EXPANDED:
A New Tool and Examples from Principals in Gwinnett County, Ga.

LEADING CHANGE HANDBOOK

Concepts and Tools

Jody Spiro, Ed.D.

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To download the handbook, please go to www.wallacefoundation.org

https://doi.org/10.59656/EL-G8831.001

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FOREWORD and ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This handbook and the tools it contains have been many years in the making. They were born and developed from a sense that there are several useful techniques for leading change that could be translated into tools to assist busy leaders. They reflect, and owe to, a rich body of thinking in this field as well as my own career experiences. This includes work I began as head of professional development for the operations department at Chase Manhattan Bank and continued through stints at the New York City Board of Education, Long Island University, and through my international public sector reform work at the Soros Foundations and Education Development Center. Over the last 20 years, hundreds of my students at NYU's Wagner Graduate School of Public Service have used these tools and materials. During my work at The Wallace Foundation, state and district leaders participating in the Foundation's education leadership initiatives have been using them as they pursue lasting change in their education systems.

The ideas and views expressed in this volume are mine alone. But I wish to acknowledge and thank my colleagues at The Wallace Foundation who helped me in exploring the use of these change tools with the Foundation's grantees. I am especially grateful to the superb change leaders of Gwinnett County Public Schools: CEO J. Alvin Wilbanks, Assistant Superintendent for Leadership Development Glenn Pethel and principals Susan Bearse, Jeff Lee, Toni Ferguson, Lamont Mays and their colleagues. The team I work with at Wallace provides important perspective on a daily basis: Deanna Chernovetsky, Aiesha Elesusizov, Lucas Held, Rochelle Herring, Will Miller, Edward Pauly, Nicholas Pelzer, Jessica Schwartz, and Elizabeth Wilde.

Gratitude is extended to the "dynamic duo" who edited this material and made sure that the language was clear, engaging, accurate and well organized – Jennifer Gill and Pamela Mendels. Many thanks for your huge contributions. Finally, thanks to José Moreno, who is a genius when it comes to creating graphics and contributed his expertise to this publication.

SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

The subject of leading change is of paramount importance for leaders these days since it seems that the only *constant* is *change*[1] Change can be a dynamic and positive force for creating new strategies and putting them in action, stimulating creativity, diversity, learning and growth. But change of the sort this handbook is about is a deliberate disruption of the status quo. While the need for change will often be apparent to many or most of those affected, opposition, resistance and unanticipated consequences are all likely to emerge. These must be taken into account in the planning and implementation. Even positive change can be stressful. An effective change leader can maximize the opportunities of change while minimizing the risks.

Unfortunately many change efforts fail or are less successful than originally conceived. This is not surprising since unforeseen circumstances are likely to arise, participants may feel uncertain and unprepared for what is to come, stakeholders may oppose disruption of their current influence or people may feel disempowered. There can be no guarantee of success up front. Leading change therefore requires continuous analysis of the situation and mid-course corrections. It includes the ability to think several steps ahead and then plan the present with the future in mind, put plans quickly into action and continuously monitor and revise the work to take advantage of -or mitigate- unintended consequences as they arise.

A missing ingredient for many practitioners has been how to translate concepts into action, continuous improvement and sustainable results. This toolkit has been developed to fill that need in several key areas of the change process: assessing and improving participants' readiness; engaging stakeholders; planning "early wins;" minimizing resistance; using collaborative planning methods; and developing ways to bring initiatives to scale and sustain them over time.

As a leader of change, you will need not only to develop strategies, but also to project what will happen to various other parts of the system as a result. It is clearly desirable to plan for change at the beginning of an initiative; however you can enter the change process at any point as long as you recognize the dynamics of the change process and have tools to use. The chart on page two presents an overview of the change process, indicating where a tool in this handbook corresponds to an action step.

Whether one begins at the onset of the planning process or is trying to make mid-course corrections, there are key questions to be addressed: *How can we ensure that what is planned will be well implemented and achieves the original intention? What is the best way to start? How can we keep getting better at what we do and build those improvements into subsequent plans? What would scale and sustainability look like? What steps can we build into our planning and implementation to increase the likelihood of sustaining the desired change and expanding its reach?*

This handbook is designed to help you address these key questions throughout the change process. It includes six tools, a brief description of the underlying concepts of each and suggestions on how to use the tools and the resulting data. The tools are appropriate for any change circumstance: examining the organization internally, the external environment or even as a self-assessment of what you need to do to carry out each action step.

The handbook may be downloaded by going to www.wallacefoundation.org. You may find it helpful to use the tools online where the text boxes will expand to accommodate your narrative and where the calculations for the *Scale & Sustainability* S*core Sheet* will be done automatically when you click on the "total" boxes.

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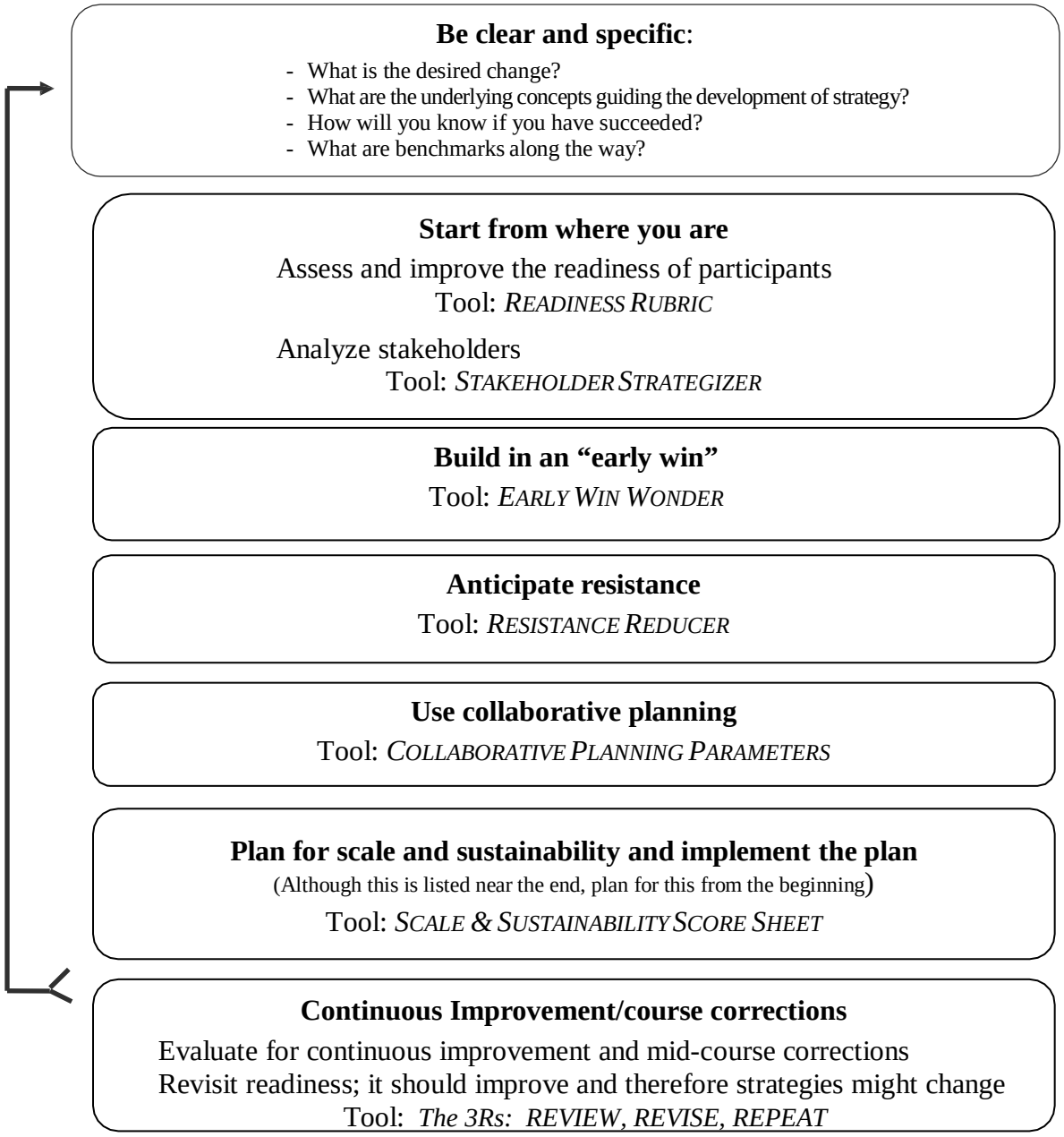
[1] Change means something different from the current state, a departure from the status quo. Change involves going from one situation to another – a period of transition. It is a continuous process. Therefore, change can best be considered as series of destinations that lead to further destinations. In this way, a leader can benchmark goals and indicators of success at various intervals and make course corrections as needed.

LEADING CHANGE ACTION STEPS



SECTION II: ASSESSING READINESS

Main concepts[2]

As a first step, leaders should assess the readiness of the participants for the change before designing the intervention. "Readiness" refers to the combination of factors evident in participants: their previous experience with such endeavors, the degree to which they have the necessary skills and knowledge for the tasks ahead and their attitude toward undertaking this change (their enthusiasm and willingness to take responsibility). Groups that are "high readiness" (meeting the highest standards for *all* three categories of experience, attitudes and skills) need less structure from the leader. They can be more self-directed as long as there are clear and specific objectives and expected outcomes.

Bear in mind that if a group is low readiness in any of these three categories, you should consider them "low readiness" overall. And most groups undergoing a change will likely be low readiness since they will likely lack previous experience with the strategy that is changing. Such low readiness groups will need much more structure and guidance until they experience success and have more confidence in the change process and in themselves as they help carry it out.

In practice, you will want to employ different strategies to correspond with the readiness of any given group. For example:

Low readiness groups need HIGH STRUCTURE strategies, largely initiated by the leader, such as:

- Specific, clear outcomes (objectives) with timelines and evaluation criteria
- Templates for work plans and budgets
- A written meeting agenda including ground-rules for participation
- Written recording of decisions reached at a meeting that are promptly distributed[3]
- Continuous review of progress and mid-course corrections through a defined structure, such as regularly-scheduled meetings
- Structured questioning to lead group conversation[4]

Medium-readiness groups need MODERATE STRUCTURE strategies such as:

- Decision-sheets, perhaps written by each participant on a rotating basis for a series of meetings
- Jointly-set meeting agendas and ground-rules
- Collaborative planning[5]

High-readiness groups need LIGHT STRUCTURE strategies such as:

- Jointly setting the objectives and letting the group decide how to achieve them.

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[2] Many of these concepts are elaborations of the work of Paul Hersey and Kenneth Blanchard.
[3] A decision sheet template may be found on page 21.
[4] Never ask an open-ended question to a low readiness group or the group might spin out of control.
[5] See the *Collaborative Planning Parameters in* this handbook.

Experience suggests a number of other guidelines for leaders to keep in mind in assessing readiness:

Levels of readiness will differ by task, even for the same group of participants**.** You will need to re-assess readiness for each activity.

Leaders often have a reluctance to label a group as "low readiness" because they are colleagues and leaders want to think the best of everyone. Being low readiness is not a judgment on the worth of the group. It is a reality that needs to be considered when planning activities to gain their active and constructive participation in the change strategy. Because any group will contain people with different levels of readiness, you should design strategies for the lowest readiness participants to reduce the chances of their disrupting or slowing the change process. One technique for managing varying levels of readiness within the larger groups is to form smaller working groups according to participants' readiness, and structure the assignments of those working groups according to their readiness level.

If no information is available, assume low readiness. You can always lessen the structure later if you determine otherwise as you go along.

Readiness levels are likely to improve as the group becomes successful, gains more skills and develops more positive attitudes toward the change process. It is important to adjust your change strategies to take full advantage of increased readiness as it develops. If you don't recognize this difference, the group will "turn-off" at being given less discretion than they have earned.

Using the tool:

The *Readiness Rubric* can be used by the leader to: rate the group's readiness according to the three criteria (experience, skills/knowledge and attitude); match the amount of structure in the strategies to the group's readiness and periodically re-assess readiness as the process unfolds and participants' readiness improves. Alternatively, you can use the tool to ask participants themselves to assess their own readiness for the task. The *Readiness Rubric* can be most useful in determining how to group participants in collaborative planning processes and deciding how much structure to use when designing activities for the group (or breakout groups).

In addition, using the data from the three readiness categories (experience, skills/knowledge and attitude) enables you to identify the area(s) where greatest emphasis should be placed when trying to increase the readiness levels of the group. For example, gaining more successful experience can be attained through early wins (see the *Early Win Wonder* tool), attitudes may be improved through use of the *Resistance Reducer* tool and skills/knowledge may be improved through training. You may also want to use this tool to consider your own personal readiness for the change at hand and understand what you need to do to increase your readiness to accomplish the change goal.

READINESS RUBRIC -- Section A: Leader's Readiness

Change Strategy Under Consideration:

Readiness = Experience + Skills + Willingness + Shared Values

Be candid when completing this tool and try to think of concrete examples when answering the questions. Be careful when noting your ratings; the scale descriptions are not the same for all questions.

A. Experience: To what degree do you have previous experience with change in general and with this type of change in particular?
Answer the questions below by entering your score in the cells to the right.

	RATING/SCORE					Input Your Score:
1. Have you successfully led change in any organization before, especially an organization similar to the current one?	Many times 5	4	Once or twice 3	2	Never 1	
2. Have you successfully led change in this organization before?	Many times 5	4	Once or twice 3	2	Never 1	
3. Have you led change in any organization unsuccessfully?	Never 5	4	Once or twice 3	2	Many times 1	
4. Do you have previous successful experience in the technical content area of the change strategy (i.e., management consulting, curriculum development, teaching science)?	Many times 5	4	Once or twice 3	2	Never 1	
5. Have you been able to "unfreeze" participants' previously negative experiences with change and motivate them to take a leap of faith now?	Many times 5	4	Once or twice 3	2	Never 1	
Experience Subtotal (out of 25 possible points)						0
High Readiness = 22-25 points	*Medium readiness = 15-21 points*		*Low readiness = 14 points and below*			

A. Required Skills: To what degree do you have the required skills and knowledge for this change strategy?
Answer the questions below by entering your score in the cells to the right.

	RATING/SCORE					Input Your Score:
6. Do you have expertise in the content required by this change strategy? If not, do you have confidence in the expertise of others on your team?	A great deal 5	4	Mostly 3	2	Not much 1	
7. Are you skillful at leading change?	Very skillful 5	4	Somewhat skillful 3	2	Not at all 1	
8. Are you aware of what you do not know and are you candid about it?	Always 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	Seldom 1	
9. Are you willing to learn together with the participants when the skills and knowledge are just emerging?	Always 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	Seldom 1	
10. Are you an active listener (i.e., paraphrasing, waiting 9 seconds for response after asking a question)?	Always 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	Seldom 1	
Required Skills Subtotal (out of 25 possible points)						0
High Readiness = 22-25 points	*Medium readiness = 15-21 points*		*Low readiness = 14 points and below*			

A. To what degree are you willing to do whatever it takes?
Answer the questions below by entering your score in the cells to the right.

	RATING/SCORE					Input Your Score:
11. Do you have competing priorities that might demand your attention and detract from your leadership of the change strategy?	None 5	4	One or two 3	2	Several 1	
12. Are you reluctant to label a group as "low readiness"? Are you reluctant to put a lot of structure into your planning and implementation processes?	Never 5	4	Sometimes 3	2	Always 1	

13. Do you believe that you should always treat everyone equally as colleagues regardless of their readiness to participate in the change strategy?	No 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	Yes 1	
14. Do you consult people whose views may differ from your own?	Always 5	4	Sometimes 3	2	Seldom 1	
15. Are you open to the resulting plan being different from your original conception (provided that the nonnegotiables are in there)?	Always 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	Seldom 1	
"Whatever it Takes" Subtotal (out of 25 possible points)						0
High Readiness = 22-25 points	*Medium readiness = 15-21 points*			*Low readiness = 14 points and below*		

A. To what degree do you have values that will propel the change process?
Answer the questions below by entering your score in the cells to the right.

	RATING/SCORE					Input Your Score:
16. Do you and the participants have the same definitions/language for the problem to be solved and the methods by which this will be undertaken? Has this assumption been tested?	Definitely 5	4	Perhaps 3	2	No/don't know 1	
17. Are you comfortable with taking risks and learning from mistakes?	Always 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	No 1	
18. Do you know the values of participants and of the organization and how they may differ from your own?	To a great extent 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	Not at all 1	
19. Do you value flexibility?	Always 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	Seldom 1	
20. Do you model behavior that you want to see as norms, such as adhering to ground rules?	Always 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	Seldom 1	
Values Subtotal (out of 25 possible points)						0
High Readiness = 22-25 points	*Medium readiness = 15-21 points*			*Low readiness = 14 points and below*		

SECTION A SUMMARY: Leader's Total Readiness Score (out of 100)

Subscore for experience *(out of 25)* :	0
Subscore for skills *(out of 25)* :	0
Subscore for do what it takes *(out of 25)* :	0
Subscore for values *(out of 25)* :	0
TOTAL READINESS SCORE:	**0**
LEADER'S READINESS LEVEL (circle one): HIGH MEDIUM LOW	

High = 88-100; Medium = 87-60; Low = below 60

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READINESS RUBRIC -- Section B: Participants' Readiness

Change Strategy Under Consideration:

Readiness = Experience + Skills + Willingness + Shared Values

Be candid when completing this tool and try to think of concrete examples when answering the questions. Be careful when noting your ratings; the scale is not the same for all questions.

B. Experience: To what degree do participants have previous experience with change in general and with this type of change in particular?
Answer the questions below by entering your score in the cells to the right.

	RATING/SCORE					Input Your Score:
1. Have participants successfully undergone change in any organization before?	All have 5	4	Some have 3	2	Few have 1	
2. Have participants successfully undergone change in this organization before?	All have 5	4	Some have 3	2	Few have 1	
3. Have participants experienced change in this organization unsuccessfully?	Few have 5	4	Some have 3	2	All have 1	
4. Do participants have previous successful experience in the content area of the change strategy?	All have 5	4	Some have 3	2	Few have 1	
5. If participants' experience has been negative, are they willing to take a leap of faith now?	Definitely 5	4	Perhaps 3	2	Few will 1	
Experience Subtotal (out of 25 possible points)						0
High Readiness = 22-25 points	*Medium readiness = 15-21 points*		*Low readiness = 14 points and below*			

B. Required Skills: To what degree do participants have the required skills and knowledge for this change strategy?
Answer the questions below by entering your score in the cells to the right.

	RATING/SCORE					Input Your Score:
6. Have participants demonstrated expertise in the content required by this change strategy?	Consistently 5	4	Sometimes 3	2	Infrequently 1	
7. Do participants have formal training in the technical content required by this change strategy?	A great deal 5	4	Some 3	2	Little 1	
8. Are training, research, and/or other resources available in the content required by this change strategy and will participants use them?	A great deal 5	4	Some 3	2	Little 1	
9. Are participants aware of what they do not know and are they candid about it?	Completely 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	No 1	
10. Are participants willing to learn together when the skills/knowledge are just emerging?	Eagerly 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	Seldom 1	
Required Skills Subtotal (out of 25 possible points)						0
High Readiness = 22-25 points	*Medium readiness = 15-21 points*		*Low readiness = 14 points and below*			

B. "Whatever It Takes": To what degree are participants willing to do whatever it takes?
Answer the questions below by entering your score in the cells to the right.

	RATING/SCORE					Input Your Score:
11. Are participants passionate about solving this problem and enthusiastic about making it happen?	Definitely 5	4	Mostly 3	2	Not really 1	
12. Are there many volunteers for various work assignments?	Always 5	4	Sometimes 3	2	Seldom 1	
13. Do participants feel blamed for the problem's existence and complain they are being asked to change?	Not at all 5	4	Perhaps 3	2	Yes 1	

14. Are participants not implementing well even though they have the skills and knowledge to do so?	No (imple-mentation on course) 5	4	Sometimes an issue 3	2	Frequently 1	
15. Do most people come in early and/or stay until the job is done even if it is past the end of their official day?	Always 5	4	Sometimes but not the norm 3	2	Seldom (or only 1-2 reliable people) 1	
"Whatever it Takes" Subtotal (out of 25 possible points)						0
High Readiness = 22-25 points	*Medium readiness = 15-21 points*		*Low readiness = 14 points and below*			

B. Values: To what degree do participants have shared understandings (culture)?
Answer the questions below by entering your score in the cells to the right .

	RATING/SCORE					Input Your Score:
16. Do participants have the same definitions/language for the problem to be solved and the methods by which this will be undertaken? Has this assumption been tested?	Always 5	4	Sometimes 3	2	No or untested 1	
17. Are participants comfortable with taking risks and learning from mistakes?	Always 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	Seldom 1	
18. Do participants value listening to each other, hearing what each is saying, and testing those assumptions?	Always 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	Seldom 1	
19. Are participants comfortable with ambiguity?	Always 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	Seldom 1	
20. Do participants value flexibility?	Always 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	Seldom 1	
Values Subtotal (out of 25 possible points)						0
High Readiness = 22-25 points	*Medium readiness = 15-21 points*		*Low readiness = 14 points and below*			

SECTION B SUMMARY: Participants' Total Readiness Score (out of 100)

Subscore for Experience *(out of 25)* :	0
Subscore for Skills *(out of 25)* :	0
Subscore for Do What It Takes *(out of 25)* :	0
Subscore for Values *(out of 25)* :	0
TOTAL READINESS SCORE *(out of 100)* **:**	**0**
PARTICIPANTS' READINESS LEVEL (circle one): HIGH MEDIUM LOW	

High = 88-100; Medium = 87-60; Low = below 60

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READINESS RUBRIC -- Section C: The Organization's Readiness

Change Strategy Under Consideration:

Readiness = Organizational Experience + Organizational Learning + Organizational Culture + Shared Values About This Change Strategy

Be candid when completing this tool and try to think of concrete examples when answering the questions. Be careful when noting your ratings; the scale is not the same for all questions.

C. Experience: To what degree does the organization have previous experience with change in general and with this type of change in particular?
Answer the questions below by entering your score in the cells to the right.

	RATING/SCORE					Input Your Score:
1. Has the organization successfully undergone any type of change before?	Many times 5	4	Once or twice 3	2	Never 1	
2. Has the organization successfully undergone change in the same content area as the proposed change strategy before?	Many times 5	4	Once or twice 3	2	Never 1	
3. Has the organization experienced change unsuccessfully?	Never 5	4	Once 3	2	More than once 1	
4. Does the organization have experience in delivering programs similar in content to those of the change strategy?	Has all needed expertise 5	4	Has most needed expertise 3	2	Has little needed expertise currently 1	
5. If the organization's experience has been negative, does it value risk-taking?	A great deal 5	4	To a moderate degree 3	2	Seldom 1	
Experience Subtotal (out of 25 possible points)						0
High Readiness = 22-25 points	*Medium readiness = 15-21 points*			*Low readiness = 14 points and below*		

C. Organizational Learning: To what degree does the organization have the capacity to learn the skills that are required for this change strategy?
Answer the questions below by entering your score in the cells to the right.

	RATING/SCORE					Input Your Score:
6. Are there processes in place by which organization members critically reflect on their experiences with their programs (successful and unsuccessful)? If not, will such be put in place for this initiative?	Definitely 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	Not at this time 1	
7. Are there many types of learning taking place (i.e., formal training, informal learning)?	Ongoing 5	4	Some 3	2	Little or none 1	
8. Are research, data, and/or other resources available in the content area? Are they valued, used, and discussed?	Extensive 5	4	Some 3	2	Little or none 1	
9. Is there on-going assessment of each individual's skills versus those needed for his/her role – and a plan for developing skills that need improvement?	A formal system is in place 5	4	Something is done; it might not be formal 3	2	Little or nothing is done 1	
10. Is there a vehicle for learning together when the skills and knowledge are just emerging?	A formal system is in place 5	4	Something is done; it might not be formal 3	2	Little or nothing is done 1	
Organizational Learning Subtotal (out of 25 possible points)						0
High Readiness = 22-25 points	*Medium readiness = 15-21 points*			*Low readiness = 14 points and below*		

C. Organizational Culture:
Answer the questions below by entering your score in the cells to the right.

	RATING/SCORE					Input Your Score:
11. Is there a culture of trying to assign blame when things go wrong or a value for being reflective and learning from mistakes?	No or seldom 5	4	To some extent 3	2	Yes 1	
12. Is there a shared value for flexibility? Ambiguity seen as opportunity?	Always 5	4	Sometimes 3	2	Seldom 1	
13. Is there a culture of mutual respect? listening to each other valued?	Always 5	4	Sometimes 3	2	Seldom 1	
14. there a strong organizational work ethic?	Always 5	4	Sometimes 3	2	Seldom 1	
15. Are there rituals or ceremonies to celebrate successes?	Always 5	4	Sometimes 3	2	Seldom 1	
Organizational Culture Subtotal (out of 25 possible points)						0
High Readiness = 22-25 points	*Medium readiness = 15-21 points*			*Low readiness = 14 points and below*		

C. Shared Values: Are there shared values about the change strategy?
Answer the questions below by entering your score in the cells to the right .

	RATING/SCORE					Input Your Score:
16. Are the terms in use for the change strategy commonly understood? Has this assumption been tested?	Yes 5	4	Perhaps 3	2	No 1	
17. Are there shared norms of behavior (such as ground rules and agendas for meetings as a matter of course)?	Yes 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	No 1	
18. Is there a shared value for the importance of the problem being addressed by the change strategy?	Yes 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	No 1	
19. Is there a shared belief that this change strategy will help solve the problem?	Yes 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	No 1	
20. Is there a shared belief that this change strategy will be successfully implemented?	Yes 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	No 1	
Shared Values Subtotal (out of 25 possible points)						0
High Readiness = 22-25 points	*Medium readiness = 15-21 points*			*Low readiness = 14 points and below*		

SECTION B SUMMARY: Participants' Total Readiness Score (out of 100)

Subscore for Experience *(out of 25)* :	0
Subscore for Organizational Learning *(out of 25)* :	0
Subscore for Organizational Culture *(out of 25)* :	0
Subscore for Shared Values *(out of 25)* :	0
TOTAL READINESS SCORE *(out of 100):*	**0**
ORGANIZATION'S READINESS LEVEL (circle one): HIGH MEDIUM LOW	

High = 88-100; Medium = 87-60; Low = below 60

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SECTION III: ANALYZING STAKEHOLDERS

Main concepts

For the leader of change, one of the most important misconceptions is that it is enough to have a good idea for change that will benefit the work. By definition, if things are to change in a significant way, stakeholders will often see themselves as winners or losers – even after the benefits become apparent. Regardless of how good a change idea is, there are groups that are benefiting from the status quo and therefore may feel threatened, angry or disempowered if things change. Therefore, leading change effectively means accomplishing your goals in spite of opposition. So it is important for leaders to recognize which groups might lose power or influence with the proposed changes, minimize their opposition, provide openings for them to participate in devising improvements to the change strategy – but also to plan for opposition that cannot be addressed.

You will need to survey the landscape to identify stakeholders who stand to gain or lose from the contemplated change and to understand which of these groups has the power to derail the change you are seeking. To minimize such opposition, you can provide incentives to entice potential opponents to support the change and thereby determine mutual self-interest. You can also begin the change process by focusing on areas that excite relatively fewer passions ("zones of indifference"). You can engage potential opponents in collaborative planning, and use data to create a sense of credibility and urgency. As with the readiness assessment, analysis of stakeholders should not be thought of as a one-time occurrence. Stakeholders' positions change as the situation changes, so it is important to do the following analysis continuously throughout the change process.

Using the tool:

The *Stakeholder Strategizer* is most effectively used as a brainstorming device as several members of the planning team consider what they know about the various groups that will be involved in the change process. Knowing which groups may support or oppose you and why - and assessing their ability to promote or derail the change - will enable you to develop strategies to engage those groups that you identify as having the power to stall your efforts. Understanding which strategies are less controversial can also lead to tackling that issue first and, once having had success, going on to more challenging aspects of your change strategy. And publicizing that early success will help build support for further successes along the way.

Using the data from this tool will also enable the leader to negotiate "at the margins" – that is, finding ways to accommodate at least some of the concerns of key groups without compromising the essence of the change strategy. The analyses provided by the tool also enables the leader to use data to make decisions purposefully about how to engage specific groups and to build on what each key group will perceive as a sense of urgency for the change initiative.

STAKEHOLDER STRATEGIZER

I. WHAT GROUPS STAND TO GAIN OR LOSE FROM THE CONTEMPLATED CHANGE?

	GROUP	GAINS	LOSSES
SUPPORTERS	1.	1.	1.
	2.	2.	2.
	3.	3.	3.
	4.	4.	4.
OPPONENTS (In order of importance)	1.	1.	1.
	2.	2.	2.
	3.	3.	3.
	4.	4.	4.

II. WHAT GROUPS CAN THWART THE PROPOSED CHANGE?

GROUP	HOW?
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.

III. WHAT INCENTIVES CAN BE GIVEN TO THE OPPONENTS TO ENGAGE THEM?

GROUP (in order of importance)	INCENTIVE	WHY IT SHOULD WORK
1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.
4.	4.	4.

IV. WHERE ARE THE "ZONES OF INDIFFERENCE" AND HOW CAN THEY BE USED?[7]

POTENTIAL ZONE OF INDIFFERENCE[8]	HOW TO USE
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

[7] "Zones of indifference" are those areas that incite relatively less passion and therefore will garner relatively less opposition. Starting with these areas helps attain early success, credibility and momentum in order to implement strategies that generate less opposition.

[8] Make sure that you test your assumption that what you think is a zone of indifference actually is one. If you are wrong about defining something in this way, you will have unexpected problems.

IV. ARE THE OPPONENTS ENGAGED IN YOUR COLLABORATIVE PLANNING?

	GROUP	WHAT IDEAS ARE THEY CONTRIBUTING?
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

VI. WHAT WOULD EACH KEY GROUP CONSIDER TO BE URGENT REGARDING THE INITIATIVE?

	GROUP	WHAT WOULD BE CONSIDERED URGENT? HOW CAN THAT URGENCY BE COMMUNICATED? (What data exist to prove the urgency?)
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

SECTION IV: PLANNING EARLY WINS

Change is a highly personal experience. Everyone participating in the effort has different reactions to change, different concerns and different motivations for being involved. The results of change are long-term, but the change *process* is incremental and continuous. To bring people along with you, they need evidence at each stage that the change will succeed and that is likely to yield positive results. That is especially true at the beginning, when skepticism about the benefits and possible costs is often highest. An effective change leader deliberately plans for "early wins" that demonstrate concretely that achieving the change goals is feasible and will result in benefits for those involved. You therefore should plan for achieving and documenting results that are evident within the first month or two that are:

tangible;
symbolic of a desired commonly-held value; and
achievable.

By so doing, you will inspire confidence that the rest of the initiative can be accomplished. However, it is critically important that once the early win objective is selected and announced, it is achieved. To do anything less risks deflating confidence in the feasibility of the initiative. One way to get ahead of the game is to explore an early win within a zone of indifference that you identified when using the *Stakeholder Strategizer*. There is a stronger likelihood of achieving this strategy since it should be opposed less fervently by fewer groups.

Using the tool:

Use a separate *Early Win Wonder* tool for each potential "early win" strategy under consideration. You can use it alone or with your planning group as a vehicle for brainstorming possible early wins and determining whether they meet all the criteria. The analysis may be done for what the group might consider a win and/or what individuals in the group might consider as such.

The results can be used to rank the various strategies according to each strategy's likelihood of producing the desired early win. The tool can also help identify shortcomings in any strategy to increase its chances of succeeding. You might also use the data you get from using this tool to brainstorm ways to take a potential loss and turn it into a win.

EARLY WIN WONDER

What specific objective can be accomplished in the first month or two that is:

tangible;
symbolic of a desired value; and
achievable?

Potential "early win":	

REVIEW FOR

GENERAL CHARACTERISTIC	EVIDENCE OF THIS CHARACTERISTIC IN YOUR PROPOSED EARLY WIN
You are certain it can be accomplished within the timeframe	
Accomplishing this objective will meet the common understanding of what constitutes "success"	
There is a transparent, observable outcome, preferably data-informed	
It will be perceived as important by many constituencies	
It is an important symbol in the culture	
It lies in a zone of indifference	
Groups that oppose the change would perceive benefits if this objective were accomplished	
It is not merely "nice" to do, but necessary to move the work forward	
There are mechanisms to communicate the goal broadly, both at the beginning and again at the promised deadline for results	

SECTION V: MINIMIZING RESISTANCE

Main concepts

The preceding three tools centered on helping you anticipate resistance – by assessing and improving participants' readiness, by identifying potential opponents and either bringing them on board or minimizing their ability to derail your plans and by planning short-term wins as evidence that the change will result in benefits. There is a good chance that resistance can be prevented if the process is matched to the readiness of the group, strategies are in place to engage key stakeholder groups and early wins are built in.

There are additional techniques that can minimize resistance. The key, once again, is to recognize that change is a highly personal experience. Affected individuals must come to believe that there are more benefits to them than costs if the change succeeds. You need to identify as many barriers to success as you can and eliminate them.

Keep in mind, too, that often people hear the need for change as blaming ("If what we were doing was effective, why would we be asked to change?"). For the leader, then, empathy is critical. That is, you can take steps to minimize resistance by thinking like the intended audience. *You* may fully understand what you are trying to communicate, but the *audience* may be misunderstanding, or hearing something different from what you intended. A successful change leader therefore probes, listens actively and paraphrases.

A key concept that many leaders miss is that you sometimes have to accept "yes" for an answer *even if participants' reasons for saying "yes" isn't the reason you would prefer*. Often, the leader has one reason in mind behind the change goal, but individuals see different benefits and are willing to go along for those reasons. This is fine. As long as people sincerely see positives in the proposed change and are willing to participate, it doesn't have to be for the same reason the leader finds compelling.

Using the tool:

When using the *Resistance Reducer*, you can either project how others will respond, or you can ask participants to answer the questions themselves. The tool can be a non-threatening way of getting direct feedback from participants.

Experience and research suggest that participants will almost always be pleased to be asked sincerely for their feedback; however, the leader will get the most candid and useful information when responses are anonymous. By using the data, you will be aware of each individual's perceptions of the plusses and minuses and whether there is group consensus on some of these. If there is group consensus, you will be able to emphasize the plusses in your action plan and minimize, or at least acknowledge, the barriers from participants' points of view. The leader will also be armed with an understanding of how the change message is likely to be heard and revise the communications plan accordingly. You might want to repeat the administration of the *Resistance Reducer* at other points along the way in the implementation of the change strategies.

RESISTANCE REDUCER

Change Strategy Under Consideration:

Effective Resistance Management = Preventing + Reducing + Tolerating

Be candid when completing this tool and try to think of concrete examples when answering the questions. Be careful when noting your ratings; the scale is not the same for all questions.

A. Preventing Resistance: To what degree can you prevent resistance before you start?
Answer the questions below by entering your score in the cells to the right.

	RATING/SCORE					Input Your Score:
1. Participants' readiness has been analyzed and activities are matched with that. Provision has been made to reanalyze to make midcourse corrections.	To a great extent 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	Not at all 1	
2. It is recognized that people have different attitudes about change and ways of dealing with it. An effort is made to find out how the individual participants feel about change and develop strategies to make each feel comfortable.	To a great extent 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	Not at all 1	
3. There are many other changes going on at the same time as this one.	Not at all 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	To a great extent 1	
4. Advantages and disadvantages of the change strategy from participants' points of view are identified up front. Strategies are developed to increase participants' perceived benefits and to decrease the negatives. The leader accepts that participants may buy into the change for reasons other than those that motivate the leader.	To a great extent 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	Not at all 1	
5. When communicating about the change strategy, the leader considers what people will hear as opposed to what he or she thinks is being said.	To a great extent 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	Not at all 1	
6. Participants feel blamed for the need to have change. If they had done their work better, change would not be necessary.	Not at all 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	To a great extent 1	
7. The leader is an active listener. He or she can turn off his or her own opinions and really hear others. The leader paraphrases the speaker often to confirm understanding.	To a great extent 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	Not at all 1	
Resistance Prevention Subtotal (out of 35 possible points)						0
High = 32-35 points	*Medium = 21-31 points*		*Low = 20 points and below*			

B. Minimizing Resistance: To what degree can you reduce resistance as you go along?
Answer the questions below by entering your score in the cells to the right.

	RATING/SCORE					Input Your Score:
1. There is awareness that resistance comes with the territory in leading change, because participants are likely to experience loss and anxiety. Attempts are made to spot resistance at its earliest stages.	To a great extent 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	Not at all 1	
2. If some participants agree with the change in public—but talk against it in private—an effort is made to understand and address their points of view.	To a great extent 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	Not at all 1	
3. Resisters are engaged in collaborative planning for the change strategy, often teaming them with others who are genuine supporters of the change strategy.	To a great extent 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	Not at all 1	
4. If the organization values competition, such tactics are used to motivate, but if there is no such value, competition is not encouraged.	To a great extent 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	Not at all 1	
5. Successes are celebrated with ceremonies and new rituals.	To a great extent 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	Not at all 1	
6. Learning is deliberately incorporated in most activities (even if it is informal or networking).	To a great extent		Somewhat		Not at all	

	5	4	3	2	1	
7. Participants believe that they are being treated fairly. For example: "negative balance of consequences"—whereby people who do the best job are "rewarded" by getting more to do without additional compensation—is avoided.	To a great extent 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	Not at all 1	
Minimizing Resistance Subtotal (out of 35 possible points)						0
High = 32-35 points	*Medium = 21-31 points*		*Low = 20 points and below*			

C. Tolerating Resistance: For the leader: To what degree can you tolerate resistance when it cannot be prevented or minimized?
Answer the questions below by entering your score in the cells to the right.

	RATING/SCORE					Input Your Score:
1. I am totally committed to the change strategy and believe strongly that it will be beneficial. Therefore, I am willing to encounter whatever resistance cannot prevent or mimimize.	To a great extent 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	Not at all 1	
2. I analyze the political power of those who are resisting to determine if they represent larger constituencies as opposed to individual issues. If resisters are individuals, I am prepared to tolerate their opposition.	To a great extent 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	Not at all 1	
3. I avoid conflict at any cost. I like the work environment to be friendly. If there is too much resistance, I will back off.	Not at all 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	To a great extent 1	
4. Resources and rewards are awarded on a competitive basis to those who support and further the change strategy if that helps move forward.	To a great extent 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	Not at all 1	
5. If people are afraid they will lose their jobs and/or be underqualified for the new change strategy, I am prepared to support their development, but also prepared to encounter resistance from those who will be affected.	To a great extent 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	Not at all 1	
6. If organizational values will remain the same or be furthered by the change, I emphasize that. If there is a deliberate attempt to change the values, I am prepared to encounter resistance.	To a great extent 5	4	Somewhat 3	2	Not at all 1	
Resistance Tolerance Subtotal (out of 30 possible points)						0
High = 28-30 points	*Medium = 18-27 points*		*Low = 17 points and below*			

TOTAL RESISTANCE RECAP

A. Subscore for Resistance Prevention *(out of 35)* :	0
B. Subscore for Resistance Reducing *(out of 35)* :	0
C. Subscore for Resistance Tolerance *(out of 30)* :	0
TOTAL RESISTANCE REDUCER SCORE *(out of 100):*	**0**

High = 88-100; Medium = 87-60; Low = below 60

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SECTION VI: COLLABORATIVE PLANNING

Planning and implementing change is most effective when people from diverse backgrounds and perspectives are involved. Such broad participation empowers people by giving them a sense of control and ownership of the strategy and the resulting changes. It also turns the change process into an enriching opportunity to examine multiple perspectives within the group; gain an understanding and appreciation of differing viewpoints; test long-held assumptions; surface and purposefully channel conflict; and build a network and team with other participants.

In short, collaborative planning is not only important for improving the strategies and developing buy-in for change. It has the added advantage, when done well, of providing opportunities for learning and growth among participants. It can help build a culture of learning in your organization in which risk-taking, flexibility and learning from mistakes are valued.

Establishing a climate of respect is an essential foundation for this work. Even if a climate of respect and good will is not fully evident at the start, the process itself can help breed it, even among formerly hostile constituencies. Since participants come with prior experience, this must be taken into account in two ways. First, critical reflection of their experience should be incorporated into the resulting plan; adding value to the plan and meaning for participants. Second, you may first have to address participants' long-held skepticism of planning in order to gain their active, positive cooperation.

The ideal collaborative process produces solutions that no one working independently could achieve. An effective planning group, then, is one in which people with diverse backgrounds and viewpoints are brought together, including people who may disagree with the prevailing wisdom but who will be called upon to support and/or implement the resulting program. An ideal size is from 10 to 15 people so an open exchange of ideas is encouraged. If the group is larger than this, smaller groups can be "broken out" for discussion sessions.

Typical ground-rules in an effective collaborative planning process may include that participants should: (1) be specific; (2) state comments in a constructive manner rather than being critical, offer potential solutions when possible; (3) stay on topic; (4) keep discussions factual, not personal; (5) use data to support arguments; and (6) listen actively to each other. For low and medium readiness groups, the facilitator must enforce the ground-rules. Even minor infractions, if ignored, can lead to disruptions of the group process. In a high readiness group, the participants themselves abide by the ground rules as a matter of cultural norm and enforce them as a matter of course.

The result of this process is a detailed document which defines the mission, objectives and strategies of the new policy or program. It delineates the activities which will be used, and assigns responsible staff with timeframes for task completion. Importantly, it also provides documentation of the decisions made along the way – a historical record that may be important as others come into the process later. Such documentation can be a hedge against the disruptions often caused by turnover among planning group participants.

An implementation team can be created from among the original planners. They may be charged with overseeing the implementation and for making timely revisions as necessary. For, just as with the other tools, it is essential that the *Collaborative Planning Parameters* be used in an on-going way throughout the change process. In this way, mid-course corrections can be made as needed and continuous improvement achieved.

The collaborative planning process is not easy or risk-free. The ego of the change leader or skepticism of participants can derail the process. Perhaps most consequentially, a leader might be tempted to weaken or over-generalize the decisions reached in order to achieve consensus or avoid conflict. For that reason, you as leader will need to prevent the collaborative process from straying from the core goals of the change strategy. You need to make clear from the beginning which aspects are non-negotiable. People appreciate not spinning wheels on something that cannot be changed. And you need to make it clear that the decisions reached will be the best according to the data and not necessarily those of consensus. You also obligate yourself to explain the rationale behind the decisions that are reached to the entire group.

Using the tool:

The *Collaborative Planning Parameters* are designed as a checklist for use by the leader or planning meeting facilitator to use in advance to plan the meetings and process by which the change strategies will be planned and implemented. The resulting data may be used by the leader/facilitator in conducting the meeting and making decisions during the meeting to ensure that the concepts presented in this tool are integrated. It is suggested that you use a "decision sheet" as shown on the next page to record the specifics of what is to be done as a result of the discussions. This becomes a contract between the leader and the participants. It also tests the assumptions of what was decided. This is important because sometimes the leader/facilitator is so pleased to get a decision that you assume, often wrongly, that everyone shares your understanding of what was actually decided. Shortly after the meeting, the draft decision sheet should be circulated for comments/revisions by participants. The leader should then ensure that those responsible for various decisions implement them by the stated deadline.

DECISION SHEET

MEETING OBJECTIVE:
DATE:
PARTICIPANTS:

	DECISION	**WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?**	**DEADLINE FOR THE ACTION**
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

COLLABORATIVE PLANNING PARAMETERS

Goal: To make the desired decisions while facilitating a learning experience for participants, without reducing the outcomes to only broad areas of consensus.

STRATEGIES	EVIDENCE (How do you know?)
ARE THE RIGHT PARTICIPANTS AT THE TABLE? Those with the authority to make decisions?	
Those with important opposing voices?	
Those who represent important internal and external constituencies?	
Those who will ultimately do the work?	
CLARITY/TRANSPARENCY OF MEETING'S OUTCOMES Is there agreement that the topic of the meeting solves an important problem? Are data presented to support this?	
Is there a written statement of what outcomes are desired from the meeting?	
Is there an upfront commitment to the end-time of the meeting? Is that commitment always met?	

COLLABORATIVE PLANNING PARAMETERS

STRATEGIES	EVIDENCE (How do you know?)
READINESS ASSESSMENT/STRUCTURE OF MEETING Is group readiness high, medium or low (see *Readiness Rubric*)?	
If readiness is low, is there high structure (for example: explicit ground-rules, an agenda, a mechanism for recording decisions and use of writing to focus the discussion[9])?	
If readiness is medium is there medium structure: (i.e., the group has a chance to provide input to the agenda and the process that will be used)?	
If readiness is high, does the group have sufficient autonomy?	
Are the group's shared values furthered by the defined work?	
Are there plans to *re-assess* readiness and adjust accordingly?	

[9] Writing can serve as a mechanism to facilitate participants' focus on specifics and gives them an opportunity to organize their thoughts before speaking. An effective device is a "critical incident" where grantees are asked to write one to two paragraphs answering three or four assigned questions about a specific circumstance related to the given topic. This is particularly effective when the last question asks for a solution to the issue discussed. For example: Think of a time in the past month when you experienced a specific problem with XX: (1) what was the issue? (2) how was it ultimately resolved? (3) how can it be prevented in the future? Such an exercise also can be used to bring participants' previous experience into the discussion in a structured way.

COLLABORATIVE PLANNING PARAMETERS

STRATEGIES	EVIDENCE (How do you know?)
PRE-WORK Is there assigned pre-work?[10]	
ATMOSPHERE OF RESPECT Are there light refreshments?	
Are all group members encouraged to contribute? How?	
Are participants heard? Are their opinions considered and incorporated? Are decisions explained, with the rationale behind them?	
MANDATES/CONSTRAINTS/NON-NEGOTIABLES Are all non-negotiables or mandates stated up-front?	
Is there discussion of how to use those mandates to the advantage of the work?	

[10] Pre-work is important in order to start participants' thinking, to develop a common language, to demonstrate seriousness and to stimulate learning.

COLLABORATIVE PLANNING PARAMETERS

STRATEGIES	EVIDENCE (How do you know?)
BUILD IN AN EARLY WIN After a review of the agenda, have you used an activity that will result in a positive and productive experience for the group? Examples include: agreement on a broad mission statement or a critical incident explicating a previous success.	
TEST ASSUMPTIONS OF WHAT HAS BEEN DECIDED Is there a clear, concise and timely summary of what has been decided, who is assigned to do what and by when?	
Do participants have input in reviewing and revising those decisions? Does this happen within a day or two of the planning session?	
MECHANISMS FOR CONTINGENCY/ MONITORING/REVISION Are there check-in points throughout the meeting to ensure that participants believe the work to be on-track? Are there specific ways in which modifications can be made as the work progresses after the meeting?	
INTEGRATION OF LEARNING Is the group solving a problem? Developing strategies that can be applied immediately? Learning from real life experiences? Forming supportive or informational networks? Acquiring new resources (knowledge, people, time)?	

SECTION VII: SPREADING AND SUSTAINING CHANGE

Main concepts

From the beginning of an initiative and throughout its life, scale and sustainability are key aspects to consider. Even if you succeed at your change goal, it means little if the resulting program does not spread or live on after the initial success.

Scale involves not only "breadth" – i.e., widespread adaptation of a program or practice – but also "depth," that is, evidence of penetration and high quality in all programs that result from the change. Too often "scale" is associated only with "spread" and the resulting programs may be numerous but are watered down versions of the original. For successful scale to occur there needs to be, first of all, a clear understanding of the core elements of the original model. As the program or practice spreads, there also has to be the right balance between preserving the essential properties of the original, and allowing for and encouraging local adaptations.

Sustainability involves not only the long-term staying power of the resulting program, but changes in people's behaviors. Adequate funding and supportive policies and laws are important to sustainability, but they aren't sufficient. To ensure that a program or practice is truly "in the water supply," people's attitudes and behaviors need to change, culture needs to change and key stakeholder groups must embrace the program as their own. Often, sustainability may *begin* with laws and policies and funding. But to last, a change must become embedded in the culture; in the attitudes values and behaviors of those most affected by it.

Taken together, scale and sustainability "convert best practice into common practice".[11] Importantly, you must consider not only how to plan for scale and sustainability, but for the difficult job of implementing those plans and revising them for mid-course corrections. It is important to distinguish between what is "on the books," versus what is really "on the ground". Therefore, the *Scale & Sustainability Score Sheet* tool presented here examines planning and implementation separately for each category so you can see the full picture of your scale and sustainability efforts to date, identify gaps and determine how to go forward. The tool is designed to be used for programs or practices that have evidence of high quality or demonstrated potential.

Using the tool:

Scale and sustainability planning should happen at the beginning of the work or as soon as possible once the program or practice has been identified. The *Scale & Sustainability Score Sheet* may be used by the leader, with a team, to determine what is needed to ensure the eventual scale and sustainability of the change strategy. It is important to engage a team because seldom does any one person have all the perspectives needed to perform this assessment holistically. The ratings and evidence provided by completing the tool should give the leader a good idea of the specifics needed in planning and implementation that are likeliest to result in scale and sustainability.

[11] PELP 2009, S. Childress and A. Grossman

SCALE & SUSTAINABILITY SCORE SHEET

STEP 1

DESCRIBE THE PROGRAM OR PRACTICE THAT YOU ARE CONSIDERING SCALING AND SUSTAINING

What is it? Why is it important? How do you know it is of high quality and valued? What results are anticipated?

STEP 2

LIST THE CORE OR NON-NEGOTIABLE ELEMENTS OF THE PROGRAM OR PRACTICE

STEP 3

RATE THE CURRENT STATUS OF THE KEY CATEGORIES OF SCALE & SUSTAINABILITY IN TERMS OF *BOTH* PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION [12]

	For Planning - There is:		For Implementation:
5 =	A comprehensive plan in place that all stakeholders "own"	5 =	All aspects have been fully implemented
4 =	A comprehensive plan in place that most stakeholders support	4 =	Most aspects have been fully implemented
3 =	A partial plan in place with some support	3 =	Some aspects have been implemented
2 =	A partial plan with modest support	2 =	Few aspects have been implemented
1 =	No plan	1 =	No aspects have been implemented

STEP 4

CONSIDER YOUR RATINGS FOR BOTH PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION IN EACH CATEGORY AND IDENTIFY WHAT IS NEEDED TO PROMOTE SCALE AND SUSTAINABITY

Fill in the right-hand column of the *Score Sheet*. This will lead you into development of strategies to further progress and fill gaps.

STEP 5

DEVELOP STRATEGIES FOR BOTH PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION BASED ON THE NEEDS YOU HAVE IDENTIFIED

Continue to monitor the categories of scale and sustainability throughout implementation and make mid-course corrections as necessary.

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[12] If you are using the on-line version of this tool, the planning and implementation ratings for each category will automatically add together to show you a total rating. "10" is the highest score. You will also see a total rating for "scale" and a total of the average sub-totals for each sustainability category. "100" is the highest score. These scores should assist you in determining where you are versus where you want to be and where the gaps are both in each category and between planning and implementation.

SCALE & SUSTAINABILITY SCORE SHEET – Part I: Scale

To what extent have the following elements been incorporated into your program or practice?

	For Planning (P) - There is:		**For Implementation (I)**
5 =	A comprehensive plan in place that all stakeholders "own"	5 =	All aspects have been fully implemented
4 =	A comprehensive plan in place that most stakeholders support	4 =	Most aspects have been fully implemented
3 =	A plan in place with some support	3 =	Some aspects have been implemented
2 =	A partial plan with modest support	2 =	Few aspects have been implemented
1 =	No plan	1 =	No aspects have been implemented

RATINGS

	SCALE CATEGORY	(P)	(I)	Total P + I		Evidence for the Rating	What Is Needed For Scale
I.	A model with demonstrated effectiveness or promise				(P)		
					(I)		
II.	A program or practice not only in more places, but with high quality and depth of implementation in all those places				(P)		
					(I)		
III.	A "logic model" or theory of action that identifies the steps leading to the model's desired outcomes				(P)		
					(I)		
IV.	A justified hypothesis and/or research that supports the rationale behind the model				(P)		
					(I)		
V.	Replication of identified core elements of the original model with contextual modifications. Ownership by local adapters				(P)		
					(I)		
VI.	High demand for program or practice; fills an acknowledged need				(P)		
					(I)		
VII.	A large number of supporters beyond "early adopters"				(P)		
					(I)		
VIII.	Structural mechanisms by which the model can be spread				(P)		
					(I)		
IX.	Personnel who are skilled in the model who can train others				(P)		
					(I)		
X.	A strong implementation plan with monitoring and continuous improvement built in				(P)		
					(I)		
	SCALE Total (P & I)					**<--Combined Total (P+I)** *(out of 100)*	
	Total	**(P)**	**(I)**	**(P+I)**			

SCALE & SUSTAINABILITY SCORE SHEET – Part II: Sustainability

To what extent have the following elements been incorporated into your program or practice?

SUSTAINABILITY ELEMENT	(P)	(I)	Total P + I	Evidence for the Rating	What is Needed for Sustainability?
I. LAWS, REGULATIONS, POLICIES					
a. Supportive laws or regulations in place				(P) / (I)	
b. Institutionalized outcomes of the change (i.e., procedures, position descriptions, curriculum requirements)				(P) / (I)	
I. AVERAGE SCORES FOR CATEGORY					
II. STAKEHOLDERS (Key individuals)					
a. Key stakeholders engaged				(P) / (I)	
b. Little active opposition				(P) / (I)	
II. AVERAGE SCORES FOR CATEGORY					
III. EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS (Key groups or organizations)					
a. Key organizations engaged				(P) / (I)	
b. Key organizations perceive the program or practice as furthering their own goals				(P) / (I)	
c. Union contracts support the program or practice				(P) / (I)	
III. AVERAGE SCORES FOR CATEGORY					
IV. INTERNAL ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY					
a. Organizational goals furthered by the change				(P) / (I)	
b. Well-defined procedures and systems for implementation				(P) / (I)	
IV. AVERAGE SCORES FOR CATEGORY					

SCALE & SUSTAINABILITY SCORE SHEET - PART II: Sustainability

SUSTAINABILITY ELEMENT	(P)	(I)	Total P + I	Evidence for the Rating	What is Needed for Sustainability?
V. HUMAN CAPITAL					
a. A clear and legitimate procedure of succession for those leading the effort				(P) (I)	
b. Staff with the skills and knowledge to implement the new program or practice				(P) (I)	
c. An institutionalized system for training personnel in the skills needed by the program or practice				(P) (I)	
V. AVERAGE SCORES FOR CATEGORY					
VI. FUNDING					
a. On-going funding from diversified sources				(P) (I)	
b. Coordination of several funding sources to support the new program or building in the new program or practice within existing programs				(P) (I)	
c. Cost neutral strategies (reallocation of resources to the new program or practice including cutting funding to programs that are not working well)				(P) (I)	
VI. AVERAGE SCORES FOR CATEGORY					
VII. CULTURE					
a. Program or practice furthers existing values and norms				(P) (I)	
b. Favorable attitudes toward the new program or practice				(P) (I)	
VII. AVERAGE SCORES FOR CATEGORY					
VIII. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT (Formative Evaluation)					
a. Continuous gathering of data to support the achievement of the change goal				(P) (I)	
b. Provisions for monitoring, learning lessons and consequently making mid-course corrections				(P) (I)	
VIII. AVERAGE SCORES FOR CATEGORY					

SCALE & SUSTAINABILITY SCORE SHEET - PART II: Sustainability

SUSTAINABILITY ELEMENT	(P)	(I)	Total P + I	Evidence for the Rating	What is Needed for Sustainability?
IX. COMMUNICATIONS					
a. On-going communications mechanisms including use of media and public relations				(P)	
				(I)	
b. Transparency of progress to all constituencies				(P)	
				(I)	
IX. AVERAGE SCORES FOR CATEGORY					
X. EVALUATION (Summative)					
a. Assessment of the program or practice's accomplishments versus planned outcomes after a specified time period				(P)	
				(I)	
b. Identified lessons learned				(P)	
				(I)	
X. AVERAGE SCORES FOR CATEGORY					
SUSTAINABILITY Total (P & I)				*(out of 100)*	
Total	**(P)**	**(I)**	**(P+I)**		

SECTION VIII. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT: REVIEW, REVISE, REPEAT

Because change is by nature continuous and outcomes hard to predict, it is difficult to get everything right up front. It is important to monitor implementation as things happen and make revision as you go along. You need to be aware of what is, what is changing and what might well change in the future. Often people mistakenly view the need for modifications to the original plan as if "mistakes" were made initially. It is important to understand that such revisions are important and could not have been anticipated until the plan was put into action.

Of course, you will only be able to gauge the current situation against what you wanted to have happen if you specify up front benchmarks with data. Then you will have a way to measure if you are on track and, if not, what course corrections are needed. In addition, you shouldn't try to assess the situation by yourself. Your team will offer perspectives on the current state and potential course corrections that would never have crossed your mind.

The "3R" tool on page 33 poses questions to ask for each of the change steps that should help you and your team analyze where you are and propose additional strategies in each area, if needed. Remember to perform this analysis for all eight steps, even if things are going well currently. Just because things are going well now doesn't mean that they will continue to do so. Try to think ahead.

The "3R" tool is the step in the chart on page two that represents the arrow that returns to the beginning of the process. It is insufficient to successfully implement your original plan. The real question is whether that successful implementation resulted in the change you sought initially. Those are two different questions.

TOOL: THE 3 R'S: REVIEW, REVISE, REPEAT

Leader's Self-Reflection Questions

1. *Do I deliberately and regularly review implementation for places where further changes are needed from what was planned?*
2. *Do I view "mistakes" as opportunities to learn and consequently develop new strategies and actions?*
3. *Am I willing to consider additional actions that may be more effective than the initial actions in implementing the original plan?*
4. *Do I rely too heavily on people who "think like me"?*
5. *Is there an opportunity to productively bring new voices into the work?*

TACTIC	MIDCOURSE QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO ANSWER BY USING THE TOOLS	POSSIBLE ACTIONS TO TAKE
1. Determine your change strategy and make your plan.	Is/was this the right change strategy to address the problem you were trying to solve?	If yes, keep going; if no, rethink and revise the change strategy.
2. Assess and improve the readiness of those affected.	What is the current readiness of the group or key individuals (as opposed to what it was at the beginning)? Has the readiness improved? Or has readiness declined once the specifics of the work were apparent?	Revise your collaborative planning design to reflect less structure if the readiness level has improved. If the readiness level has not improved, keep high-structure group strategies. Demonstrate how the program is furthering organization values.
3. Analyze the stakeholders.	Are the right groups actively engaged? Are any groups missing? Have the positions of key groups changed on this strategy since the beginning?	Add missing groups. Deepen the engagement of important groups not currently actively involved. Delineate clear roles for participating groups for next tasks.
4. Minimize resistance (and maximize your tolerance for it).	What level of resistance has been encountered? Can it be minimized further? If resistance is present, are you still convinced that the strategy is worth continuing?	Continue to restate the messages to the audience's ears; if resistance is still present and the strategy is still important, engage supporters and continue the work. Emphasize the success of early wins.
5. Secure a small, early win.	Have we secured your early win? Is there momentum for the strategy now?	If the early win has been achieved, publicize and capitalize on momentum. If the early win has not been achieved or if it did not work, quickly plan a new "win" for the next month.
6. Engage all those affected in collaborative planning.	Are the right groups at the table, including the opposition? Is the structure of sessions commensurate with the readiness of the group? Is there agreement on the central aspects of the strategy?	Add missing groups; make better use of under-utilized groups. Add more structure or lessen the structure as appropriate. Get agreement on the main aspects of the strategy before moving forward. Develop implementation plan and monitoring mechanisms.
7. Plan for scale and sustainability and implement the plan.	Are the core elements right? What gaps remain regarding planning for scale and sustainability? What gaps remain regarding implementing scale and sustainability?	Add or take away strategies as appropriate. Develop actions to fill gaps. Continuously revise plan as appropriate during implementation.
8. Build in ongoing monitoring and course corrections.	Are the actions working as hoped to address the problem? What midcourse corrections are needed in change step tactic?	Modify the strategy (even if implementation is successful) if not solving the original problem. Develop midcourse corrections based on analyses from using the tools. Analyze lessons learned that may inform future change strategies.

Note that many of the forms in this book can be downloaded for free from the Jossey-Bass Web site. Go to: www.josseybass.com/go/spiro.

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SECTION IX: THE LEADING CHANGE HANDBOOK IN ACTION

Gwinnett County Public Schools is the largest school system in the state of Georgia and the 13th largest in the nation. Its 139 schools serve more than 178,000 students in the metro Atlanta region.

During the past three years, several Gwinnett principals have used the concepts and tools described in the Handbook. They each identified a high-leverage change strategy and implemented it successfully by producing early wins that over time became part of their school's culture. In a series of interviews, they explained how use of the Handbook tools played out for them. Their stories illustrate how the tools can be used to help develop strategy and put it into practice.

The author of this Handbook became aware of the Gwinnett principals through her work as director of education at The Wallace Foundation, which has funded an initiative to promote effective school leadership in Gwinnett and other districts. It's worth noting that the principals' efforts to effect meaningful change in their schools and deliver demonstrable results were encouraged from the top. All of the principals received ongoing support from their district, led by Superintendent J. Alvin Wilbanks. Wilbanks, along with Assistant Superintendent for Leadership Glenn Pethel, supported the principals' efforts to effect meaningful change in their schools and deliver demonstrable results. In fact, Wilbanks invited the leadership teams of several schools to present their strategies at district-wide meetings.

One successful change strategy was led by Principal Susan Bearse at Berkley Elementary School. She set out to improve math instruction throughout her school by aligning academic standards, curriculum and assessment. Teacher support was critical, so to spark interest and buy-in, Bearse sent several teachers to a conference about putting standards and assessment in sync. The early win was huge. "When the teachers came back, they were so excited," she recalls. "They wanted to implement everything they learned. It was a changing moment for the school."

Like Bearse, the principals profiled here all experienced turning points as they disrupted the status quo and led their schools through a major change. Principal Jeff Lee overcame his own skepticism to carry out a strategy suggested by teachers. Principal Toni Ferguson forged a unique partnership between teachers and parents that she believes has paid dividends for student learning. Principal Lamont Mays empowered teachers to learn from each other, and in turn, sharpen their instructional practices. In each case, the tools in the Handbook guided their steps. Their use of the tools did not always follow in lock-step with the order they appear in the Handbook. Sometimes, the principals used a tool more than once as their change strategy unfolded. The tools are designed to permit leaders to enter the change process at the place that is most appropriate.

For all of the principals, culture and behaviors were changed in a sustained way. This, of course, is the goal of change leadership. It is not the perpetuation of a particular program, but the changed behaviors that underlie it. Read on to learn how the principals did it.

Right On Schedule

Principal Jeff Lee was skeptical when his teachers first proposed a new class schedule. Were they ready for departmentalization? Was he?

Jeff Lee has been the principal of Chattahoochee Elementary School for the last seven years. The school serves 1,250 students from kindergarten through fifth grade and is racially diverse, with roughly equal numbers of African-American, Caucasian, Hispanic and Asian students. Lee oversees 64 teachers and 60 staff members. It is the school's mission to teach students with academic rigor and according to their individual needs.

As in many elementary schools, students at Chattahoochee mostly stayed in their classroom all day with one teacher instructing them in language arts, mathematics, social studies and science. In 2014, teachers proposed an alternative way to Lee: Let us focus on a single subject and have students rotate among our classrooms each day. Teachers believed instruction would be more rigorous if they could concentrate on one subject, rather than many. This was a particular concern in light of the state's upcoming launch of new standardized tests. In addition, middle schools already operated on a rotating schedule. Introducing the practice to elementary school would help students get used to it. The teachers assured Lee that they would work together to create a seamless, well-coordinated academic program for the students.

Lee's first reaction was skeptical. The idea of a rotating schedule had been floating around the school for a few years, but the current structure had its advantages. Parents, for example, had to talk with only one teacher to learn about their child's progress. That would change if the school departmentalized the schedule. He also worried about the students and their ability to adapt to a rotating schedule. Implementation would take work. Test scores had been on the rise each of the past seven years. Was this a case of "don't fix what isn't broken"?

Still, Lee was pleased with the initiative taken by the teachers. Certainly the proposal had to be seriously considered.

Assessing Readiness

Lee knew that readiness, both the teachers' and his own, would determine whether or not to go forward—and if so, how. Clearly the teachers were enthusiastic about the idea, which was critical for pursuing it. But readiness also requires having relevant skills and experience. The school had never had a rotating schedule, so the teachers didn't have any experience with it. Lee believed their readiness was medium at best.

He turned to the Readiness Rubric in the Handbook for confirmation. By asking the rubric's questions to the faculty, he discovered that the nine teachers of fourth grade shared a readiness for the rotating schedule to a considerable degree. On the "plus" side: They all had been at the school for the past seven years and worked well as a team. Each also had strong skills and knowledge in a particular subject area, important to ensuring the academic rigor of the rotating schedule. They were also highly motivated—they wanted to prove to the principal that their idea would work. On the other hand, none had ever tried this type of schedule before. Taken together all these considerations put the teachers' readiness at "medium."

At the same time, the teachers' readiness was higher than that of their principal. Lee's self-analysis revealed that his readiness was "low" primarily because of two factors: his knowledge that the teachers didn't have any experience with a rotating schedule and his lack of full confidence in the organization's readiness for such a drastic change. A rotating schedule would affect how support staff served students, particularly English language learners and those with individualized education plans. The teacher's enthusiasm was infectious, however, and Lee soon agreed it was an idea worth pursuing. To ensure that everyone was on the same page about the new schedule, he invited support staff members to provide input into its development. He insisted on a good deal of structure and also proposed that the fourth grade pilot the rotating schedule for the 2014-2015 academic year. After the pilot, the school would evaluate the effort and decide whether to expand it to all grades.

Analyzing Stakeholders

As part of Lee's change strategy, he analyzed which stakeholders were essential for success and which could thwart it. Using the Stakeholder Strategizer tool, he determined that teachers and parents were both essential to engage in planning and implementing the new schedule. He knew the teachers were on board, based on the readiness assessment. Parents were an open question. Since becoming principal seven years ago, Lee had worked hard to cultivate trust with parents. That trust could be an asset in getting their buy-in for the new schedule. However, Lee also could lose their trust if they objected to the strategy. The stakes were high, not only for the new schedule's implementation but also for Lee's overall relationship with parents.

Analyzing Resistance

Lee knew he had to be upfront with parents and address their concerns before piloting the new schedule. Parents had to clearly see the benefits for their children. Using the Resistance Reducer tool, Lee prepared for a series of meetings with the parent association to engage parents in the planning of the pilot. The tool helped him anticipate concerns they would raise, allowing him to adequately prepare responses before the meeting. For example, he thought parents might object to having several teachers to consult about their child's academic progress, rather than just one. They might also think their children were too young to travel to different classrooms every day. Coordination between teachers might also be a concern—would teachers reinforce each other's content? Would there be three times the homework, now that students had three different teachers?

By anticipating parental questions, Lee was able to plan well for the meetings and engage parents in solutions that enhanced the strategy. For example, parents asked if they would meet all three of their child's teachers at conference time. Lee posed this question to teachers, who collectively decided that parents would meet with their child's homeroom teacher, although conferences involving all three teachers would be arranged if necessary. These details were added to the roll-out plan for the new schedule so all stakeholders were informed.

Lee also met separately with fourth-grade parents and parents who were most involved with the school. He asked about their concerns and what they were hearing from other parents about the new schedule. He committed to reviewing the strategy after a year, either to revise it or revert to the single classroom model if it was not working well. Because Lee actively sought parents' input, the proposed schedule stood a better chance of being more widely endorsed and garnering parents' confidence that it could result in improved teaching and learning. Lee saw his actions as a way to build parents' trust that he would deliver and change course after a year if warranted.

Baking in Early Wins

It was important for everyone—teachers, parents, students and school leaders—to know they were on the right track early on in the process. Following the criteria of the Early Win Wonder, Lee devoted an entire faculty meeting early in the fall semester to the new rotating schedule. The fourth-grade teachers shared their new approach to teaching and learning with the rest of the school. Among other things, they compared examples of student work with some from the previous year, a move intended to showcase the improved performance of students. At an open house with parents to kick off the 2015-2016 school year, Lee made a presentation about the pilot's success to reinforce parents' buy-in for the new schedule and its continued use in the fourth grade.

Collaborative Planning

Each week, the nine fourth-grade teachers collaborated during their planning time and after school to prepare lessons and instructional strategies. With the new rotating schedule, three teachers taught reading, three math, and three science. On Mondays, the three teachers of each subject met to study the standards for their particular discipline, review instructional calendars and jointly design lessons for the next two weeks. They also developed assessments necessary to gauge students' mastery of the material. On Tuesdays, all nine teachers met to create instructional plans for the subjects they all taught to their respective homerooms--social studies, writing and grammar. Again, their conversation centered on academic standards and how to help students master them. On Wednesdays, teachers met to review data from assessments given the previous week. As the year unfolded, the collaborative planning became more concentrated on the standards, and in Lee's observation the teachers became more efficient in planning and more determined in their instruction.

Outcomes and Potential for Sustainability

As promised, Lee and his leadership team reviewed the rotating schedule at the end of the school year using the 3R tool. The qualitative feedback from teachers, parents and students was positive. Teachers, it was apparent to Lee, appreciated that instructional planning took less time because they had fewer subjects to teach. Responses from parents suggested they believed that the approach engaged their children better. Students commented that they liked moving to different classrooms during the day and felt it better prepared them for middle school. While the effects of the new schedule haven't been formally studied, Lee believes it has benefited students. In the 2014-2015 pilot year, the school as a whole made significant gains in test scores, but the fourth grade saw the biggest improvement. Social studies, one of the subjects that all the teachers taught, had the largest gains. Lee surmises that the collaborative instructional work may have been a factor. Owing to its overall stronger test scores in 2014-2015, Chattahoochee leapt to sixth place in the district's ranking of its 79 elementary schools, up from 35th.

Lee also used the Scale and Sustainability Scoresheet to gauge the long-term prospects for the new schedule. The results were promising. The new schedule filled an important need because it was a promising approach to improving instruction and student learning. It helped teachers acquire new skills in teamwork and teaching. Furthermore, it did not require additional funding, and district leaders were pleased with the strategy. The district was even encouraging other elementary schools to switch to a rotating schedule.

Based on how well the fourth grade took to the rotating schedule, the school expanded it to fifth grade in the 2016-2017 school year. In 2017-18, the school plans to introduce it in third grade, but with an age-appropriate twist: The younger children will stay in their classroom while their teachers come to them.

Forging a Strong Partnership

Elementary School Principal Toni Ferguson wanted parents to play a more active role in their children's education. The teachers did too. Here's how they made it happen.

Toni Ferguson has been the principal of Knight Elementary School for six years. The school serves 872 students from kindergarten through fifth grade. Students are racially diverse; 46 percent are Hispanic, 20 percent African-American, 19 percent Caucasian, 12 percent Asian and 3 percent multi-racial. Roughly two-thirds receive free or reduced price lunch. Ferguson's team includes 41 classroom teachers and 55 support teachers and staff members.

In 2014, Ferguson wanted the school to more deeply engage families. Attendance at parent workshops and parent-teacher conferences was inconsistent. Ferguson and her leadership team—two assistant principals and 36 teachers—set out to implement a strategy that would involve families more in the life of the school. Their aim wasn't simply to draw more parents to school functions. They wanted parents to become true partners in their children's education. More family engagement, they reasoned, would lead to better outcomes for students.

Ferguson and her team's first task was to identify the challenges facing family engagement. They believed parents wanted to be more involved with the school, but felt uneasy because they didn't know how to help their children academically. If this was true, the team thought the school might try a model where parents and teachers partnered on instruction. They decided to put in place Academic Parent-Teacher Teams (APTT), a model designed by the education nonprofit WestEd. APTT links classroom and home learning to increase academic achievement. Teachers instruct children at school and parents reinforce the material by tutoring at home three to five times a week. The idea seemed promising to the team, but it would entail a good deal of work.

The stakeholder groups—teachers and parents—were clearly known. Both were crucial to drive the change forward and either could derail it. Before starting to plan, therefore, the leadership team needed to conduct a readiness assessment and resistance analysis for both groups. The readiness assessment would reveal how willing and able teachers and parents were to engage in the strategy—and how structured it had to be. The resistance analysis would point out potential roadblocks as well as identify motivators to help with buy-in.

Assessing Readiness

The teachers' readiness assessment showed great enthusiasm for APTT. However, the teachers hadn't realized that they would need to develop a new muscle for the project—the skill of teaching adults. Clearly the teachers had excellent skills with children. They would need help translating those skills to teach adults. Parents would need instruction on how to tutor their children at home. In some cases, they might even need instruction on the actual homework assignment.

Meanwhile, Ferguson and the leadership team assessed parent readiness. They held three school-wide meetings in the summer of 2014, prior to launching APTT in the fall. Teachers attempted to call every parent to personally invite them to the meetings. Ferguson knew she was on the right track when she saw the turnout at the first meeting. About 65 percent of parents attended. While attendance slipped a bit at the next two meetings, it was still well above the norm. In the past, school meetings usually drew about 10 percent of parents. Interestingly, parents were more likely to attend if they had received a call from a teacher. Readiness surveys were distributed and collected.

Analyzing Resistance

While teachers were excited about the Academic Parent-Teacher Teams, some were also skeptical. Would they be able to effectively execute this new partnership with families while maintaining a high level of teaching? They had concerns about the commitment of parents too. Did parents have the time and motivation to do their part?

Parents voiced similar concerns. Results from their readiness survey indicated they were eager to participate if it would benefit their child's education. Still, they wondered whether they could find time to tutor their children three to five times a week. Even if they could, how would they know what to do?

Baking in Early Wins

Early signs of success were key to building the confidence of parents and teachers that APTT was beneficial. Within the first two months, the school scored four early wins:

1. Parents and teachers together reviewed data for each child and set individualized goals.
2. Teachers prepared lessons for parents to use at home and held training sessions for parents.
3. Teachers presented at faculty meetings.
4. The school celebrated the three accomplishments.

Collaborative Planning

To launch the effort successfully, Ferguson and the leadership team responded to stakeholder concerns that had emerged from the readiness and resistance analyses. First, they removed some obligations so teachers had time to devote to APTT. They eliminated meetings and found less time-

consuming ways to distribute information to teachers. To address teacher concerns about parental commitment, Ferguson pointed to the strong attendance at the information meetings, which augured well for their involvement.

Next, the leadership team turned to the issues raised by parents. They assigned teacher-leaders to help the faculty develop the skills necessary for instructing adults. In turn, teachers prepared materials for parents to use at home that reinforced concepts covered in class.

Outcomes and Potential for Sustainability

Three years after Ferguson identified a lack of parental involvement at Knight Elementary, the Academic Parent-Teacher Teams are going strong. Teachers and parents continue to meet one-on-one to discuss each child's progress and develop plans for improvement. The initiative is now part of the school culture and even highlighted on its website.

Ferguson's own analysis of APTT's impact, which she conducted as part of her doctoral studies in education, found that the program has strengthened family engagement. In focus groups she led, parents reported that APTT improved communication between the school and families, connected the home and the teacher, provided data on how students are measured with clear expectations, and offered useful instructional activities to do at home to help their children academically. Ferguson says that attendance at school meetings now averages about 60 percent. In 2017, Knight was named one of Georgia's top Title I schools that have made the most progress in improving the scores of all students on statewide tests from 2013 to 2015, a three-year period that includes APTT's inaugural year. While a link between APTT and higher student achievement at Knight has not been independently studied, Ferguson believes there is a correlation. Third grade scores on statewide tests, which in Georgia determine whether students are promoted to the next grade, have shown a double-digit increase in the percentage of students scoring "proficient or distinguished" since APTT was introduced.

The initiative has also boosted the role of teacher-leaders at Knight who provide ongoing professional development to support the work, Ferguson says. APTT has affected the school's recruitment strategy, too. When assessing applicants, Ferguson now looks for teachers who are willing to partner with parents in ways APTT requires. This should help sustain the program as teachers leave and are replaced. "At this point, I could be here or not be here," she says. "It wouldn't matter. The teaming work will continue."

And if imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, Knight Elementary has many admirers. After Gwinnett County Superintendent Wilbanks invited school leaders to present the Academic Parent-Teacher Teams model at a district event, three more schools decided to try it.

Peer-to-Peer Learning

Middle school principal Lamont Mays knew his students could do better academically. But first, he needed teachers to work together to identify what effective instruction looked like.

Lamont Mays is the principal of Moore Middle School, which serves 1,000 students in grades six through eight. The school is racially diverse. Forty-one percent of students are African-American, 37 percent Hispanic, 12 percent Caucasian and 10 percent Asian. Roughly 84 percent receive free or reduced price lunch. Mays, who oversees 60 teachers and 40 staff members, has been Moore's principal ever since the school opened seven years ago. It is his first principal assignment.

In 2015, Mays established a curriculum team comprising 16 teachers and four assistant principals. The team was committed to "changing students' lives," in Mays' words, and improving academic achievement. Its analysis showed that the school was falling short. It was not providing the kinds of opportunities for students to be successful. Teachers were not getting ongoing constructive feedback about their instructional practice. Assessments were not aligned with the curriculum. The first step, the team decided, was for the faculty to conduct classroom observations. "We had to create opportunities for our teachers to see quality instruction in action and then provide a forum to debrief about what the planning and execution should look like in our building," says Mays. By observing classrooms, the teachers could learn from each other and develop a shared understanding of what effective instruction looked like.

Collaborative Planning

Teachers were enthusiastic about observing each other's instruction, Mays says, and a readiness assessment confirmed that they didn't mind the time investment necessary. Still, their overall readiness was "medium" because they had never done classroom observations before. With that in mind, the curriculum team provided common observation protocols so everyone used the same criteria to observe and debrief.

From October 2015 to March 2016, teachers observed classroom instruction together in all three grades. Volunteer teachers in four subject areas opened their classrooms for observation, then debriefed the lesson with the observers. One common theme they explored was how teachers incorporated writing into their instruction. Math teachers, for example, were eager to see how writing was taught in language arts and science.

The observations resulted in many professional development sessions. In one, teachers discussed how to instruct students in a common method for solving math problems across all grade levels. Another session focused on how to model higher-order thinking for students. Mays tapped master teachers to help with these sessions. Through the readiness assessment, classroom observations and informal conversations, he had identified several teachers who not only understood the type of rigorous instruction students needed but also had the expertise to deliver it. Before the classroom observations, these teachers had not felt empowered to share and contribute, Mays says, but the collaborative work provided the structure and comfort for them to do so. They would become an integral part of shifting practices and culture in order to improve student achievement at Moore.

Baking in an Early Win and Beyond

The first classroom observations and sharing sessions in October served as the early win. The activity generated a lot of cross-curriculum talk as teachers contributed and learned from their colleagues, suggesting to Mays that a new, collaborative culture was developing. That, along with the collective development of an understanding of effective instruction, he believed, could help move the school closer to achieving its vision of helping every student reach his or her academic potential.

With the classroom observations under their belt, the teachers were ready to put more rigorous instruction into practice—and, they suggested to Mays, they had the perfect way to start: Focus on an early morning ritual at Moore called "Continuous Quality Improvement," CQI for short. CQI is a 30-minute period of extra instruction before homeroom. Since the school opened it doors, CQI had always focused on math, the subject students struggled with the most. Every teacher, regardless of formal training, led CQI sessions in it. Some faculty, however, wished to focus on their area of expertise instead. Looking to capitalize on the shift to more effective instruction, they made a bold proposal to Mays: Expand CQI to all subjects to better support students. Once again, a planning process was needed.

Reassessing Readiness

Every time a change is contemplated—even when it builds on something similar done before—readiness must be reassessed. Mays worried that expanding CQI beyond math might divert focus. He also wondered if teachers across subject areas had the expertise to pull it off successfully. Teachers certainly thought they did, as demonstrated by their excitement for the idea. Enthusiasm, however, is only one component of readiness. People often think they're prepared to do something because they're enthusiastic, but they may actually have low readiness because they're unaware of the challenges they could face. A new assessment indeed found that most teachers had low readiness. It was clear that a change of this magnitude needed a short-term trial before possibly scaling to a yearlong program. Mays approved a CQI pilot expansion for one month in spring 2016.

The curriculum committee gave the one-month pilot high structure. It created an eight-member feedback committee to survey all teachers, evaluate the results and develop guidelines on effective instruction. The guidelines document what effective instruction looks like in all subject areas, particularly with regard to teaching writing. They were drafted before the end of the semester, discussed by teachers during the summer and then revised before school started. The guidelines were instrumental in expanding CQI for the 2016-2017 school year.

Outcomes and Potential for Sustainability

The guidelines on effective instruction are now deeply engrained in the culture at Moore, Mays says, describing them as an essential part of the planning process for weekly collaborative meetings, a driver for professional development, and an anchor for evaluations and feedback. In addition, classroom observations continue. The school has even invested in online technology so observations can be recorded, shared and preserved for future professional development.

A formal study hasn't investigated the impact of the changes in instruction at Moore. However, Mays and his team are encouraged by test score gains in all subjects and grades.

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In addition to the three principals profiled at length above, the author spoke with five other Gwinnett County principals about their use of the tools in the Handbook when leading change. Lessons for effective change leadership can be drawn from all of their experiences:

Maintain a laser-like focus on your change strategy.

Lawrence Elementary Principal Lisa Marie Johnson was dismayed that her teachers had not kept up with the best instructional practices and that her approach to improving instruction had not yielded the desired results. The reason? It was scattershot. "I was doing too much and nothing was happening," she recalls. A readiness survey she conducted with her 65 teachers confirmed it. Both she and the teachers felt a single, driving focus was necessary. To that end, she assigned instructional coaches to each grade to lead planning discussions and conduct model lessons. The focused strategy worked. "The coaches created a framework for lesson planning and discovered that teachers wanted models to see it in action," she says. "The whole year was focused on instructional planning and developing model lessons."

Don't mistake enthusiasm for readiness.

Many change leaders bypass assessing readiness, but Jeff Lee says it's essential to "identify blind spots and pitfalls that can be avoided." Also, be careful not to confuse enthusiasm with readiness. Just because people like an idea doesn't mean they are ready to execute it. In fact, most people will

have low readiness; after all, they will be trying something they have not done before. One solution is to provide high-structure activities, such as the classroom observation protocols that Mays and his curriculum team gave teachers.

When readiness is medium or low, set specific and clear expectations.

The readiness assessment can also create awareness among teachers about what's expected of them. Eddie Maresh and his leadership team at Creekland Middle School wanted all teachers, regardless of subject, to incorporate reading and writing into their instruction. They conducted a detailed instructional readiness assessment of all teachers. The survey asked the faculty if everyone should teach writing—and if they had the skills to do so. This created awareness among science and social studies teachers, for example, of the importance of teaching writing in the context of their subject. It also highlighted the role of teacher-leaders in coaching others on how to include reading and writing in their classes.

Assess everyone's readiness—even your own.

Change leaders must assess their own readiness too. Once you do, don't assume that others share it. Just ask principal Clent Chatham at McConnell Middle School. He and his teachers had launched an extra class period to give students additional support in math. Based on the program's success, teachers suggested that the school add a reading component too. Chatham was skeptical at first, but remained open-minded and distributed a three-question readiness survey to the teachers. It turned out that the teachers were enthusiastic, skilled and experienced—and willing to devote the time to expand the program. Chatham gave the proposal the green light. His biggest lesson? "Readiness is not always about others," he says. "In this case, the low-readiness person was me."

For lasting results, the change needs to be embedded in the culture.

Early wins motivate people in the short term, but they're not enough to ensure the sustainability of a new way of doing things. For that to happen, the change must become so embedded in the school's culture that people no longer think they're doing something different, but something routine. The Academic Parent-Teacher Teams at Knight Elementary are now an expected part of school life. The rotating schedule at Chattahoochee Elementary is simply how the school day runs. Penny Palmer Young, the principal at Arcado Elementary School, established weekly half-day meetings for her assistant principals so they could better collaborate. She also put them in charge of leading learning communities for teachers. Both the learning communities and the weekly meeting are now routine at Arcado.

Continuously reflect and make course corrections if necessary.

Since change is continuous and frequently leads to further change, reflection about an improvement effort should be ongoing. Understandably, people often reflect on matters when things are not going well. However, it's worth it to take time for reflection even when operations are running smoothly. After all, good work today may encounter setbacks tomorrow. The principals used the Handbook's 3R tool to check in at designated points to see if things were going as planned or if adjustments were necessary. When you reflect, it's critical to review your original objective too. Things may be going well, but you may not be achieving the intended goal. Checking this continuously is important.