

Implementation Fail: A Case Study

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IN THE LAST decade, the level of complexity in the workplace has increased dramatically, creating significant challenges for leaders. Faced with poor outcomes, pressure from stakeholders, staff shortages, and uncertain budgets, leaders must contend with the constant need for change, its accelerating pace, unclear information and outcomes, unknown variables and drivers, and a lack of clarity and direction from competing interests.

Unfortunately for leaders, tried-and-true strategies such as static replication of what works from other areas, strategic planning, and root cause analyses are insufficient tools in the complexity of today's correctional space, yet often they are the only strategies our organizations and systems have at their disposal. We offer the following case study of one county agency's attempt to replicate a model for youth corrections after passage of legislation. This case study could be any county, anywhere, and highlights what we consider to be "the rule" as opposed to "the exception" when it comes to implementing new programs, practices, and policies in the criminal justice field. Earnest attempts at justice reform are urgent and necessary. The field needs the effort of communities, activists, and policy makers to improve outcomes for people. Rather than being a rebuke of those efforts, this case study seeks to highlight how the best of intentions can fall short when it comes to implementation, and how leaders in systems must take a different approach to implementing change in

our organizations. To create socially significant change, isolated programs and incremental improvements are insufficient.

Data on change initiatives across disciplines and across the country make it clear that they are much more likely to fail than not (Beer & Nohria, 2000). Organizational change, whether it be shifting practices or starting something entirely new, requires people within those organizations to change the way they do business, the way they see the problem itself, and their role in solving it. This process takes time, effort, energy, and resources, beyond just more money and people. Without guided and directed implementation supports, most change efforts never produce the results promised. Among many consequences, failed implementation can also lead to leadership burn out, cynical staff, and a frustrated public. There are better ways to implement changes and shifts in our organizations, and the science of implementation demonstrates how much of what we do, while considered common sense or logical, is simply misguided (Fixsen, Blasé, & Van Dyke, 2019).

Scientific and strategic implementation work requires formal tools and structured interventions to guide organizations, leadership, and people to systematically make impactful changes. Without these, people are relegated to legacy strategies, best guesses, and personal agendas to guide the work. This article will highlight the *Five Dynamics of Effective*

Implementation model, created by the Alliance for Community and Justice Innovation, which distills the science of implementation (Fixsen et al., 2019) into five key dynamics: people, data, culture, leadership, and feedback. These dynamics guide the purposeful and intentional actions required to reach full implementation, which is defined as 50 percent of practitioners delivering new policies, practices, and programs with fidelity (Fixsen et al., 2019). When applied well, the dynamics create alignment between the ideal state and what is actually happening on the ground.

The following case study highlights how the five dynamics can be counterintuitive to how we typically approach change in our organizations. We use the case of "Camp Best Practice" not because it is unique or remarkable in any way, rather because it highlights the predictable and run-of-the-mill strategies that we, as leaders, tend to use to make change in our organizations that inevitably lead to efforts fizzling and fading, or never being there in the first place. Camp Best Practice represents the programs and/or change efforts that most of us have passionately worked to implement throughout our careers. Almost any agency or program name across the country could be inserted into the following narrative and tell a similar story. With almost 50 years of collective experience in the correctional field implementing all sorts of change attempts, big and small, the authors of this article can deeply resonate with everything

shared here—as line staff, supervisors, and leaders of these types of efforts.

Camp Best Practice Model Case Study

An illustrative example of failed implementation was brought to light by the regional news editorial staff of what was *intended* to be a therapeutic rehabilitation facility for youth in a large county. Looking to reform their approach and improve outcomes for justice-involved youth, local leaders borrowed ideas from model programs in other regions, expecting the same outcomes for some of the toughest youth in their county. What ensued paints a picture for decision makers of the cost of failed implementation for communities. Without intentional effort given to the implementation itself, the best intentions, ideas, programs, and models fizzle, fade, or fail altogether. In the case of Camp Best Practice, it's not clear that the model ever existed despite being “in practice” for four years.

Reform efforts started with the passing of a law designed to create juvenile justice realignment. The bill limited certain types of commitments to a state youth correctional facility and provided funding to county probation to supervise youth with serious offenses. Seeking out opportunities to implement the intent of the bill, the county probation department leveraged funding to demolish a county-operated juvenile camp, which we will call Camp Old Practice, and build a new cottage-style facility using a model designed and implemented in another state. We will call the new model for the facility Camp Best Practice (CBP).

Stakeholders wanted to offer a different way of rehabilitating youth and depart from the typical boot camp and institutional style traditional of county youth camps. The goal was to provide a therapeutic community through a home-like environment with a wide range of individualized programming that emphasized trauma-informed care in a small-group setting. More than \$50 million dollars was spent on a state-of-the-art residential campus, and optimistic leaders coined the project the “CBP Model,” only to have it closed four years later by the governor.

So, what happened to the CBP Model? An evaluation report presented to the county by an outside non-profit group revealed that it's unclear what outcomes the CBP Model could have achieved, because the model was never properly implemented in the first place. As such, the CBP Model is a case study for the troubling, costly, and all too common gap

between the vision of leaders and what actually happens in practice, also known as the *implementation gap*.

What policy makers and leaders need to know is that the drivers that make efforts like the CBP Model fail are known, measured by the science of implementation, and very predictable. Decision making that favors short-term gains, or checking the box and moving on, rather than working on long-term impact can have enormous costs for the youth who never receive the benefits promised by the program model and for all of the youth, staff, families, and communities who never experience the return on their enormous investments. If decision-makers had built in early implementation supports, measures, and strategies to respond to the very predictable challenges around leadership, people, data, organizational culture, and feedback, perhaps the community would have experienced better outcomes.

To demonstrate the importance of implementation, this article will break down the CBP model through the lens of the five dynamics of implementation. While direct quotes and data from published evaluation reports and articles are used throughout the case study, citations are not included in the text, but are listed at the end of the article in the reference section. This is intentional to reinforce this case study as a familiar example of current state implementation efforts, not as an issue specific to one organization or jurisdiction. This happens all the time, everywhere, and by using implementation as a framework we hope to demonstrate how we can do better as a field.

Organizational Structure

Many important aspects of the CBP program model were abandoned because the existing system could not support the innovation. The model's focus on small-group care, which included cohort consistency, a focus on relationships in homelike living spaces, and a new kind of trusting relationship with staff, never materialized in practice. The status quo scheduling practices of officers would not budge to accommodate a new way of doing things. These uncompromising staffing patterns prioritized long shifts and days off over regular programming hours. This prevented adoption of the schedule required to implement the designed model of care, which included an intentionally trusting relationship with a consistent adult leader. Instead, each group of youth had a different probation officer every 2.5 days, diverting what was happening in

practice far from the original program model.

Additionally, staff shortages meant that the frequency and dosage of the programming itself, as designed in the model, was happening inconsistently or not at all. Staffing patterns and shortages also made critical structural components of the model, such as staffing cases and team meetings, impossible. Three sets of probation officers were assigned to each small group and split the week, but their disparate schedules made it difficult to discuss their shared insights and experiences on cases and to get on the same page around case planning and addressing problematic behaviors.

This implementation effort paints a picture of the many gaps in fidelity to the program model. As implementation progressed and leaders moved on to new priorities, the CBP Model continued drifting, shifting, and ultimately completely departing from its original design to fit within legacy structures and the immutable culture of the existing system. This concern was echoed in an assessment of CBP completed by the original creators of the model, who help train other sites, such as CBP, on their unique approach to serving confined youth. In the assessment, the director reported that the lack of a unified approach and the chance for staff to meet regularly as a team had resulted in “falling back to old custodial/supervision practices where the focus becomes obtaining institutional compliant behavior as the primary goal instead of internalized change, which should be the mission.”

This is not an uncommon strategy for many organizations that want to squeeze the program or practice within existing organizational structures. Much like the old adage of “a square peg in a round hole,” the agency context within which this program was being placed simply did not align with the programmatic requirements and expectations that needed to happen to bring about better, or even different, outcomes. The significant misalignment between core principles and practices of the program they were trying to replicate and the existing, legacy practices of the program they were trying to dismantle came into direct conflict with one another. And when that happens, despite our best intentions and herculean efforts, the culture of the existing program always wins.

Culture Dynamic

With the benefit of hindsight, it is easy to see how CBP was perfectly designed to get their ultimate results. There were many examples

of policies that conflicted with the practices promised in the model. In fact, the CBP director reported that one of the challenges in implementing the model as designed was reconciling it with existing local, state, and federal juvenile justice laws. Staff had many ideas for recreational activities, wanting to further engage youth, but couldn't even lead them on hikes just outside the fence without permission. "Sometimes the policies that govern probation and residential treatment don't always fit into what our model is," the CBP director said.

While the CBP model was designed to shift toward a therapeutic and trauma-informed approach, the strategy could not get traction from the strong pull of its militaristic culture of control, a culture the vast majority of institutions in the carceral system share. The new approach required staff to be empathetic and competent in a variety of skills and knowledgeable about trauma-informed and positive youth development philosophies. This was an enormous departure from the traditional roles, rules, and relationships that define the parameters of work identities of the probation department. These new expectations for staff around developing prosocial relationships that would establish healthy relationships and social emotional skills were not supported by the existing organizational culture.

To change the culture at the CBP Model pilot, the Department recognized that staff must be dedicated to a therapeutic approach while working together for the greater good of the youth. Anchored in the assumptions that warm, professional, and competent staff with a variety of tools at their disposal would engage and motivate youth, the Department encouraged a culture of change. While seemingly a great idea in theory, it represented a tremendous shift from the existing organizational culture and philosophical approach to the work. The shift did not necessarily require more staff or funding; rather, shifts in mindset and identity. Without the modeling, incentives, and supports of an aligned culture, more funding and more staff cannot compensate for the pervasive influence of the old way of doing business.

Organizational change is hard work and takes considerable time and energy. In fact, without dedicated implementation supports, change efforts can take upwards of 17 years to come to fruition, with only about a 14 percent success rate (Fixsen et al., 2019). Unfortunately, most systems are not set up to wait more than a few years to see results. So,

it seems we can either implement intentionally or implement how we always have and wait for results we will never see. To date, the latter seems to be the predominate approach, which leads to staff and stakeholders blaming the model for not working rather than the implementation, relegating us back to the days of the doctrine of "nothing works" (Martinson, 1974).

Organizations can increase their likelihood of reaching full implementation by creating a team that is focused on how practices are being deployed in daily practice. Implementation teams function as a catalyst to create pressure and overcome inertia, as a helper to the process to recognize and define needs, diagnose problems and set objectives and acquire needed resources, and as a group that can function as a connector of resources, including people, time, motivation, and funding. An expert and engaged implementation team throughout a project can produce upwards of 80 percent successful use of new ways of doing work in about three years (Brunk, Chapman, & Schoenwald, 2014; Fixsen, Blase, Naoom, & Wallace, 2009; Forgatch & DeGarmo, 2011; Jackson, Fixsen, & Ward, 2018; Saldana, Chamberlain, Wang, & Brown, 2012).

The work of the implementation team includes engaging in planned and purposeful activities, seeing the immediate and longer-term results, solving problems related to new ways of doing work and the use of implementation supports in organizations and systems, and using the experience to develop a revised plan for the next attempt. Unfortunately, many organizations create a team to engage in the planning and development stages, only to have them disband or become defunct soon after implementation begins.

People Dynamic

Early in the planning process, CBP stakeholders carefully defined and documented the 10 essential elements for evidence-based programming and skill-building activities. While the program *on paper* was receiving national recognition and praise, the program *in practice* was practically non-existent. What was being done, it seemed, was largely just what had always been done.

One of the foundations of the CBP Model is a "small-group" theory, where youth live in groups of 10-12, sharing a small homelike living space. They attend school, group therapy, and most other daily activities as a unit. Each group is assigned a consistent set of probation

officers and mental health clinicians, with the goal of building trust-based relationships.

On a visit to the campus, probation leadership detailed a host of problems she encountered, including group sizes that far exceeded those intended by the CBP Model, youth undergoing treatment with psychotropic medication being improperly assigned to the camp, and deviation from the approved therapeutic methods. In essence, the probation department was not applying the principles and policies of the therapeutic, trauma-informed CBP Model as thoughtfully designed. And the small-group sessions that "represented the core of the CBP model" had been discontinued altogether. As a result of their visit, probation leadership commented, "experts are increasingly aware of the Probation Department's inability to operate the facility with basic adherence or fidelity toward its own carefully-developed plans."

The evaluation report conducted by an outside entity called Best Practices Evaluation (BPE) detailed:

the Department should consider an integration of staff selection (ensuring staff are a good fit for the CBP Model approach), training (baseline training in core skills), and coaching (to build on skills learned in training) supports established by the original implementation design into the onboarding strategies for staff supporting youth. In addition, leadership across the organizations should be exposed to the CBP Model approach to ensure consistency in staff transfers and selection for the ongoing efforts related to the pilot and to inform or guide any considerations for expansion of the approach beyond the pilot."

Staff selection is an important implementation driver, especially when organizations are beginning the installation of an intervention or practice (Fixsen et al., 2019). Not everyone is naturally a "good fit" for certain programs or intervention models, and frontline staff carry out most practices and programs. In the CBP Model implementation, selected staff exhibited beliefs and attitudes more custodial in nature than rehabilitative. Research on implementation of evidence-based programs and practices has revealed that training alone does not translate effectively to the use of consistent practice in the new model within the setting for which it was intended. This is even more challenging when we expect training alone

to shift the underlying values, beliefs, and mindsets of staff that have a different understanding of their role and their work (Fixsen et al., 2019). This seems to have been true with the CBP model, as many of the staff found the new model to conflict with more traditional attitudes and beliefs about youth behavior and corrections philosophy around punishment and consequences.

Training was also insufficient, a problem exacerbated by staff turnover. The evaluation reported that three-quarters of staff couldn't clearly articulate what was expected of them. There was high turnover among teachers, who were replaced by instructors not trained in the CBP model. For those who did receive training, the most common complaint lodged by staff regarding the training was the lack of practice in using the skills they were taught during training. On all three coaching measures, nearly half of all staff reported the coaching had no impact on their skill integration. Despite these implementation challenges, the probation department decreased the training requirements significantly from the original implementation design.

People are the most valuable resource in any organization, and implementation success depends on people. For decades leaders have struggled with aligning and mobilizing people to embrace new practices, sharing things like, "once so-and-so retires... then we can make some meaningful changes." This is a testament to the habit of pointing fingers at individuals rather than contexts and structures that create the outcomes that are achieved. Again, organizations are perfectly designed to get the results they get. When expectations change, but the systems that support them do not, a tremendous amount of inertia and resistance is created in organizations that have to make the change. In many cases, these changes that people really wanted in the beginning become almost impossible to carry out in practice.

Data Dynamic

Implementation struggles with CBP were exacerbated by problems with data collection. In the state where it was developed, the CBP model led to steep declines in youth crime recidivism rates. As alluring as it is to want to replicate the approach and improve outcomes in other places, it's simply not enough to pick up a program and drop it into a new context, without intentional implementation support and measures, and expect it to produce the same results.

Leaders had every intention for the CBP model to eventually be implemented across all

county camp locations, without any data systems in place to provide feedback on whether the program was working in the first place and should be replicated at all. Delays in contracting with an evaluation team prevented early learning and data collection, and ultimately a lack of data sharing agreements between agencies made evaluation difficult. Ten months into the pilot, the evaluation was still only in planning phases.

Further, the county probation department did not have a lot of experience tracking youth released from custody, meaning that implementing an evaluation plan required changes in practice, policy, mindsets, and habits such as collecting good data to begin with and understanding why that was important in the first place. The pilot required more than just collecting data; it had to build the staff and department's capacity to be able to do it effectively.

Data collection across the justice system, including after people complete their sentences, is critical to understanding what works. Enormous investments of taxpayer money are spent on incarceration and programs designed to change behavior and prevent new crimes. It is nearly impossible to implement well without data. Yet assessing whether or not the organization has the capacity to measure what they are being asked to do is often overlooked or is an afterthought when a new initiative is implemented. Without studying what happens to people after their sentences are completed, corrections and rehabilitation agencies are operating in the dark, tailoring projects and programs according to political fashion, rather than according to what really makes a difference in people's lives.

In the case of the CBP Model, as confirmed in the evaluation by the BPE evaluation, implementing without the capacity to track and measure the progress of youth and their outcomes in the community made it impossible to understand what parts of the model were having an impact and whether anything was working at all. That, however, did not seem to slow down the urge to celebrate the program's success before the data was even in on effectiveness.

Data is one of those areas that people tend to love or hate. Organizations tend to have too much of it (data saturation where there is so much that it isn't used or even known about) or very little (data desert where very few data points are even available). Either way, data is often seen as something that must be complicated to be worthwhile. This simply isn't the

case when it comes to implementation. A few data points, when used together, can provide a clear picture of what is, or is not, happening in practice and how it is working. But this is only half of the story that you need from data. Leaders also need to know whether their efforts are having their intended impact, and that is why the feedback dynamic is so important.

Feedback Dynamic

The Director of Youth Justice Policy at a national nonprofit organization was on the steering committee that helped develop the CBP Model. The plan, she said, was for those advocates to continue advising the implementation process, giving feedback and support, but that just did not happen. "We're no longer involved," the director said, expressing frustration that a "ready set of experts that could be doing oversight" had been left out of the process. "These folks are key to the rehabilitative process per the reform agenda," the director said, "because it is these community-based organizations that continue to serve the youth when they return to their communities."

In the beginning of a change effort, it is not uncommon for groups of stakeholders and staff to come together to create visions and plans for the change that they want to see in practice. Change, when you are driving it, can be exhilarating, and visioning work is something that creates energy for the people and groups at the planning table. Unfortunately, as soon as the transition from planning to doing occurs, the proverbial wheels fall off. Plans never go as written. And most times the staff tasked with putting plans into action were not at the planning table. When change efforts begin to feel complicated, are met with challenges or resistance, or face a significant shift in the original context (such as budget cuts, staff changes, or global pandemic), it can quickly become exhausting.

Implementation teams can help design feedback loops, measure the implementation quality and the process itself, support the people doing the implementing, and solve problems as they emerge. These teams should be actively looking at the change process for years, not simply during the planning phase, and the work should include ongoing effort to remove barriers, track progress, and align new practices, policies, and priorities with the implementation. Without this intentional work, leaders move on and efforts fizzle, fade, or disappear as focus shifts to new initiatives. In the case of the CBP model, that intention seemed to be present early in

planning meetings; however, consistent with the most common implementation pitfall, the ongoing support of a dedicated group of people focused on the implementation itself dropped significantly and eventually vanished altogether. Implementation teams not only create an infrastructure to monitor activities, review data, and improve processes, they hold organizations accountable for whether or not things are happening as the public expects.

Leadership

Leadership is a critical implementation driver because leaders are responsible for the important decisions, resources, relationships, and vision for implementation. Their focus is also necessary for addressing misalignments between internal policies and practices and the goals of an implementation project. The CBP Model implementation struggled from a lack of consistency in leadership both at the program level and among executives. Administrative turnover made it difficult to resolve the pervasive internal issues such as work schedules and staffing patterns that created barriers to implementing the program model. Regardless of good intentions and efforts, structural barriers created by legacy practices can destroy new ideas and programs and certainly prevent fidelity. Over time, leadership may move on to new agendas, move on altogether, or be consumed by handling major crises like wildfires and the pandemic. In the case of the CBP model, priorities shifted, key staff turned over or transferred, and, without a team to attend to the quality of the implementation itself, the CBP model drifted further and further away from what it was designed to achieve.

The challenges of leading in the complex environment of large justice bureaucracies requires more than just managing change as if it were something that can be controlled and governed with management practices. Implementation leadership is a mindset beyond technical, linear, and check-the-box approaches that at best are limited in their ability to facilitate organizational change and at worst create more complex challenges in the future. Implementation leadership requires a personal and collective commitment to perpetual growth and learning throughout the implementation process. This can be challenging, as many justice agencies have a predisposition to solve problems with rules and policies. Unfortunately, it is rare that a new policy, procedure, or set of rules creates meaningful and sustainable change within an organization.

The local newspaper's editorial board

summed it up when they wrote: "In any large bureaucracy there can be dangerous gaps between vision and execution, and the county is as large as bureaucracies come. The county unnecessarily exacerbates its problems with a very short attention span, allowing its leaders to believe they have accomplished things that they have merely discussed."

Conclusion

The CBP model is an example of trying to fit a specific program model into a structure that in many cases is set up to do the opposite of what is required. It is the square peg/round hole problem that so many organizations across the country struggle with. The natural response to this challenge is to change the program model, trying to make it fit within what already exists. Where leaders fall short is in changing the organization to better fit the necessary components of the model being adopted. The propensity is to focus on changing the model over changing our organizations. This not only creates barriers to long-term outcomes, it fuels two of the most commonly expressed challenges to change: the need for more resources and the need for more readiness.

More Resources

Scott Sonenshein in his book *Stretch* (2017) argues that most people and organizations have what he terms a "chase" mentality, where more is required to be successful. Many leaders believe that reform and change efforts require more people and more funding to be successful. The reality is that no amount of money and people can overcome legacy practices and the inertia that comes from trying to

shove a square peg into a round hole. In this case Peter Drucker was right: culture does eat strategy for breakfast.

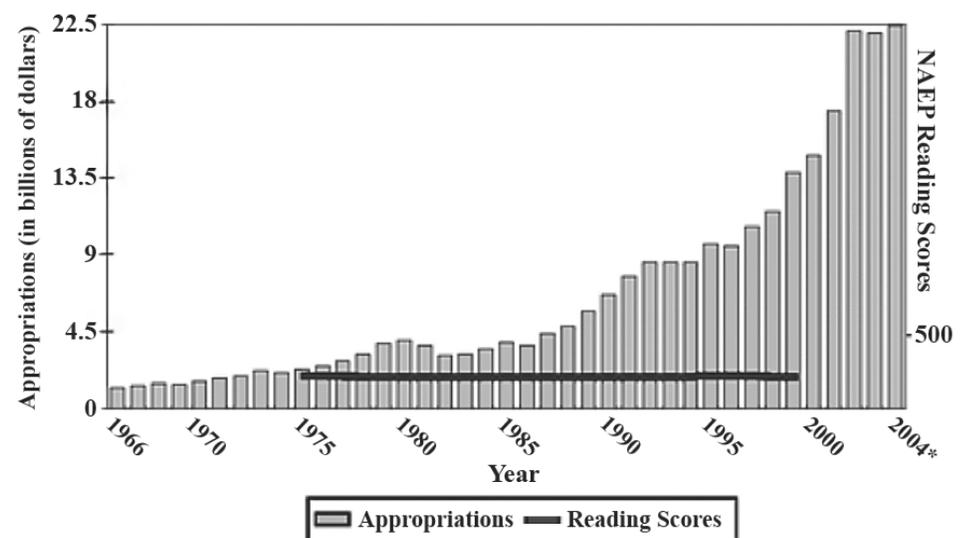
A commonly used example that highlights how more funding and staff, while perhaps necessary, are insufficient to create sustainable and meaningful changes is about reading scores for children in the U.S. Reading scores for 9-year-olds have remained stagnant for more than 60 years. Literacy scores have not improved even as funding, social conditions, attention to education, and even evidence-based instruction have changed drastically (Grigg, Daane, Jin, & Campbell, 2003; Goldberg & Harvey, 1983). Figure 1 demonstrates how reading scores have stayed the same despite dramatic increases in funding over several decades.

Despite this alarming data, federal spending in 2012 was more than double what it was in 2004, at \$55 billion (<https://www2.ed.gov/nclb/overview/intro/index.html>). This data is an implementation cautionary tale demonstrating how, "It is not just the availability of funding; socially significant results depend on what the funds are used for... Spending more on things that don't work only results in outcomes as usual" (Fixsen et al., 2019, p. 55).

Missed opportunities exist when we are so focused on what feels outside of our reach that we overlook the strengths, resources, and capital that are right in front of us and that can help us achieve our goals:

...almost anything—tangible and intangible—has potential as a resource, but for that to become anything valuable requires action. This helps us realize

FIGURE 1
Federal Spending on K-12 Education and NAEP Reading Scores (Age 9)



that resources don't come from outside us—they're not things we go out and get but rather things we create and shape... By adopting a stretching mind-set, we can reach extraordinary potential with what we already have. It's a matter of recognizing the untapped value in our resources and directing our energy to nurturing and developing what's in hand" (Sonenshein, 2017, p. 121).

More Readiness

Another challenge to the change process that comes up often is organizational readiness. When leaders are tasked with organizational change initiatives, many start by requesting organizational assessments to gauge overall readiness for change. Unfortunately, readiness is fluid; according to Fixsen et al. (2019), organizations are only about 20 percent ready for any given change initiative at any given time. So the idea of waiting to be "ready" or waiting until you are "fully staffed" or "better resourced" is simply a nice way of saying no. Organizations will likely never be ready for the change initiatives that come their way; if they were, the change wouldn't be needed in the first place. And even if staff across the organization want the change and are eager to make it happen, 70 percent of change efforts that have critical mass support still fail (Fixsen et al., 2019). This is another opportunity to engage implementation teams that can create and nurture readiness so that, over time, all individuals within an organization are ready for change and ready, willing, and able to put new ways of doing their work into practice (Prochaska, Prochaska, & Levesque, 2001).

Implementation as an Answer

So how do we avoid throwing our hands in the air and giving up? The answer is to focus on implementation and alignment. The Five Dynamics of Effective Implementation provide practical and applicable strategies to better align and insulate change efforts within organizations (ACJI, 2020). Creating implementation teams that review, adjust, and align practices related to people, data, culture, leadership, and feedback can create pressure for change and overcome the inertia that many organizations experience through the process. An expert and engaged implementation team alone can produce significant increases in implementation effectiveness and sustainability. This practice alone has potential as a game changer for correctional leaders nationwide.

These teams should be focused on aligning

practices across the organization to support the change. Alignment is about using what you have to make incremental shifts toward your ultimate organizational goals. It is about intentionally connecting the new program model or change initiative to the people and their daily tasks at work. This work examines: How are people spending their time? Where do they put their focus? What is incentivized? What is modeled? What is rewarded? And, how do we know?

Front-line staff being asked to change the way they work with people may feel like they don't have time to engage in what feels like extra work with their clients, because they have ten more people waiting to talk to them outside their office door. Digging deeper, we may learn it takes just as much time to, for instance, talk about skill building as it does to check in about urinalysis results, terms, conditions, and rules. In many instances, the real struggle lies in a staff's comfort level doing the new thing rather than a true lack of time. In many situations organizational policies actually incentivize staff to focus on the things we want them to stop focusing on, such as technical violations, rather than the transformative work of building new skills. These types of challenges require a different kind of solution. It requires leaders supporting a diverse implementation team to grapple with realigning who we are in our jobs with what we believe, what we measure, and what we are asked to do in the long-term work of implementation. Without acknowledging and creating space for this invisible, complicated, and important work, we will continue to chase different and better ways of doing things that never actually make it into practice and never deliver the promised results.

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