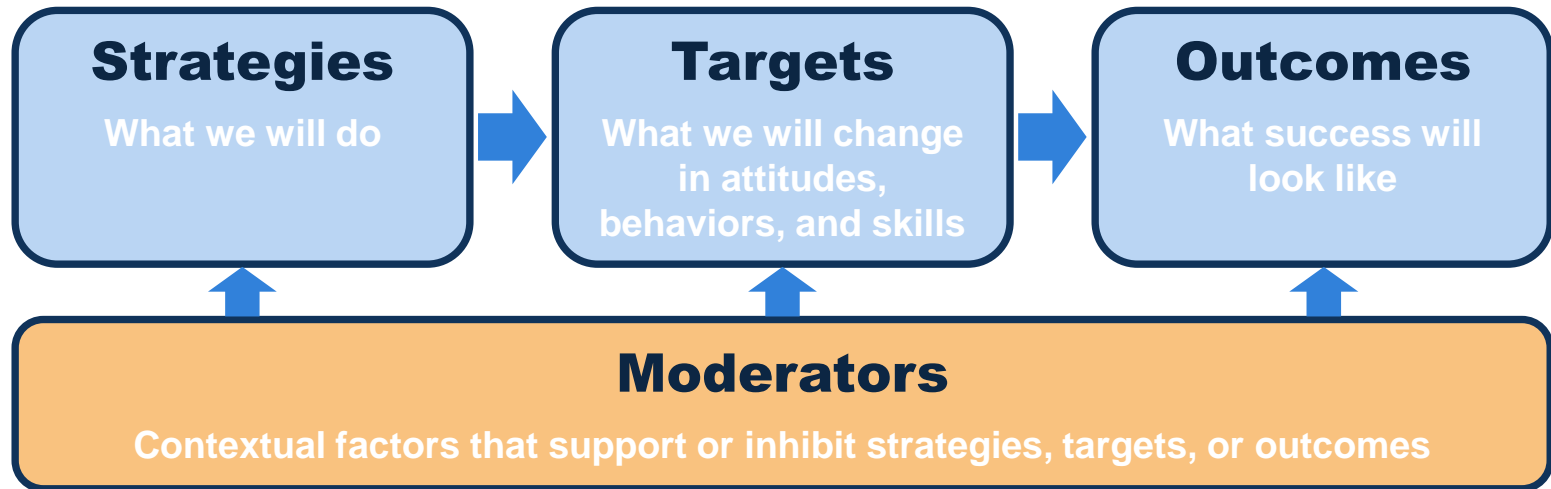
# Linking the Components: Causal Logic

---

- **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*



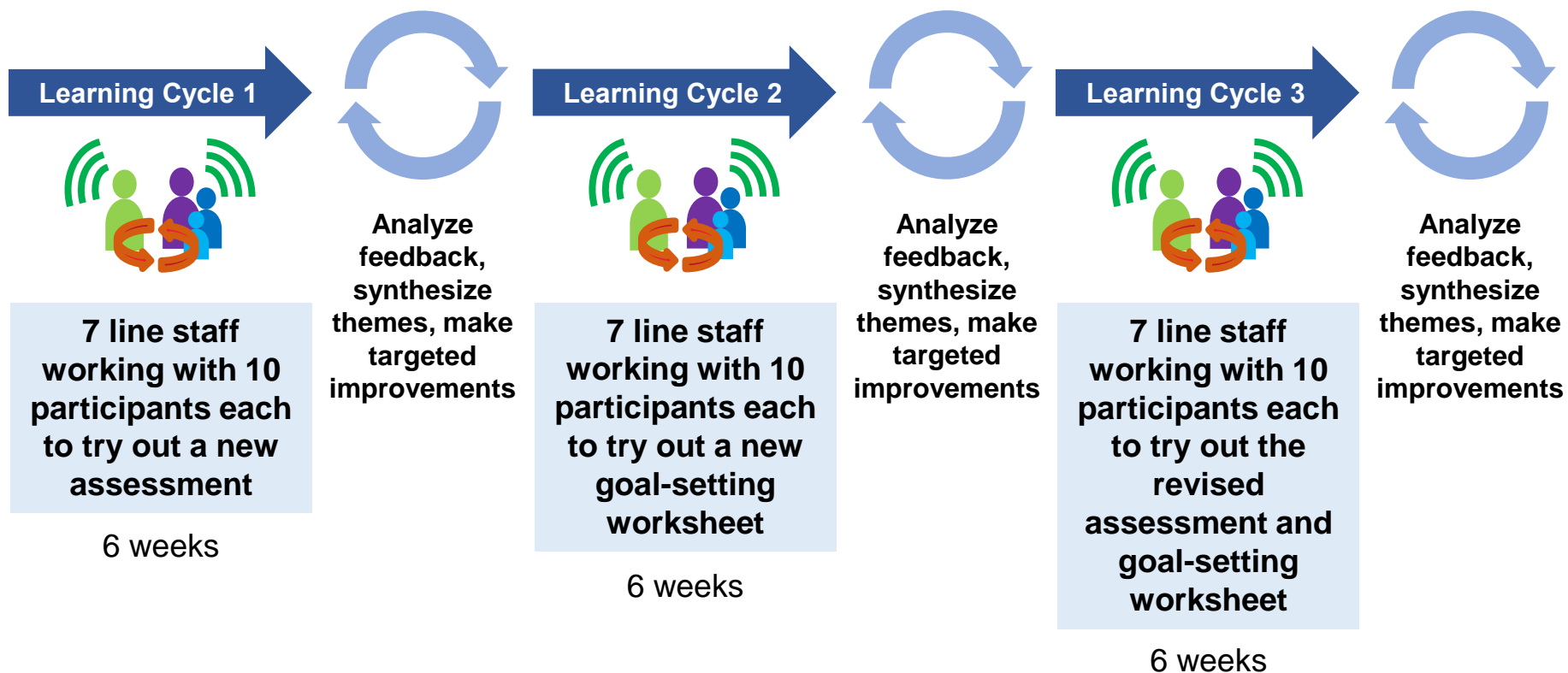
**a particular strategy**

*providing*



**targeted feedback about their experience**

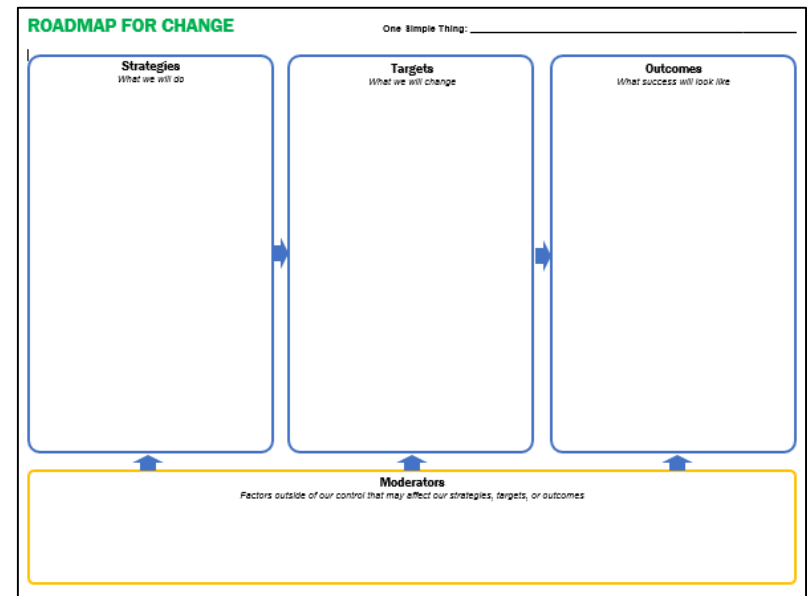
# How Does a Road Test Work?



# 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 <sup>st</sup> observation			2 <sup>nd</sup> observation	
Individual counselor interview		1 <sup>st</sup> interview			2 <sup>nd</sup> interview	
Group supervisor interview			1 <sup>st</sup> interview			2 <sup>nd</sup> interview
Check-in teleconference with Dr. Guare		1 <sup>st</sup> check-in		2 <sup>nd</sup> 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

---

- **Michelle Derr**
  - [MDerr@mathematica-mpr.com](mailto:MDerr@mathematica-mpr.com)
- **Anna Mastri**
  - [AMastri@mathematica-mpr.com](mailto:AMastri@mathematica-mpr.com)
- **Scott Baumgartner**
  - [SBaumgartner@mathematica-mpr.com](mailto:SBaumgartner@mathematica-mpr.com)