

Implementation Considerations: From Design to Impact

Recent research examining various attempts to improve or "reform" education provide convincing evidence that the implementation process itself must be given the same careful attention that we give to the educational practices, programs and initiatives we want to use (Aladjem & Borman, 2006; Vernez, Karam, Mariano, & DeMartini, 2006). It is becoming clear that in order to obtain the desired impact of effective evidence-based programs and practices, the implementation process must be intentionally and actively managed. The constructs identified in the research literature on implementation can be applied to new programs to enhance the likelihood of obtaining desired outcomes and improve the chances that the program will be sustained with fidelity over time.

Why Consider Research on Implementation?

		IMPLEMENTATION	
		Effective	NOT Effective
PRACTICES	Effective	Positive Benefits/Intended Outcomes!!	
	NOT Effective		

What are key components identified through research on implementation?

- Stages of Implementation implementing a new program is process
 - Exploration & Adoption, Installation, Initial Implementation, Full Implementation, Innovation/ Refinement, Sustainability
- Core Implementation Components components that *drive or impact* positive outcomes (build capacity of staff and the organization)
 - Staff Selection How will staff be selected who are in charge at various programs?
 - Training How will training be provided? Ongoing?
 - Coaching Is there a mechanism in place for coaching as the practice is rolled out?

- Evaluation How will effectiveness of the tool be measured? What are desired outcomes?
- Systems Intervention How is capacity of the system that houses the tool developed?

• Leadership at *all* Levels

- Problem solving geared to adaptive or technical issue Has leadership at all levels been established?
- Coherent Alignment of Policies and Practices
 - Use of teams What teams are in place to increase likelihood of sustainability and consistent knowledge across time?
 - Continuous feedback loops What structures are in place to solicit feedback so that practice is informed by policy and policy enhances practice?
 - Collaboration Are all key stakeholders identified and working together?
 - Aligned and relevant professional development How is professional development being provided? What is the plan for providing?

Implementation Occurs in Stages

Fixsen, Naoom, Blase, Friedman, & Wallace, 2005

Note:

- The stages are not necessarily linear!
- You may have already passed through exploration and decided to adopt, but you can always circle back!
- The stages are *quide posts* through the process!
- Proceeding through each of the stages and attending to what may occur during each stage enhances the likelihood of effective and sustained implementation!
- A process that takes time typically 2-4 years to full implementation

Exploration

- Make the decision to adopt the program and the evidence-based practice (EBP)
- Examine the degree to which the EBP, best practice, or policy meets the needs of the district, school, & community
- Determine whether adoption and implementation is desirable and feasible
- Create readiness for change how?

Installation

- Get ready!
- Make structural changes necessary to begin the practice, program or policy(write new job descriptions, recruit, hire/redeploy staff, make special purchases of equipment, arrange for space)
- Figure out who is going first (early adopters)
- Challenges...
 - Resources consumed but no change in practice in the school or classroom is seen

- Status quo gets challenged
- Creating new realities "Oh, I didn't understand that it would mean...."

Initial Implementation

- Surviving the awkward stage!
- Provide the practice or policy (new services, curriculum, interventions, instructional practice)
- Begin to function in a new way
- Manage the change process (changes in practice, structures, culture, infrastructure, fear, resistance)
- Continue buy-in efforts (celebrate success)
- Learn from mistakes
- Set, reset, adjust, expectations

Full Implementation

- Maintain and improve services, linkages, supports, infrastructure
- Components of the practice or program are integrated and fully functioning
- Service is provided in a skillful manner
- · Data systems are reliable and efficient
- · Summative evaluation outcomes assessed

Innovation/Refinement

- First do it right (with high fidelity as intended)
- · Then do it differently and better
- Ability to retain function while changing form given turnover, changing needs and context

Sustainability

- Goals of Sustainability
 - o Ensure funding streams for service and infrastructure
 - Ensure high fidelity and positive outcomes through infrastructure improvement and maintenance
- The time when...
 - Information is shared about efforts
 - Trust is established
 - Good outcomes are recognized and celebrated
 - Support base continues to expand
- Starts during Exploration Stage, never stops...