



AMERICAN PUBLIC HUMAN SERVICES ASSOCIATION

By the Organizational Effectiveness Department

**A Guidebook for Building
Organizational Effectiveness
Capacity: A Training System
Example**

APHSA

A Guidebook for Building Organizational Effectiveness Capacity: A Training System Example

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1133 19th St, NW • Suite 400

Washington, DC 20036

Phone 202.682.0100 • Fax 202.204.6555

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APHSA OVERVIEW

The American Public Human Services Association (APHSA), founded in 1930, is a nonprofit, bipartisan organization of state and local human service agencies and individuals who work in or are interested in public human service programs. Our mission is to develop and promote policies and practices that improve the health and well-being of families, children, and adults. We educate Congress, the media, and the general public on social policies and practices and help state and local public human service agencies achieve their desired outcomes in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, child care, child support, Medicaid, food stamps, child welfare, and other program areas and issues that affect families, the elderly, and people who are economically disadvantaged.

Organizational Effectiveness Department Overview and Staff

APHSA's Organizational Effectiveness (OE) Department provides management consulting products and services to help state and local public human services agencies continuously improve their performance and capacity. As a result of more than five years of technical assistance to state and local human services agencies, the OE department has developed a core set of models that describes the systematic and systemic work an agency needs to do to maximize its organizational effectiveness, including a set of products and services to guide agencies through a learning by doing process to learn this work while closing real life organizational gaps.

The OE Department has developed an Organizational Effectiveness Handbook (OE Handbook) that compiles tools and materials developed by the Department since early 2004. This Handbook has multiple purposes and uses based on the individual needs of our clients. The overarching purpose of the handbook is to help an organization make continuous improvement a way of doing business. The Guidebook for Building Organizational Effectiveness Capacity: A Training System Example (Guidebook) draws on some of the core contents of the OE Handbook, with emphasis on the importance of collaboration among support functions and the need for expansion of the traditional roles to encompass expertise required to perform OE-specific tasks.

PHIL BASSO

Phil Basso is APHSA's Director of Organizational Effectiveness, specializing in products and consulting services that help agencies improve their performance and capacity. Prior to joining APHSA in 2003, Phil worked for over 15 years in the corporate sector, including eight years as a human resources and general management executive. During Phil's APHSA tenure the OE team has

successfully delivered over forty field consulting projects with members at the state, regional and local levels. Phil earned a BA in Sociology from SUNY-Binghamton, an MLR from Cornell University, and 18 doctoral credits in Education from The College of William and Mary.

KATHY JONES KELLEY

Kathy Jones Kelley, APHSA Organizational Effectiveness Consultant, specializes in products and consulting services that focus on the continuous improvement of organizational performance and performance capacity. Kathy has worked in the human services field since 1983 and since 1992 has focused on the development and delivery of training curriculum, transfer of learning, and organizational effectiveness products and services for the child welfare field. Kathy has led major improvement efforts in Pennsylvania promoting workforce development, leadership development and organizational effectiveness and its impact on child and family outcomes in child welfare.

ROBIN O'BRIEN

Robin O'Brien, APHSA Organizational Effectiveness Consultant, has 15 years experience managing projects and programs in the nonprofit, public and corporate sectors. Since joining APHSA in 2005, Robin has spearheaded OE product development and marketing efforts and led or facilitated strategic planning, workforce capacity building, and continuous performance improvement efforts for a range of state and local human services agencies. Robin received BA's with honors in History and Government & Politics from the University of Maryland at College Park and an MS in Industrial-Organizational Psychology from Baruch College, City University of New York.

JON RUBIN

Jon Rubin is an Organizational Effectiveness Consultant with APHSA serving State and Local members by providing program development consultation and continuous improvement support. After receiving his Masters Degree in Social Work from Temple University, Jon began his career as a Social Worker in the child welfare field, eventually becoming a Supervisor and Administrator for Child Protective Services at the county level. During that time, Jon frequently provided training and technical assistance regarding child protective services to staff and the local community along with his other duties. After 15 years of direct service practice, Jon became an Organizational Effectiveness Specialist for Pennsylvania's Child Welfare Training Program and prior to joining APHSA served as the Interim Director for the Training Program. Jon is also an experienced Therapist, having provided individual, family, and group therapy.

Web-site

For additional information on APHSA and/or the Organizational Effectiveness Department visit our web-site at www.aphsa.org

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APHSA aims to continuously improve its Organizational Effectiveness (OE) products and services based on the real life experiences of states, counties, and organizations engaged in continuous improvement efforts.

The Guidebook for Building Organizational Effectiveness Capacity: A Training System Example is the result of guidance and on-going feedback from members of the APHSA-sponsored Building OE Capacity Work Team. We would like to acknowledge the following individuals who participated in the development of this Guidebook as well as the state, counties, and organizations they represented:

Building OE Capacity Work Team Members

- Christeen Borsheim, Child Welfare Training and Quality Assurance Program Manager, Minnesota Department of Human Services
- Beth Bowman, Assistant Director, Institute for Families, School of Social Work, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
- Elizabeth Hatounian, Senior Organizational Development Consultant, Arizona Department of Economic Security
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- Judith Jhirad-Reich, Child Welfare Consultant
- Susan Kanack, Project Director, Northeast and Caribbean Implementation Center, University of Southern Maine
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- Robin Leake, Butler Institute, University of Denver
- Mary McCarthy, Director, NYS Social Work Education Consortium and Co-PI National Child Welfare Workforce Institute, University at Albany.
- Mary Rose McCarthy, Director, University of Pittsburgh's Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program
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- Jerry Sopko, Practice Improvement Specialist, University of Pittsburgh's Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program
- Mary Urzi, Consultant and Trainer
- John Vogel, Associate Director, Massachusetts Department of Children and Families

PREFACE: PURPOSE OF THE GUIDEBOOK FOR BUILDING ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS CAPACITY

Public and private human services leaders are committed to achieving positive outcomes for children, youths, adults, and families. To this end, they spend substantial time developing and implementing organizational improvement plans. They are focusing on how gaps in OE effectiveness impact client outcomes. Part of this planning process includes thinking through the strategic support needs of the organization to sustain an effective and continuously improving learning organization. Leaders of organizations must view these support functions as critical and necessary financial investments to carry out the strategic plans.

During consultative work with states, the OE Department staff increasingly noted the significance of how different support functions must collaborate to achieve organizational effectiveness. They also observed in many instances that there was little or no dialogue or engagement between organization leaders and the managers responsible for the oversight of the support functions. The conclusion was: to sustain organizational effectiveness and to ensure strategic alignment between different program components, the organizational leaders and those accountable for the oversight of each support function must engage in a meaningful two-way dialogue and a working relationship.

A CALL TO ACTION: Human services leaders must fully utilize multiple support functions such as training /staff development, policy, and quality assurance to build organizational effectiveness. Take a new view of current internal strategic support resources and create strategic alignment between their work and the organization's work serving children, families, youth, and adults.

The *Guidebook for Building Organizational Effectiveness Capacity: A Training System Example* (Guidebook) provides guidelines for promoting constructive and instructive dialogue among different agency components to accomplish the OE goals. It discusses the application of different OE strategy development approaches to help plan and implement improvements to organizational OE capacity. Additionally, the Guidebook provides an example of how a Training System can use these guiding principles to build its own capacity to provide the organization OE strategic support. Building OE capacity helps drive culture change toward becoming a learning organization. It establishes a systematic

approach to driving incremental, continuous systemic change to help organizations build the internal capacity to sustain continuous improvement over the long haul.

The guidance in this Guidebook applies to all support functions seeking to strengthen their impact on organizational effectiveness. The Guidebook uses the Training System as an example to illustrate how to put its guidance into action to build OE capacity. The Guidebook is designed to speak to the following three audiences:

- Human service agency leaders seeking to strengthen the effectiveness of support functions they oversee;
- Support function directors seeking to strengthen their functions' impact on organizational effectiveness by expanding services to include OE-focused technical assistance; and
- Training System directors seeking to strengthen technical assistance capacity to support OE initiatives and the agency's growth as a learning organization.

Overview of the Guidebook

The Guidebook outlines guiding principles for defining and implementing an expanded role of support functions to help strengthen the effectiveness of the larger organization. A Training System example is used to demonstrate the application of these guidelines, which other support functions could replicate to expand their traditional role to incorporate OE-specific expertise. The Guidebook has two main sections. Section I focuses on support functions in general and introduces a problem-solving framework to help strengthen effectiveness of the organization at large. Section II presents models, planning tools, and application of the problem solving framework to build the OE capacity of the Training System. This section also contains examples to illustrate how states have applied some of above referenced models and tools to address practice issues. These Sections contain the following chapters:

Chapter One: Understanding Effective Organizations, Support Functions and Models and Tools for Building OE Capacity introduces the support work an organization needs to execute its strategy and the program units in which they are generally housed. It presents the key tasks of these strategic support functions, the ways they are linked, and how they help the organization at large continuously improve organizational effectiveness. The *DAPIM*TM framework for

continuous improvement, *Pyramid of Influence* model, and *Markers of Effectiveness* help Guidebook users think about how to increase the impact of support functions on the organization's overall effectiveness.

Chapter Two: Expanding the Role of the Training System introduces a strategy to build strategic support capacity, using the Training System as an example. It discusses the expansion of the Training System's role to include both traditional services and OE-specific technical assistance services. It explains how the tools and models introduced in chapter one -- the *DAPIM™* framework, *Pyramid of Influence* model, and *Markers of Effectiveness* – help leaders drive this expansion. The *DAPIM™* framework helps the Training System define issues involved in expanding its role, find solutions, and identify staffing changes necessary to build both the traditional training and OE technical assistance roles. The *Pyramid of Influence* model help the Training System identify its strategic role in supporting four major areas of organizational work. The *Markers of Effectiveness* help leaders create strategic alignment between the Training System and the organization at large.

Chapter Three: Training System Role in Building Effective Organizations describes how a Training System, with a firmly established, expanded role, provides technical assistance to help the organization at large use the *DAPIM™* framework, *Pyramid of Influence* model, and *Markers of Effectiveness* to continuously improve its performance and capacity. It also provides guidance for the Training System to use data gathered during the monitoring of OE initiatives to help the organization continuously improve its overall strategy.

Appendices

Markers of Effectiveness for Training Systems – The “*Markers of Effectiveness: Building Organizational Effectiveness Capacity within the Training System*” help leaders understand how their training system can operate most effectively to provide the strategic support necessary to achieve the organization's mission. These markers are guidelines to help organizations redefine roles, responsibilities, and expertise needed for the training system to provide OE-focused technical assistance services.

Fact Sheet: Success Factors for Internal Facilitators – This fact sheet lists the interactive behaviors that enable OE facilitators to manage effective communication among participants.

Organizational Continuous Improvement Assessment (OCIA) Tool – The OCIA Tool is designed to help the organization gain a clear view of itself through a systematic review of the organizational system and its functioning to achieve the agency’s mission and goals. The tasks include assessment of current state, desired state, critical gaps, root causes of the gaps, and key priorities for addressing those root causes to improve organizational performance. This assessment tool is designed to guide the user through a continuous improvement process using the DAPIM™ approach. Completion of the assessment tool should raise awareness around the need to develop an overarching continuous improvement plan for the organization – linking improvement efforts, professional development, technical support and training to the organizations strategy and desired outcomes.

Continuous Improvement (CI) Plan – The CI plan template is designed to assist the organization in thinking about how to plan and implement both rapid and longer range improvements. The template identifies the key tasks an organization should put into operation when planning and implementing improvements within an existing system to address performance gaps.

Fact Sheet: Sustainability Factors for Continuous Improvement Work – This fact sheet lists the factors that are critical to sustain continuous improvement work within an organization.

SECTION I: STRATEGIC USE OF SUPPORT FUNCTIONS FOR ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Chapter One: Understanding Effective Organizations, Support Functions and Models and Tools for Building OE Capacity

Effective Organizational Systems

"Organizations where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning to learn together"
(Peter Senge, 1990)

The American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) has defined OE as follows:

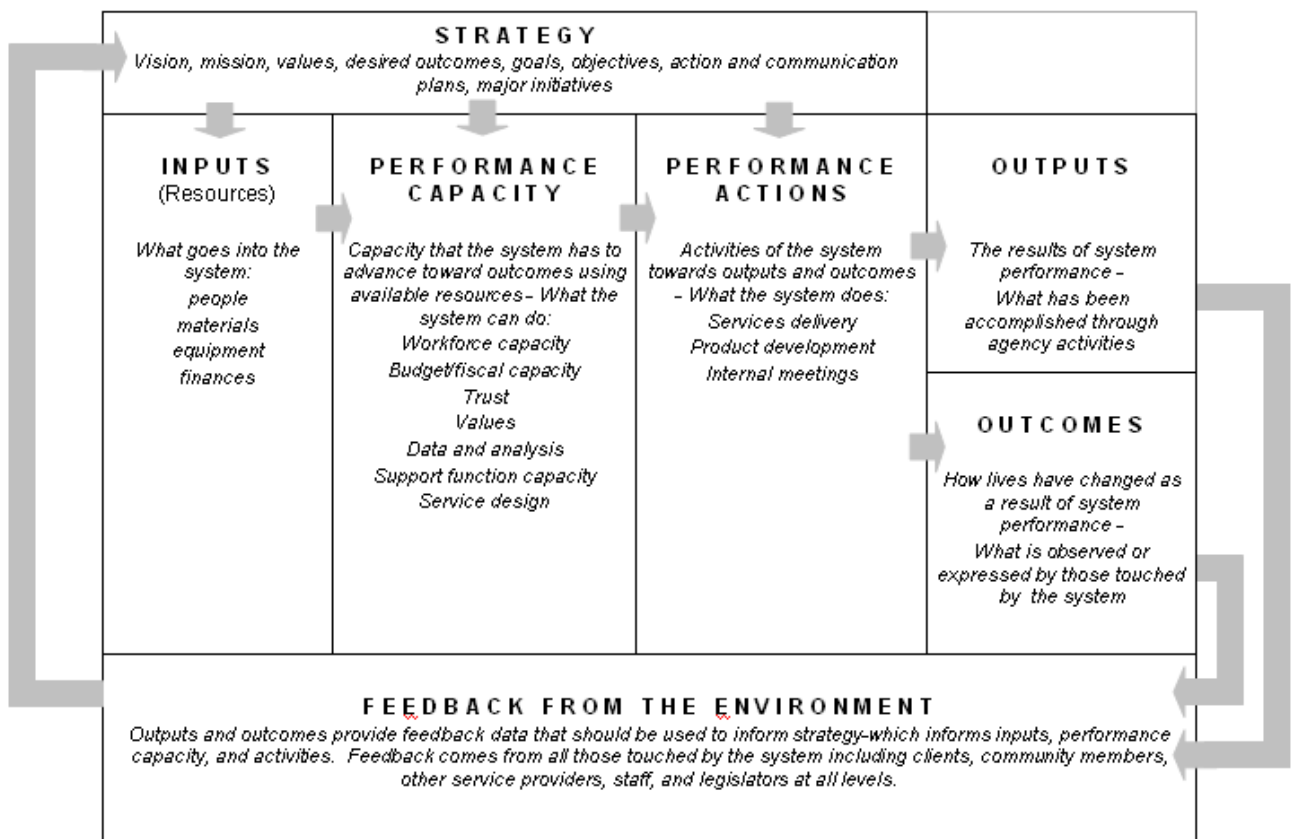
OE is a systematic and systemic approach to continuously improving an organization's performance, performance capacity and client outcomes. "Systemic" refers to taking into account an entire system or in the case of OE an entire organization; "systematic" refers to taking a step-by-step approach. In simple terms, therefore, OE is a step-by-step approach to continuously improving an entire organization.

In the OE approach, effective organizations are described as operating as systems with the following interconnected elements:

- a shared **strategy** considered important by staff within the organization and stakeholders external to the organization;
- **inputs** or resources needed by the organization to implement the strategy;
- **performance capacity** or the ability the organization has to advance toward outcomes;
- **performance actions** or activities of the organization implemented to achieve outcomes;
- **outputs** or results of system performance;

- **outcomes** or changes in lives as a result of system performance; and,
- **feedback** from clients, staff, partners, other key stakeholders, and the community about how well the organization is achieving its desired outputs and outcomes. Feedback drives continuous improvement of strategy, which in turn drives continuous improvement of inputs, performance capacity, and performance actions, which in turn drives continuous improvement of outputs and outcomes.

The Organizational System model (shown below) illustrates how all of these interconnected and changing parts of the organizational system operate in balance. It also illustrates the importance of agency staff and external stakeholders understanding their roles and performing them effectively.



Effective organizations make a concerted, planned effort to ensure all interconnected parts of the organization are aligned strategically to achieve the mission and goals. The success of any initiatives in the plan depends on the effective use of the technical expertise that support functions can provide. To be effective, these functions need to expand their traditional roles to increase impact on organizational effectiveness efforts. They also need to continuously improve

their own operations to perform both traditional and expanded roles as effectively as possible.

Each support function requires performance of specific tasks that necessitate expertise consistent with the OE planned efforts and expected products. The success of an OE initiative depends on how each support function is carried out, and understanding its role and the importance of coordination in designing and implementing the collaboratively planned strategy.

Support Functions

Public and private organization leaders devote substantial effort to planning agency structure, fiscal and staff resources, technical support, and facilities necessary to accomplish the agency mission and goals. This effort needs to map out how each support function will collaborate and coordinate efforts with other functions to implement the strategy and the periodic review of each support function's outputs for consistency with the plan goals.

Strategic alignment and collaboration among all support functions is critical to the overall effectiveness of the organization. Each support function is accountable for performing its unique function, including both traditional services and expanded services that support the organization's overarching strategic plan. The success of an OE initiative depends on how each support function understands its role and the importance of coordination in planning, implementing and monitoring the collaboratively planned strategy.

In the *Positioning Public Child Welfare Guidance*, APHSA and Casey Family Programs identified the following list of typical strategic support functions:

Training/Staff Development defines and assesses individual and organizational learning needs, develops and implements plans designed to address those needs. It also promotes and monitors both formal and informal instructions, learning opportunities, professional development and organizational development aimed at addressing the identified training needs for improving client outcomes.

Organizational Development (OD)/Central Planning addresses the beliefs, attitudes, values, and structure of organizations so that they can better adapt to new technologies, markets, and challenges.

Quality Assurance (QA) ensures that services being provided meet the clients' needs in a systematic and reliable fashion. QA also collects data to determine whether the agency and community-based of services have developed a system of care to work collaboratively to assist families.

Policy interprets legislation and facilitates the development of procedural guidelines and practice standards.

Human Resources brings into the organization people qualified to function in specific roles and positions that are consistent with the organizational structure and mission, provides them with the right supports, and communicates the standards of performance and accountability.

Communications/Public Relations implements formalized strategies for internal and external communication of the organizations' mission, policies, and position on issues. Strategies address pro-active and re-active communication; facilitate opportunities for formal and informal interactions; and support developing and maintaining stakeholder relationships.

Evaluation encompasses assessment at multiple levels, including systems level (evaluation of policies and procedures that govern the support function); process level (assessment of training curricula and delivery and provision of feedback to guide course development, improvement and delivery); and outcome level (assessment of changes in individual learning and job performance, agency practice, provision of service, and improved safety, permanency and well-being for children and families).

Fiscal support function helps to maximize available resources, develops and implements policies to maximize resources to meet the planned organizational strategies to achieve outcomes, including development of strategies to mitigate and manage financial risk.

Information Technology provides hardware and software to gather, manage, and use data required for effective management of the organization and for determining accomplishment of the program mission, goals, and outcomes.

Legal support function provides legal advice on the implementation of laws and regulations pertinent to the organization.

Office/Facilities Management organizes and provides support services for organization staff to function effectively in the office environment.

Research ensures that methods and content are grounded in theory and supported by evidence-based practice, and that relevant information is disseminated and effectively utilized by practitioners.

Organization leaders should aim to maximize the use and effectiveness of each support function to improve the organization's performance and performance capacity. To assist organizations in their efforts towards systematic continuous improvement, APHSA has developed several models and tools to identify strengths, gaps, and priorities to improve organizational effectiveness.

Models and Tools for Building OE Capacity

Strategic planning is the key to continuously improve an organization's performance and performance capacity to achieve positive client outcomes. When planning, leaders draw on legislative mandates and program mission and goals to define the departmental structure, roles, processes, tasks, and activities, and map out the support functions to be strategically performed by each unit in the organization.

The development of a strategic plan for organizational improvement requires a step-by-step process for decision-making to identify required cultural, structural, programmatic, and operational changes necessary across the organizational system. The success of an OE initiative depends on how each component carries out its support function and understands its role and the importance of coordination in designing and implementing the collaboratively planned strategy. This Guidebook constitutes the first step in getting the dialogue started around building effective organizations and the strategic use of support functions in this effort.

APHSA has developed the following models and tools to assist organizations in this process:

- The *DAPIMTM* model for systematic continuous improvement.;
- *Pyramid of Influence*, a model which identifies four major areas of organizational work and how strategic support functions add value to the larger organization; and,
- *Markers of Effectiveness*, guidelines to build OE-specific capacity which include expansion of traditional roles to become effective partners in the organization's OE initiatives.

The *Pyramid of Influence* and the *Markers of Effectiveness* are two distinct tools to help organizations define strategic support function effectiveness and how functions must expand beyond traditional roles to support overall organizational effectiveness.

DAPIM™

The “DAPIM™” approach to problem solving spells out the steps organizational teams take to drive continuous improvement. It provides a framework for developing and instituting systemic change necessary to improve OE performance capacity. The application of the “DAPIM™” model requires the following incremental steps:

Step One: Define priority improvements in operational terms.

Step Two: Assess observable, measurable strengths and gaps. Identify root causes and general remedies for priority gaps.

Step Three: Plan quick wins, mid-term, and longer-term improvements.

Step Four: Implement action plans while managing communication and capacity.

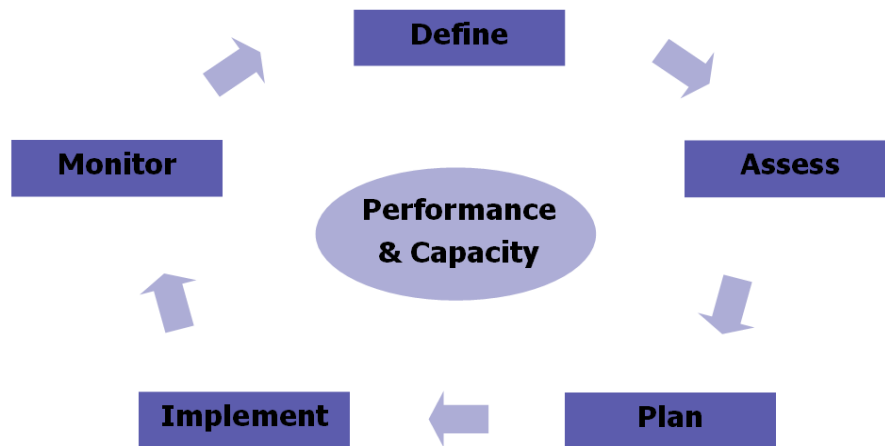
Step Five: Monitor progress, impact, and lessons learned impact for accountability and on-going adjustments.

The DAPIM™ approach involves first defining what you aim to improve in observable, measurable terms and in line with the organization’s strategy. Defining a continuous improvement team’s aim will provide a clear, defined, and agreed upon goal and path to achieve the goal. Once teams have defined the focus for continuous improvement, they need to complete an assessment of the current state of the organization. This assessment can then be compared to a desired future state to help identify strengths, gaps in service, and areas needing improvement. During initial assessment phases, the team considers input from different operational units in the form of reports, data, and other opportunities to communicate concerns. Once teams have accurately identified their findings, they need to build a bridge to planning. This work involves group input, brainstorming, and dialogue to determine priority order of identified gaps, root causes, and general remedies to address root causes. Planning, the third phase of the DAPIM™ approach, requires planning for the implementation of remedies -- either immediate quick wins or mid- to long-term improvements to address root causes to close the performance gaps. The next phase is implementation of the plan by team members for maximum impact and sustainability. Lastly, to determine the effectiveness of the plan, monitoring of the plan yields information

regarding accountability, progress, impact, and continuous adaptation of the plan based on emerging lessons learned.

The DAPIM™ approach to continuous improvement is a facilitated process and operates like a flywheel (shown below), utilized by work teams to continuously improve an organization’s performance, performance capacity, and client

The *DAPIM*™ Model: A “Flywheel”

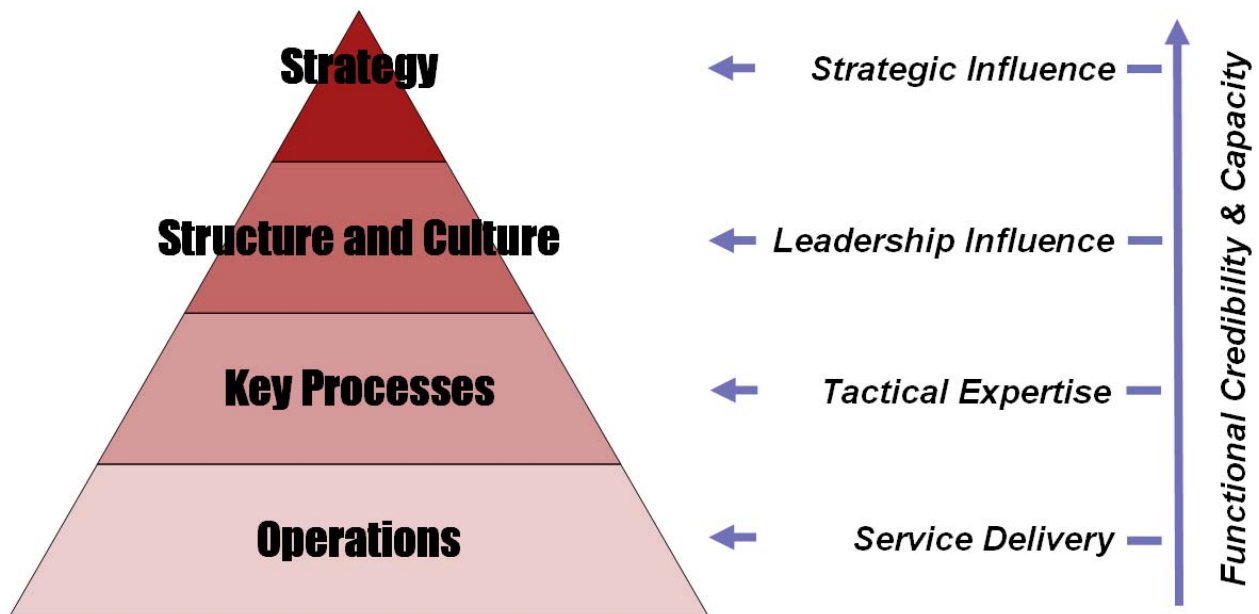


outcomes.

Pyramid of Influence

Organizations generally identify the types of strategic support needed from each function to assist in the performance of the core work of the organization. These functions work to support the organization in achieving its mission and goals.

Regardless of the organization’s structure, the quality of support function work has a significant impact on the quality of work performed by the entire organization. The APHSA-developed *Pyramid of Influence* model identifies four major areas of organizational work at the center of the Pyramid. The right side of this model identifies how support functions add value to the larger organization:



The Four Major Areas of Organizational Work

Strategy work involves defining the aim and game plan of the organization -- what the organization is, what it intends to do and why, how it will do it, and what it needs to succeed. **Structure and culture** work involves modeling values and defining and communicating departments, jobs, levels, work teams, policies, and performance expectations. **Key processes** work involves defining specific processes and procedures that translate strategy and desired structure and culture into guidance for day-to-day work. **Operations** work involves implementing key processes, providing services to clients, and managing individual performance.

A Support Function's Added Value to the Organization

Service delivery work involves the most foundational work a support function is expected to complete. This work generally involves managing key organizational information (e.g., personnel records, performance data, financial records) and delivering core services in a timely and high quality manner. If a function completes its service delivery work effectively, the organization's leaders will generally ask for its **Tactical Expertise** in helping design key processes. This work involves gathering input from internal staff at various organizational levels and designing specific processes and procedures. If an organization's leaders see these processes and procedures adding value, they will seek guidance to help them improve their

effectiveness as individual leaders. This **Leadership Influence** work generally involves giving advice to individual leaders proactively to help the leaders leverage strengths, close gaps, and pursue strategic priorities as well as in response to ad hoc questions. If these leaders see the advice as consistently valuable, they will invite the support function's leaders to help complete the organization's strategy work. This **Strategic Influence** work generally involves participating in strategic planning and other executive team meetings and providing expert input regarding the advantages and disadvantages of different approaches to the organization's work. Continuous improvement of strategic support work, therefore, generally flows from the bottom of the pyramid up – functions first improve service delivery, then tactical expertise, then leadership influence, then strategic influence.

The *Pyramid of Influence* model shows the four major areas of organizational work as connected parts of a whole. Strategy is at the top because it drives all other organizational efforts in alignment to it. Connecting strategy to the day-to-day operations are the organization's structure and culture as well as the processes and programs that serve as tools and boundaries to support daily operations. As just discussed, support functions can add value in all four major areas, but in the real world they are built best from the bottom-up. As support functions establish their credibility and effectiveness at the more foundational levels first, they will then be able to add value at higher levels of the pyramid.

As they evolve, strategic support functions need to streamline and innovate how they do their foundational work so they can devote more and more capacity to adding higher levels of value. In a common continuous improvement scenario, a support function will first deliver more effectively the expected and traditional services. It will then shift its capacity (e.g., through automation, client self help, staff skill-building and streamlining administration) towards providing more innovative tactical support in developing key processes. As the organization learns how to use the key processes most effectively, this shift will be followed by a further shift in capacity toward helping improve the organization's structure and culture through leadership influence. Finally, support functions with the most credibility shift their capacity further toward helping strengthen the organization's overall strategy.

A support function can use the Pyramid of Influence model in combination with the DAPIM™ approach to drive systematic continuous improvement. This model can help an organization *define* a desired future state for itself and *assess* its current state. Once a support function has identified and prioritized its current

strengths and gaps, it can develop, implement, and monitor plans to strengthen its work at all levels of the pyramid. What results is a step-by-step approach to creating conditions to sustain the organization's OE capacity and initiatives.

An Example from the Field: Using the Pyramid of Influence in Ventura County, California

In 2005 Ventura County's Human Services Agency (HSA) launched a number of key initiatives to achieve its goals for clients and staff, based in large part on a comprehensive set of organizational assessments earlier that year. By late '05 the agency's focus turned to improving a comprehensive array of organizational mechanisms for strategic performance, supervisory and management leadership, continuous improvement, staff development and succession planning, empowerment, teamwork, internal and external communication, unit and individual capacity planning, and building trust for change.

While this initial effort was primarily driven through external consulting support, much of the design, delivery and support for these organizational mechanisms fit within the scope of AHSA's "strategic support" functions, especially Human Resources. In the past these functions had not always been appreciated or well-leveraged for providing the desired improvements. Indeed, these functions had strengths and needs that were not well-understood by senior leadership and management in general. As a result the functions themselves have become more reactive and non-strategic.

Agency senior management set out to change this reality through an HR transformation project facilitated by APHSA, using a number of tools and models including the Pyramid of Influence. The main requirement in designing this project was to fully enfranchise the HSA Human Resources function in its own self-assessment and improvement planning.

The HR team employed APHSA's Human Resources Assessment Tool, a comprehensive set of effectiveness indicators organized around four "tiers" of value that the function provides to their clients- Service Delivery, Tactical Alignment, Leadership Influence, and Strategic Influence. The team compared their current state to these effectiveness indicators and generated Key Findings. From these Findings, the team identified the root causes of their most critical gaps, and then established an additional set of priority initiatives for providing fuller value to their clients. Priority was given to initiatives that reinforced HR operations and programs/tactics, while those focused on influencing leadership and agency strategy were deemed equally important but not as urgent.

The HR team then constructed detailed action plans for implementing each of these initiatives, working both as a team and individually as project managers. Along the way, they analyzed their organizational structure and full time equivalents (FTEs), the status of their relationships with key client groups (executives and their management and supervisory teams), and they articulated how to operationalize “doing the right thing”- a core driver of the credibility and trust the team sought to improve with the agency as a whole. The team put in place a plan to shift their structure and roles from administrative and specialist-oriented to more generalist and relationship-centered (e.g., HR relationship managers for particular HSA departments) over time.

Markers of Effectiveness

APHSA has also supported the development of Markers of Effectiveness that outline the expansion of the traditional support functions to include OE specific strategic functions. Markers can serve two important purposes. First, they can help an organization’s leaders understand how support functions can help spearhead OE initiatives in support of the organization’s mission and goals. Second, they guide those responsible for actually directing support functions in providing technical expertise, guidance, and consultation to the organization’s leadership team.

Support functions play an important role in continuous improvement. When organization leaders engage support function directors to ensure effective utilization of each function, in alignment with the organization’s overall strategy, organizations end up with stronger performance and performance capacity. Markers help establish grounds for dialogues about functions’ roles and responsibilities for contributing specific technical products and services to influence the OE work of the organization.

A CALL TO ACTION: A critical first step is for organization leaders and support staff to develop markers of effectiveness. In DAPIM™, this phase of work is “Defining” the desired state for the support function. Define markers in your organization that will serve as a guide for creating strategic alignment of each support function. The application of the Pyramid of Influence requires identifying technical expertise to be provided toward planning the organizational strategy.

Each support function must cultivate a set of markers to help build, monitor, and measure its own effectiveness in supporting continuous organizational improvement efforts. Having established the markers, the support functions would be able to communicate with overseeing executives and other stakeholders about how effectively they could deliver OE specific services and products. The following elements of markers are necessary to perform each support function effectively, including both traditional and OE-capacity building responsibilities:

Skill Development: Developing content experts that have skill sets necessary to effectively perform support functions.

Strategic Alignment: Creating alignment with different support functions to strengthen the organization's strategy, structure and culture, key processes, and operations work.

Products and Services: Developing products and services to support OE initiatives and strategies. Products and services demonstrate the expertise of support functions. These products also demonstrate the guidance and facilitation provided in the work of defining, developing and implementing strategy, structure and culture, key processes and operations of the organization using a "learning by doing" approach, a process in which participants analyze OE issues, identify barriers to effective agency performance, and develop strategies to improve client outcomes.

Engagement Skills: Engaging organizations in formal and informal learning opportunities through administrative support, technical assistance, training, and consultation.

Monitoring Effectiveness: Providing technical assistance to analyze program data generated by the organization and evidence-based data generated during the performance of different support functions. This analysis is to be used to monitor OE initiatives and make recommendations for OE improvements.

Once the effectiveness of support functions is maximized in alignment with the markers, the organization's executives will have a broad sense of "ownership" of the functions' strategic support work. They will be able to explain how services and products of each function will carry out the organization's strategy to achieve positive outcomes for children, youth, families, adults, and communities. Markers also serve as benchmarks to assess how effectively the organization is using support functions as well as how effectively the functions are helping the organization achieve its desired outcomes. The importance of these benchmarks cannot be emphasized enough to gain buy-in for and understanding of strategic support functions' capabilities to effectively address organizational challenges.

The following is an example of how the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES)'s Organization and Management Development Administration (OMD) leverages the markers to support overall organizational improvement efforts.

An Example from the Field: Using the Markers of Effectiveness in Arizona

The Department of Economic Security (DES) was established to provide an integration of direct services to the people of Arizona. This integrated structure improves coordination of economic opportunities and the delivery of human services. Children, families, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities are able to access an array of programs and services through a single state agency. The agency is responsible for protective services for children, adults, and vulnerable populations. The Department also administers programs which provide basic living supports and economic assistance to promote self-sufficiency and well-being. DES works closely with a network of community organizations and providers, as well as federal agencies that oversee Department programs, other state agencies, and Native American tribes in the delivery of services to the citizens of Arizona.

Under the Office of the Director, the Organization and Management Development Administration (OMD) is responsible for employee and organizational development that crosses all Divisions and programs. Two units within OMD support all of DES' 9,000 employees: the Employee Development Unit and the Organizational Development Unit. The focus of the Employee Development Unit is the training function. The focus of the Organizational Development Unit is on organizational assessments, change management and evaluation. This unit leads several DES OE initiatives such as employee on-boarding, engagement and the identification of a core set of organizational competencies

Example of the Marker: Develop Consistent Internal Skill Set for Curriculum Development and Delivery

Each DES program area has a training unit that focuses on training staff to work within the scope of their own program. In order to have consistency in practice across the agency, the Organization and Management Administration offered a certification for training delivery. Formal

certifications for curriculum design and evaluation of training is expected to be offered in 2010.

Example of the Marker: Strategic Alignment with OE Initiatives

DES' workforce initiatives are using work teams to develop employee onboarding and engagement strategies for the whole agency. Organization and Management Development Administration (OMD) has the strategic lead on these initiatives on behalf of the whole agency.

OMD and the Human Resource Administration (HRA) partner on several projects to strengthen the workforce such as the identification of organizational competencies.

Example of the Marker: Developing and delivering products and services that are outcome focused, evidence-based and focused on continuous improvement efforts

Aligning organizational and employee needs is addressed by conducting a Bi-Annual needs assessment. The assessment serves to identify the developmental needs within the organization. The information is shared with the Executive Leaders of DES. The curriculum planning and development addressed by OMD crosses all programs within the organization.

OMD conducts the annual Employee and Customer Satisfaction Surveys on behalf of DES. Not only are reports generated that reflect what is occurring in the whole agency, but each Divisional Program and Support area receives its own report so that the area's management can conduct continuous improvement activities specific to their area.

Example of Marker: Engaging organizations in formal and informal learning opportunities through administrative support, technical assistance, training and consultation

The DES Division of Benefits and Medical Eligibility provides financial assistance and/or nutrition assistance benefits to eligible applicants and recipients and determines eligibility to receive medical benefits from the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS), which is the

State's Medicaid program. Offices are Statewide and located in both rural and urban areas with diverse populations.

With assistance from the American Public Human Services Association (APHSA), a continuous improvement method, the DAPIM™ framework was introduced to a number of offices. APHSA provided guidance and training so the process could be replicated down to the level of the offices themselves.

Some of the positive outcomes from using the DAPIM™ framework as a continuous improvement approach were:

- The Division Leadership was able to continue to replicate the process using its own staff as process facilitators.*
- Several offices were able to keep the process going without the need for a process facilitator.*
- Enhanced opportunities for frontline staff to provide feedback to their local management to improve office operations.*

Example of Marker: A Continuum of Services and Products *(The redefined approach will provide an opportunity for the organization leaders to strategically engage the training staff to exercise their expertise in sharing organizational goals and outcomes, assessing organizational gaps in achieving them, and providing guidelines to embed transfer of learning strategies that are at the core of the organizational improvement plans.)*

In Arizona, the Office of Facilities Management observed inconsistent practices by the Building Coordinators in following the procedures outlined in their Building Coordinator's Handbook. To address this issue, the Facilities management requested curriculum to be developed and training provided for the Building Coordinators.

Several consultative meetings with the heads of both the Facilities group and Procurement area were conducted. Procurement had been identified as one of the main areas that worked directly with the Building Coordinators and interfaced frequently with Facilities; and had assisted with the development of the Handbook.

The result of conducting several consultative meetings with the Leaders accountable for their respective areas was an agreement that further analysis was needed to determine what the needs of the Building

Coordinators were, the usefulness of the Handbook, and gaps between procedures and practice in the field.

An OE Facilitator conducted two separate focus groups. Two sets of focus groups were used: one group consisted of top performers who perform the Building Coordinator function and the second group consisted of members from Facilities and Procurement. The primary purpose of the focus groups was to identify training needs, identify current communication gaps between the field and Facilities/Procurement areas and develop solutions.

The result was that training topics were identified, non-training issues were identified, and recommended solutions were provided to the Facilities and Purchasing sponsors of the work. The curriculum is under development and several of the recommended solutions are being developed for future implementation.

The use of the DAPIM™ framework, *Pyramid of Influence* model, and *Markers of Effectiveness* guidelines can help an organization develop a strategy to determine when, where, and how each support function should contribute its technical expertise and collaborate with other functions in supporting OE initiatives. Once the expansion of support functions is complete and their effectiveness maximized, they can support the organization at large in building its own effectiveness.

SECTION II: USING THE MODELS AND TOOLS TO BUILD OE CAPACITY IN THE TRAINING SYSTEM

Chapter Two: Expanding the Role of Training Systems

The Current Role of Training Systems

Successful performance of the Training System requires staff and fiscal resources as well as policies and procedures that guide the process of delivering the planned services and products. Products and services of the Training System must have strong alignment with the organization's mission and goals. They must also be connected with the services of other support functions to promote continuous improvement in services to the clients of the organization at large.

A CALL TO ACTION: By providing training and technical assistance to organization staff, the Training System can carry the mission, goals, and priorities of the organization out to the field, external partners, and stakeholders. Identify the ways your Training System supports the mission, goals, and priorities of your organization.

In most organizations the training and/or staff development functions are referred to as the Training System. In the publication "Building Effective Training Systems for Child Welfare Agencies" by the National Resource Center for Organizational Improvement, a Training System is defined in as follows:

The Training System typically is comprised of people representing different entities (public and private agency managers and training directors, and universities), resources (fiscal, computers hardware, physical facilities, staff with technical expertise), and policy and procedures that govern the development of curriculum and delivery of formal and informal training. The purpose of a Training System is to plan, provide, support, and evaluate formal and informal instruction, learning opportunities, and professional development aimed at improving agency outcomes.¹

¹ Kanak, S., Baker, M., Herz, L., Maciolek, S. (2008). Building Effective Training Systems for Child Welfare Agencies. Portland, Maine: National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement.

The creation of a Training System typically occurs within the organization, relying on a mix of brokered training by outside vendors and partnerships with private agencies and universities. The Training System is viewed most often as focusing on developing the competencies staff needs in particular program, policy, and practice areas.

A CALL TO ACTION: Organization leaders must view the Training System as a management tool. Leaders must also understand the need for the Training System to collaborate with other support functions to improve agency performance and outcomes. Identify the areas where your Training System collaborates with other support functions to develop staff.

Most Training Systems currently rely on participant reaction evaluation and, in some instances, pre- and post-knowledge testing to show their value to the organization. Training professionals are in the midst of discussions on how to strengthen links between training and organizational outcomes and demonstrate more effectively the value of training to build the organization as a learning system.

As training professionals discuss how to strengthen the links between training and organizational outcomes, they are developing a greater awareness of organizational and individual staff capacity needed to deliver high quality services to children, youth, families and communities. They are also developing greater awareness of how the training system can expand its impact on the organization by building the Training System's capacity to deliver OE-focused technical assistance in alignment with the organization's overall strategy.

A CALL TO ACTION: Training Systems must move beyond current evaluation methods (e.g., participant reaction evaluations and pre/post knowledge testing) and evaluate the impact of their services and products on organizational improvements and outcomes for clients. Identify and begin using data measures to show your Training System's impact on the organization at large and the children, families, youth, and adults the organization serves.

Defining the Expanded Role of Training Systems

Training Systems currently offer fixed curriculum delivered in static settings and on a predetermined schedule. This approach focuses primarily on agency staff. Training curriculum is developed typically without the in-depth dialogue with organizational executives necessary to understand what the organization wants to achieve, what strategies it is implementing to get there, what performance and capacity-related limitations need to be addressed, and what staff development services are needed to support organizational improvement efforts.

When redefining itself, the Training System should provide a continuum of products and services that include traditional curriculum and classroom training as well as products and services that address the organization's continuous improvement needs. This approach requires expansion of the Training System role to include facilitation, technical assistance, and consulting services to help generate, implement, and monitor organizational continuous improvement plans. The redefined approach leverages the training staff expertise in sharing organizational goals and outcomes, assessing systemic barriers and gaps in achieving them, and embedding transfer of learning strategies that are at the core of the OE improvement plans.

In building this continuum of services and products, the Training System provides customized support in addition to pre-written and “off the shelf” curriculum.

An Example from the Field: A Continuum of Services and Products from Arizona

In Arizona, the Office of Facilities Management observed inconsistent practices by the Building Coordinators in following the procedures outlined in their Building Coordinator's Handbook. To address this issue, the Facilities management requested curriculum to be developed and training provided for the Building Coordinators.

Several consultative meetings with the heads of both the Facilities group and Procurement area were conducted. Procurement had been identified as one of the main areas that worked directly with the Building Coordinators and interfaced frequently with Facilities; and had assisted with the development of the Handbook.

The result of conducting several consultative meetings with the Leaders accountable for their respective areas was an agreement that further analysis was needed to determine what the needs of the Building Coordinators were, the usefulness of the Handbook, and gaps between procedures and practice in the field.

An OE Facilitator conducted two separate focus groups. Two sets of focus groups were used: one group consisted of top performers who perform the Building Coordinator function and the second group consisted of members from Facilities and Procurement. The primary purpose of the focus groups was to identify training needs, identify current communication gaps between the field and Facilities/Procurement areas and develop solutions.

The result was that training topics were identified, non-training issues were identified, and recommended solutions were provided to the Facilities and Purchasing sponsors of the work. The curriculum is under development and several of the recommended solutions are being developed for future implementation.

Expanding the Training System's Role

To be an effective partner in OE initiatives, the Training System will need to expand the scope of its traditional role of training the frontline staff to include technical expertise needed to facilitate and support the organization's continuous improvement efforts. The following new tasks will enable the Training System to contribute more to achieving organizational outcomes and creating learning organizations while continuing to contribute in more traditional ways:

- Identify individual and organizational learning needs that support professional development and build performance capacity – traditional function;
- Develop formal training and technical assistance plans, identify informal learning opportunities, and facilitate OE initiatives stemming from developed plans and strategies – expanded function;
- Develop and implement professional development plans that address beginning and advance level training needs of the frontline staff and OE-specific learning needs of other agency staff – traditional and expanded functions;
- Partner with other support functions such as quality assurance, human resources, information systems, and program planning to ensure an integrated approach to professional development – expanded function;
- Monitor and assess all professional development activities – traditional function;
- Evaluate the continuum of learning and application of learned skills to the job from individual learning, individual job performance, agency performance and organizational effectiveness – traditional and expanded function; and,
- Generate evidence-based practice information for use for continuous improvement, and share with others in the field information and feedback from lessons learned to improve professional development and OE work – expanded function.

An Example from the Field: Training, Technical Assistance and Transfer of Learning Collaboration from Pennsylvania

County A is a rural Pennsylvania county with a population of approximately 90,000. The county requested assistance through the Child Welfare Training Program's (CWTP) Practice Improvement Unit of the Organizational Effectiveness Department. Upon meeting with the county administrator, it was found that the county was ready and willing to change its permanency practices to include enhanced use of concurrent planning. Working together, the CWTP Practice Improvement and Transfer of Learning units (training staff) and county representatives developed a training, technical assistance and transfer of learning (TOL) plan. A CWTP contracted trainer delivered two three-hour workshops for the entire staff. Training staff followed up with sessions of supervisors and staff to help assure that the classroom learning was clearly understood and would be used in daily work. Training staff assigned helped to coordinate this work effort and other technical assistance and training requested by the county. They were also very involved in assessment, planning and implementation and part of TOL delivery. The activities outlined in this document occurred over a two year period.

Training staff attended the TOL sessions, which helped firmly establish a trusting and respectful relationship with the agency. The supervisors and staff expressed a need for a brochure to give to families when they first came into contact with the agency that would explain Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) and concurrent planning. A need was also expressed for county specific diligent search tools that would help locate absent parents. Additionally, the agency wanted to become better equipped to recruit adoptive homes for several children in foster care who were legally free for adoption but had no identified family resource.

The three training staff continued to meet with the supervisor and others to further assess agency needs. Development of the ASFA/Concurrent planning brochure was accomplished through the use of training staff expertise in ASFA and professional experience in child welfare casework and supervision. The diligent search tool was also developed by Training staff, in consultation with the agency and all staff were trained on its use, in collaboration with State Wide Adoption Network (SWAN) Legal Services Initiative staff. The training staff's knowledge of state and federal resources helped tailor the approach to County A's resources and procedures. Training staff also have many years of direct

casework and management experience in public child welfare, which is an asset to the training, technical assistance and TOL approaches.

The final task involved meeting with supervisors and staff to review and revise adoption recruitment procedures. This gave everyone an equal opportunity to determine methods best suited to County A, firmly establishing agency wide buy-in to the new methods and processes. Recommendations were made for working with SWAN, with regional media who assist with family recruitment, working with adoption exchanges and fine tuning agency documentation of recruitment efforts, among other suggestions. The training staff later facilitated discussions between the children and youth services agency and SWAN, enhancing their collaborative relationship to benefit children and families.

County A was pleased with all of the products and service of technical assistance, TOL and training. The training staff worked collaboratively to offer a broader set of services and supports than either could have offered separately. A year later, the county supervisor informed CWTP that, in the year since the interventions, adoptions had increased from one to fourteen. Since this work effort occurred, two directors left this county for positions elsewhere in Pennsylvania. Both have requested similar services in their new agencies.

Effective Training Systems transform themselves to play important roles in continuous improvement. When organization leaders and Training System directors work together on this transformation, inter-departmental strategic alignments emerge naturally. This transformation work builds a bridge between traditional classroom training with a focus on individual learning to OE products and services that support transfer of learning, organizational learning, and continuous improvement.

Taking a Closer Look at Traditional Training Systems

In most organizations, Training System staff compiles competency lists of knowledge, skills, abilities, and values required for organization staff to perform key tasks. These competencies are used to guide curriculum development, trainer development, and training delivery. The resulting services typically include the following:

- conducting individual training needs assessment;
- developing entry-level training curriculum aimed at building staff

- knowledge, values, and skills, using role plays and trainer demonstrations based on generic scenarios;
- delivering classroom training to workers who need job-specific competencies;
- providing advanced training aimed at building specialized subject matter knowledge and skills;
- conducting formalized train-the-trainer sessions to prepare future trainers to deliver content as scripted; and,
- evaluating trainees' impressions of the training and, in some instances, administering pre- and post-tests to measure knowledge and/or skill acquisition.

Training Systems committed to OE work recognize that classroom training can help participants build knowledge and awareness as well as learn new procedures, but cannot adequately help participants translate the organization's values into action, develop supervision and leadership skills, and advance worker skills such as engagement, assessment, interviewing and case documentation. These Training Systems adjust the continuum of training services to include the following:

- developing markers of effectiveness;
- developing competencies linked to outcome-focused practice models and/or established evidence-based standards of practice ;
- assessing competencies of a unit within the organization versus individual competency alone;
- providing opportunities to an agency unit, department, or leadership for team building based on competency assessments
- offering an array of standard curriculum custom-developed to meet identified individual and organizational development needs. Content includes tools and methods specific to the organization's unique OE issues. Content is delivered through organization-specific role plays and trainer demonstrations;
- implementing written pre- and post-training evaluation activities to support transfer of learning; and,
- evaluating supervisor perceptions of training participants' on the job application of newly acquired knowledge and skills.

When Training Systems seek to expand their role and contributions to the organization's OE efforts, they add the following tasks to those noted above:

- assessing organization development needs based on the organization's strategic plan, including desired outcomes;
- assessing readiness of an organization to engage in continuous improvement work and development of competencies through learning-by-doing;
- building internal sponsorship for OE efforts;
- defining desired performance capacity of the organization;
- providing individual and team-based facilitation skills necessary for of continuous improvement work;
- facilitating team activities to close continuous improvement team gaps;
- developing strategic support function playbooks and continuous improvement plans;
- measuring the impact of organizational improvements on staff performance and client outcomes;
- building the capacity of continuous improvement teams and individuals within the team to handle challenges as an ongoing “way of doing business”;
- building executive sponsorship and performance capacity to enable sustainability of improvements;
- building high-trust learning environments that encourage staff to take risks and contribute actively to continuous improvement work;
- facilitating team activities to identify commitments and establish methods for strengthening accountability;
- using participant expertise and insight about their own performance strengths and gaps to build new models and tools and that drive organizational continuous improvement.

A Training Scenario

The following scenario compares a traditional response to an organizational training request and a response from an OE perspective.

During a quality assurance case records review, organization leaders notice poorly written service plans in client files. All plans appear similar. It is clear to leaders that staff members are not engaging families in service planning to develop plans to meet the unique needs of families. Furthermore, it appears that supervisors are not reviewing service plans

properly and providing staff the coaching needed to ensure use of family engagement practices during service planning.

The leaders contact the training department and request training for all supervisors and front line staff on family engagement practices and service planning. Training responds in a timely manner and all supervisors and front line staff receive the requested training. Three months following the training, a follow-up record review is conducted. Service plans still do not show improvement.

At this point, several things can happen:

- Leaders view the training as ineffective and the training department's credibility is damaged;
- Leaders view staff as resisting and start corrective action with staff members responsible for inadequate case records; and/or,
- Leaders become complacent, developing a "that is just the way it is all around" attitude.

A CALL TO ACTION: Organization leaders and Training System staff must monitor training initiatives by collecting data from supervisors and front-line staff. Gathering impact data and lessons learned from operations staff enables continuous improvement of the initiatives to ensure achievement of desired results. Review the Training System's current evaluation instruments and how evaluation results are used to monitor progress toward desired results.

Continue the scenario using OE *Learning-by-Doing* approach to the training request.

The training department receives the request to train all supervisors and front line staff in family engagement practice and service planning. Prior to agreeing to do the training, training personnel requests to take a closer look at the situation by holding a focus group session with a sampling of supervisors and front line staff. It is clear from leaders that they want service plans to be based on family input and meet families' unique needs. Training personnel holds a session with supervisors and front line staff to assess why they are developing service plans that "all look alike" and do not appear to be engaging families. They discover supervisors and front line staff support the desired outcome of family engagement when developing services plans. Furthermore, supervisors and staff report they

have been concerned about this issue ever since the service plans become computerized. Staff members are having difficulty using the computerized service plan. Two concerns (gaps) are noted -- the plans have a drop down menu for services that does not allow services unique to each family to be entered and many of the front line staff have not been trained in basic computer skills and have difficulty using the computers. Supervisors and front line staff recommend a change to the computer program that will allow them to enter services specific to each family. They also request training in basic computer skills. The training personnel shares these remedies with the leaders, the software is improved, and basic computer skills training is provided. Three months later the desired outcome is seen in service plans.

In the above scenario, training staff, applying an OE approach, identified the root causes of the problem and worked with several other strategic support functions to implement a plan to address underlying causes. The plan resulted in working with the computer systems unit to improve worker documentation of service tasks. This example illustrates the sort of “value-added” consultative role a Training System can play within organizations.

An Example from the Field: Using Agency-Specific Strategic Planning and Technical Assistance as an Alternative to Formalized Training in Pennsylvania

A Director of a small, rural, county children & youth agency contacts the Practice Improvement Specialist from the Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program (CWTP) assigned to assist the agency with organizational needs. It should be noted that the training staff has established an ongoing working relationship with the agency over a 4 year period; a degree of trust already exists which makes this approach possible.

The Director requests that the CWTP provide “refresher” training in Risk Assessment. The rationale for the request includes:

- it has been many years since the more experienced staff attended the original Risk Assessment training and it is felt that they would benefit from a review of the curriculum*
- there are some internal disagreements over how to complete certain components of the instrument*
- the leadership in the agency believes that the overall quality of the assessments needs to improve to assist with case decision-making and to decrease the likelihood of future licensing citations*

In this instance the training staff teams with a co-worker who has a degree of expertise in completing Risk Assessments, and whose primary duties also include the development of transfer of learning activities and services.

As a first step, a phone conference is scheduled with the agency Director and Supervisors to further clarify, define and assess the request. As a result of the discussions, everyone agrees that before any training is scheduled, a random sample of completed agency Risk Assessments would be copied and forwarded to the training staff for closer review. Specific client information would be “sanitized” and training staff would review the work and identify strengths, needs, areas of confusion, and whether there were any systemic problems noticed with the instruments. In this case, in lieu of a “canned refresher trainer,” and in order to address the specific needs of this organization, it was agreed that a technical assistance session would be developed based on the results of the reviews. The Director and Supervisors agreed that all staff would attend the session with a

goal of facilitating an open and honest discussion about what needed to be done to improve the quality of the Risk Assessments.

After completing the reviews and sharing the results with the agency Director, a very agency- specific agenda was developed for the technical assistance session which included:

- Revisiting the purposes and goals of Risk Assessment*
- Reviewing the technical components of the factors and summary*
- Identifying the strengths – what was done well based on the results of the reviews?*
- Identifying areas needing improvement based on the results of the reviews*
- Questions, clarifications, and discussions about individual cases reviewed*

Since there had not been any direct contact with casework staff during the planning phase, training staff used solution-focused scaling questions and exceptions questions at the beginning of the technical assistance session to provide an opportunity for casework staff to identify what they wanted to get out of the session.

This technical assistance session lasted approximately 4 hours and follow-up contact with the agency indicated that they believed they were able to improve the overall quality and consistency of their Risk Assessments.

Achieving the Expanded Role

When undertaking systems change that includes expansion of the role of the Training System, an organization can use the *DAPIMTM* framework, the *Pyramid of Influence*, and *Markers of Effectiveness* to develop a strategy for when, where, and how training should contribute its technical expertise in OE work. The organization should also develop a continuous improvement plan for how to expand the Training System's role to include both traditional training tasks and OE-specific tasks. The plan should describe the Training System's new operational structure and staff capacity requirements. The Training System must first implement the new structure and build the enhanced staff capacity before committing to OE work.

A CALL TO ACTION: The Training System must not expand its scope until it is fully able to develop and deliver outcomes-based curriculum. This ability will establish the Training System’s credibility at all levels of the organization as it begins to provide OE support. Establish a monitoring and evaluation system for your performance and model the use of this information in continuous improvement activities.

The Pyramid of Influence and Training Systems

The *Pyramid of Influence* model identifies four major areas of organizational activity and how the work of support functions can add value to the larger organization. When looking at *the Pyramid of Influence*, the Training System must first review its traditional training role and its effectiveness in completing this work. Generally, the Training System offers curriculum to develop core knowledge, values, and skills necessary to perform practice tasks, including training such as “implementation of a new policy or procedure” or “overview of legal mandates”. Organizational leaders do not typically view training as a resource beyond classroom training of frontline staff and supervisors. However, once a Training System has established its credibility by consistently offering quality training based on best practices, it can leverage this credibility to engage in dialogue with organizational leaders and managers to develop the capacity over time to devise strategic plans to address processes, agency structure, and culture barriers that impede overall agency progress. The Training System must ensure that leaders understand the type of support and tactical expertise it can offer in all areas of the organization’s OE work.

The following scenario illustrates how a Training System, operating as a support function with full credibility and OE capacity, can impact an organization and promote positive outcomes supported by best practices.

*The Training System provides training in “developing effective family service plans” at a **service delivery** level. It has established credibility within the organization as a system that provides training based on best practices. Training staff offers to provide on-site technical assistance to local agency front-line supervisors and managers in which **tactical expertise** is provided through a facilitated dialogue. Training staff facilitates sessions with supervisors and front line staff to review internal processes and procedures in place that encourage workers to apply new knowledge and skills from the training as well as identify barriers to engaging families in service planning. During these sessions, supervisors*

and front line staff identify root causes for the service gaps and develop plans to address barriers to effective service planning. They share with organization leaders the proposed plans, including recommended changes in processes and procedures.

*One of the barriers noted during the facilitated dialogue was that processes and procedures tend to be top-down and overly prescriptive. Training staff notices this barrier runs counter to the desired culture of teamwork and organizational value of inclusiveness. Bringing to bear **leadership influence**, the Training staff offers to provide technical assistance on how to improve the culture of teamwork to the preferred state of inclusiveness. By continuously providing training on best practices, technical assistance shaping processes and procedures that support implementation of best practices, and supporting leaders in creating a culture that promotes its core values, the Training System gains credibility with organizational leaders and becomes viewed as critical to the success of the organization. As a result, Training System leaders are invited to participate in organizational strategic planning sessions. During these sessions, Training System leaders provide information on the impact and lessons learned from family engagement in service planning projects. This information is used to plan the future direction of the agency. The Training System is viewed as providing **strategic influence** based on best practices in the field and relevant personal experience and expertise.*

This scenario illustrates how a Training System with strong credibility in training delivery can gain the capacity to influence the organization in areas far beyond traditional training.

Markers of Effectiveness for the Training System

When building its capacity to provide technical support, the Training System needs to recognize that it has an opportunity to influence the organization's strategy, structure and culture, key processes, and operations OE work. By extension, it can influence the organization's inter-departmental collaboration needed to improve outcomes. The following markers were developed by the *Building OE Capacity Work Team* to explain the essential components of a redefined Training System that incorporates both traditional and OE-related tasks:

1. Continuing to develop internal skill sets for curriculum development and delivery

Training System staff must include training professionals able to develop and deliver traditional training that meets the organizational needs. “A New Key to Success,” a publication of the National Staff Development and Training Association (NSDTA), provides guidelines for optimal Training System staffing for organizational development work that supports the organization’s programs goals, objectives, and priorities. The key players engaged in the development and implementation of the training program include training unit staff, organization staff, community members, and university training partners. APHSA’s Markers of Effectiveness are consistent with the NSDTA’s position that successful training programs need to be seen as having an integral role in the larger organization’s structure and purpose. (See NSDTA document, p. 3)

2. Developing OE Strategic Support Function Capacity

The performance of non-traditional OE support functions requires staff with training platform skills and OE technical expertise. Staffing levels and skills should align with the OE work the Training System is being asked to take on and the organization’s larger OE priorities.

Staffing levels need to be such that OE specialists have the time and availability to work “on-site” with leadership and work teams throughout the organization. OE specialists need time to prepare for team meetings and process information for the team following meetings. By means of meetings with teams to develop, implement, and monitor complex and long-term improvement plans, OE specialists model facilitation and planning behaviors the organization desires. In doing this work OE specialists draw on new OE facilitation skills as well as their own experience within the Training System.

A CALL TO ACTION: Developing effective Training OE specialists requires a commitment of both time and resources. Enable future OE facilitators to develop required skills through a learning by doing process, facilitating “real life” continuous improvement projects.

An Example from the Field: Assessing and Building Facilitation Skills Related to Continuous Quality Improvement: Texas Department of Family and Protective Services: 2008-2009

As part of a leadership development initiative, begun in the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Child Protective Services Program in 2008 through consultation with American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) staff, existing quality assurance staff assigned in the Child and Family Services Review and Investigations areas were tapped to lead organizational effectiveness facilitations (OE Sustainability Team). In order to analyze the readiness of this team to conduct structured facilitations across Texas in eleven regions, an assessment of skills was conducted and a plan developed to support training of this team to strengthen their capacity. A list of questions representing skills needed for effective facilitation was generated and each of the facilitators completed a self-assessment. The list was:

- What skills do you feel particularly strong in and why?*
- What skills do you feel you still need to develop and why?*
- Based on the skills you still need to develop, what you identify as your top three priorities.*

These assessments were completed and provided to the APHSA mentors. The information was also shared with the Casey Family Programs which was providing support for this initiative in order to identify supplemental facilitation skills training for the OE team. The assessment specifically evaluated skills in two areas: Facilitation and Technical Skills.

Following the APHSA led facilitation training and mentoring, Casey Family Programs sponsored an intensive facilitation skills training, which built on the needed areas identified by each OE facilitator. This approach was very successful and built confidence of the team. Over the course of several months in 2008 and 2009, the OE team has conducted several facilitations across Texas resulting in many system improvement work products that are being implemented by the Child Protective Services Program (CPS). CPS staff is very appreciative of the OE team and their capacity to lead them through complicated system improvement initiatives. The self identified skills assessments are also being used on an on-going basis as one of the monitoring tools for evaluating the capacity of the facilitators.

3. Creating strategic alignment with OE initiatives

As the organization's Leadership Team creates strategic alignment between the organization and the Training System, the Training System has opportunities to do the following:

- Develop a strategic playbook that links the goals, objectives, priorities and activities of the training system to the overall vision, mission, values, and practice standards of the organization;
- Establish Training System standards, products, services, and day to day operations that reflect the organization's mission and values and a structure to support the key OE initiatives and projects;
- Participate as a member of the organization's management team to provide expertise and guidance on the strategic direction and facilitating the discussion toward OE goals;
- Establish boundaries and role clarity within the training system on how it will interface with the organization, specifically around:
 - Inclusion of training staff on organizational work teams
 - Decision-making on priorities within the training system
 - Leadership styles demonstrated in the training system
 - Create a balance between what time and energy the training system spends directly with the organization and what it does internally
 - Develop and implement communication plans and processes between the training program and the organization management team
- Develop key processes within the training system from the organization's point of view, which supplement and complement the existing training program operations and serve the need of the training system and the organization, such as forecasting resource needs based on comprehensive needs assessments;
- Facilitate meaningful planning in support of the organizational development efforts and coordination of activities at all levels of the organization; and
- Foster the growth of learning organizations by developing an integrated evidence-based approach to professional development that includes both formal and informal learning opportunities.
- Facilitate collaboration among agency components that perform the support functions tasks. Facilitation Skills are different than typical training or platform skills and are crucial to the success of any OE specialist. Skilled OE facilitators must be comfortable leading groups through system assessments and problem solving and planning while keeping groups on

task with a balance of safety in the room and accountability for the work. This must be done while using the participants in the room as the subject matter experts of their own system.

Further information on facilitation skills can also be found in the following resources; APHSA's Organizational Effectiveness Handbook; "The Skilled Facilitator" by Roger Schwarz, Jossey-Bass, Inc publisher, 1994; "Best Practices from the Leading Organization in Facilitation" Jossey-Bass, 2005; and, "The IAF Handbook of Group Facilitation" by Sandy Schuman.

4. Developing and delivering products and services that are outcome focused, evidence- based and focused on continuous improvement efforts

As the Leadership Team begins to accomplish the strategic alignment between the organization and the training system, the training system has opportunities to provide the following services to improve strategic alignment:

- Develop and deliver products and services that are aligned to advance the organization's strategy for culture change to achieve positive outcomes for children, youth, families, adults and communities;
- Develop key processes and operational practices to facilitate the implementation of OE initiatives;
- Deliver formal structured classroom training for staff at all levels of the organization and key stakeholders that supports the outcomes identified in the organizations strategy;
- Provide informal learning opportunities (such as facilitated team dialogue and learning, e-learning, distance learning, and webinar) for staff at all levels of the organization and key to advance the OE initiatives;
- Establish methods to define products and services of the training system and how they support the strategy of the organization;
- Establish methods to conduct organizational needs assessments and develop and deliver timely, relevant, and actionable training, technical assistance and consultation plans that are based on the assessments and articulate how products and services appropriately match the needs of the organization-staff, support continuous improvement efforts, and promote positive outcomes for the clients;
- Establish methods to continually scan for best practices and innovations in the field in efforts to provide consultation and facilitated discussions on how to effectively implement these practices;
- Deliver an array of quality products and services, addressing a variety of learning styles, in a timely manner, to create a learning organization and

support the overall operations and effectiveness of the organization including:

- Individual and organizational needs assessment
- Outcome focused curriculum resulting in transfer of learning
- Facilitated learning opportunities, using a systematic and systemic approach to utilizing information and feedback to plan for meaningful improvement to advance OE initiatives
- OE resource guides, tools, and templates
- Training opportunities for staff at all levels of the organization and key stakeholders; foster, adoptive and kinship parents; and families on regulation, policy, procedure and basic knowledge and theory content
- Technical assistance and consultation for staff at all levels of the organization and key stakeholders; foster, adoptive, and kinship parents, and families,
- Technical assistance grounded in building learning organizations and using feedback on lessons learned as an opportunity for improvement to support transfer of learning and advance OE initiatives
- Employ experts within the training system to perform traditional training services such as curriculum development and delivery experts
- Employ OE experts within the Training System that can develop and deliver facilitations concentrated on OE goals
- Engage the training system OE specialist in daily efforts of the organization, which would require spending the majority of time on the development and delivery of OE products and services that meet the specific needs of the organizations, and
- Use teams and collaborative efforts in the development of all training system services and products, including participation by:
 - Staff from all levels of the organization it supports,
 - Key partners (e.g. community providers, university social work programs, families served by organization, and political and business leaders),
 - Other agency staff involved in support functions (e.g. technology, human resources, policy), and,
 - Staff from within the training system.

5. Building and demonstrating engagement skills

As a member of the Leadership Team, which conducts sessions to discuss OE improvement plans and/or is considering implementation of new initiatives, the Training System OE representatives have opportunities to demonstrate the following engagement skills:

- Bring to the table expertise specific to the most current OE models, tools, and practices;
- Facilitate the work of continuous improvement that is based on organizational needs assessments, conducted with the use of “learning by doing” approach;
- Effectively "contract" services with the organization leaders in ways that lead to the expected follow-through related to the Leadership Team decisions and desired impact on the organization outcomes; and,
- Facilitate informal learning sessions and transfer of learning with staff within the organization.

6. Monitoring Effectiveness of OE initiatives and measuring impact on agency performance and client outcomes

When making decisions, the Leadership Team may rely on the Training System, as one source, to monitor OE initiatives and collect and analyze program data generated by the organization and the Training System to assess the effectiveness of the OE strategy and make recommendations for improvements. In performance of this task, the Training System has opportunities to demonstrate expertise in the following areas:

- Establish guidelines for monitoring performance, impact, and effectiveness of the training system and how data and feedback on lessons learned will be collected and used to continuously improve the training system;
- Establish guidelines for the analysis and interpretation of client outcomes data, generated by the organization, and the use of such analyses to develop recommendations for OE improvements;
- Establish guidelines for using data collected by the organization on client outcomes and client satisfaction feedback to influence the training system’s delivery of OE support services, curriculum development, and delivery of the traditional training function;
- Establish guidelines on using data and lessons learned feedback collected by the training system that can lead to future learning opportunities and support continuous improvement for the organization;
- Establish guidelines on using data and lessons learned feedback collected by the organization’s other strategic support functions that can lead to

- future learning opportunities and support continuous improvement of the training system and the organization;
- Establish guidelines to generate data from embedded evaluation during classroom training as well as evidence based practice research to address training curriculum as well as OE issues;
 - Establish guidelines to generate data and lessons learned feedback from transfer of learning, technical assistance and consultation efforts to address training development as well as OE issues;
 - Establish guidelines to conduct “learning assessments” ; generating data and lessons learned from the organization and individual staff on the impact of training system efforts on building the performance and performance capacity of the organization through various learning opportunities; and,
 - Create a feedback system using quantitative and qualitative data that scans for lessons learned, including both strengths and gaps, from the product development and delivery process, using data to continuously improve both OE supports and curriculum development and delivery.

When the markers are implemented, the Training Systems can contribute to continuous improvement by doing the following:

- engaging the organization in a facilitated decision making process that creates pathways toward the adoption of improvements;
- communicating excitement, possibilities and details about continuous improvement to those internal and external to the organization;
- bringing expertise around best practices and standards of operation to the organization, relying on the expertise in the organization to reach conclusions on how the best practices and standards apply in the organization; and
- providing tools and techniques to reconcile and resolve disparate points of view.

A complete set of the *Markers of Effectiveness: Building Organizational Effectiveness Capacity within the Training System* is located in the appendix of this chapter.

A CALL TO ACTION: Leaders of organizations must view Training System staff as OE experts and seek their expertise to facilitate the organization's continuous improvement strategy. Use the DAPIM™ approach to develop plans to improve the agency's overall strategy, structure and culture, key processes, and operations work to achieve improved agency performance towards desired outcomes.

Engaging Training Systems in a DAPIM™ Process

The approach APHSA uses when applying the DAPIM™ approach to existing work situations is inspired by adult learning research. The DAPIM™ approach to continuous improvement is a framework for a systematic approach to problem-solving. This approach guides critical thinking to develop solutions based on problem identification and analysis, implement solutions, and determine through monitoring whether the solution is working to achieve the intended goals. This approach to problem solving involves learning by doing, a process in which participants analyze OE issues, identify barriers to effective agency performance, and develop strategies to improve client outcomes. A Training System that first uses the DAPIM™ problem-solving approach to guide its own role expansion is positioned perfectly to help the organization at large begin to apply the DAPIM™ approach to its own continuous improvement. Unlike the traditional training approach, the learning by doing approach has the following core elements:

- Working directly with intact teams who perform day-to-day functions;
- Building safe, high trust, team-oriented learning environments;
- Encouraging teams to tackle real life challenges through creativity and experimentation;
- Facilitating continuous improvement for the aspects of performance that are of greatest significance to the teams themselves;
- Building the capacity of participating teams to handle new and emerging challenges as an ongoing way of doing business;
- Using participant expertise and insight about their own challenges to determine which developmental models and tools are introduced and when they are introduced;
- Using an organizational needs assessment to determine developmental priorities in alignment with organizational goals and objectives; and,
- Measuring success by identifying concrete improvements in learners' on-the-job performance and in the lives of the organization's clients.

A Training System using DAPIM™ starts by convening a work team of Training System staff to look at its current performance and capacity against its desire to build OE capacity. This can be done by using the current needs assessments process to review the methods currently used to develop and deliver products and services, current methods of evaluation (e.g., pre- and post testing, embedded training evaluation), and participant and staff observations of the Training System. Once the work team has completed an assessment and identified organization performance gaps, it determines underlying root causes, solutions, resources, and technical assistance necessary to address these gaps and build OE capacity. Finally, the work team and/or Training System leadership team implements and monitors the effectiveness of the OE strategy to continuously improve the identified solutions.

A CALL TO ACTION: It is essential for organization leaders to engage in the DAPIM™ process staff at all levels as well as key external stakeholders. Create a sense of ownership for the continuous improvement effort as well as buy-in for implementing changes.

Whether implementing an in-house Training System or contracting for training through a university partner or vendor, using a DAPIM™ approach to create a continuous improvement plan for the Training System requires engaging internal and external stakeholders to help make decisions regarding the following aspects of the Training System:

- Vision, mission, values and linkages to the organization it supports;
- Innovations, priorities, and linkages to the organization it supports;
- Organizational structure and roles;
- Key processes;
- Products and services to be delivered and how they will be delivered;
- Resource allocation;
- Staffing capacity and staffing expertise; and,
- Data to be collected and disseminated to the organization.

The use of the *Pyramid of Influence* and *Markers of Effectiveness for the Training System* during the DAPIM™ process allows participants to reflect on each area of work performed by the Training System and carry out the following tasks:

- define the desired future state of the Training System;

- assess the current state of the Training System against the desired future state;
- identify strengths and gaps between the desired state and current state;
- prioritize gaps and identify root causes and remedies for the gaps;
- plan for action based on the remedies; and,
- implement and monitor action plans to assess the effectiveness of the training system in supporting individual and organizational learning through implementation of OE practices.

By completing DAPIM™ process work, the Training System develops performance improvement plans to build its capacity to help the organization complete OE work. In addition, the organization and the Training System model how to engage the organization at large in continuous improvement efforts.

There are two additional tools in the appendix of this chapter that can help a Training System complete work using the DAPIM™ approach. The Organizational Continuous Improvement Assessment Tool (OCIA Tool) is a step-by-step guide on how to facilitate each phase of DAPIM™ effectively and the critical thinking questions to consider in each phase. The Continuous Improvement (CI) Plan template can help the work team document decisions, communicate planned improvements, and plan solutions.

An example from the field: the Minnesota Child Welfare Training System uses DAPIM to build internal capacity and improve systemic support for the child welfare practice model.

Since the late 1990's Minnesota has implemented significant child welfare reforms that have demonstrated improved outcomes for children and families. Skills and competencies required by front line caseworkers, child welfare supervisors and managers to perform effectively in the reformed child welfare system evolved as the state shifted from deficit-based, unilateral planning and compliance monitoring policy and practice to an approach that was assessment-centered, strengths-based and collaborative.

To be successful and sustainable, there needs to be continued attention to promoting consistency and providing support to the changes in practice required to be successful in the reformed child welfare system. The Minnesota Child Welfare Training System (MCWTS) is a primary resource for accomplishing this in a way that is systematic and systemic.

In order to build internal capacity to carry out its role to support child welfare reforms, the MCWTS requested technical assistance through the National Resource Center for Organizational Improvement (NRC-OI) for assessing and improving the training system in alignment with best practices in child welfare training. This request for technical assistance resulted in a partnership between NRC-OI and the American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) to conduct the on-site technical assistance. In November 2008, APHSA and NRC-OI conducted a strategic readiness assessment of the MCWTS, in a two-day process that included all training staff and management, quality assurance, and policy and program staff from across the Child Safety and Permanency Division.

The strategic readiness assessment was the MCWTS's first experience with "learning by doing" assessment using DAPIMTM, where we completed the "define" and "assess" steps. A key determination from this assessment was the need for a statewide child welfare practice model that would clearly articulate the values, principles, practices and skills of the state's reformed child welfare system. During February and March of 2009, a large group of Division leadership, management and staff, representing strategic supports, programs and policy; county partners; community stakeholders; and parent representatives convened to develop the Minnesota Child Welfare Practice Model.

Equipped with the results of the strategic readiness assessment and the Minnesota Child Welfare Practice Model, the MCWTS reconvened with APHSA in May and June 2009 to resume the planning process for building internal capacity. During these sessions, DAPIM™ was used to plan continuous improvement efforts in the following key areas of the MCWTS: training needs assessment, curriculum development, training delivery, trainer and writer development, OE facilitator development, and training evaluation. For each area, the APHSA-OE facilitator led the participants through:

- defining a desired future state,*
- reflecting on strengths and gaps in the current system, and*
- identifying root causes and remedies for gaps.*

A continuous improvement plan was developed to document decisions reached on which remedies to implement.

The continuous improvement plan was implemented immediately following the planning sessions and nearly all “quick-win” activities were accomplished within the established timeframe. Team activities are ongoing and the entire MCWTS staff meets monthly to reports on activities, monitor progress and achievements, and amend the remaining mid and long-range plans if necessary. The MCWTS continuous improvement plan is organized in a format developed by APHSA, and the MCWTS added a column to the matrix for recording updates/changes reported at each month’s meeting. All documents or products associated with the continuous improvement plan are stored on the unit’s “shared drive” where they are available and easily accessible to all staff.

Intentional planning for and adherence to monitoring efforts have been essential to successful implementation of the continuous improvement plan. The MCWTS assigned responsibility for plan monitoring to the unit’s supervisor and the monthly meetings are considered high priority for staff attendance. Planning for “quick-wins” as part of this model proved essential to establishing enthusiasm and creating momentum for the initiative from the beginning. All staff are engaged in some activity in the plan which contributes to “buy-in” and this is reinforced as progress is achieved and celebrated each month.

Chapter Three: Training System Role in Building Effective Organizations

Strategic alignment and collaboration among all support functions is critical to successful OE work. This chapter continues to flesh out the role of the Training System in supporting organizational OE initiatives. That said, all support functions are critical to building effective organizations and can play roles analogous to the one described here.

Having established its expanded role and capacity to deliver both traditional and OE services and built the required credibility with organization leaders, the Training System must begin to engage staff throughout the organization in continuous improvement work using the DAPIM™ approach. Traditionally, the Training System has helped to build frontline workforce capacity by delivering training critical to effective on-the-job performance. In its expanded role, the Training System can build the capacity of staff at all levels of the organization to complete OE work and improve the overall performance of the organization. Through its facilitation of work using the DAPIM™ approach, the Training System can help the organization draw on currently available program data and data generated during defining and assessing work to develop a comprehensive continuous improvement plan. This plan should spell out how all support functions – not just the Training System – will contribute to the success of the organization's OE work.

Facilitating DAPIM™ to Build Effective Organizations

A CALL TO ACTION: Unlike traditional training, DAPIM™ facilitation is more like forming a jazz ensemble. The ensemble leader (facilitator) assembles a group of musicians who know their instruments but do not memorize any music (real-world teams working on the real problems they face). Before playing, the ensemble agrees on a few things, e.g., the rhythm, key, and core melody (the DAPIM™ approach and basic agenda objectives). Playing itself is generally fluid and dynamic and only as good as the ensemble's growing sense of one another and their instruments (improving readiness, safety and accountability, and facility with new models and tools). Over time, the ensemble works to get better and better through jam sessions (learning by doing). Consider assessing the ability of your organization to drive continuous improvement using the DAPIM™ approach.

Having developed the internal skill sets of the Training System for contributing OE expertise, the OE specialists will need the time and availability to work “on-site” with leadership and work teams. With the use of the DAPIM™ approach, the OE specialists will help the teams identify gaps to effective agency performance and their root causes, develop a plan based on the technical expertise provided by the team members, and devise an approach to implementing the plan and monitoring its effectiveness.

Continuous improvement initiatives require well-organized efforts guided by effective facilitators. The DAPIM™ approach requires group discussion and decision-making that ensures all participants are involved in a meaningful, constructive ways. Facilitation involves creating a safe environment in which participants feel comfortable sharing the full measure of their experience and thinking, including things that might be challenging to the group at large. In skillfully facilitated groups, information flows leave all group members feeling energized to participate and accountable for the group’s products and results.

To give the Training System the authority to facilitate the DAPIM™ process, the organization’s leaders must assign the OE strategy planning task to the Training System and identify work team members from other support functions such as human resources, quality assurance, policy and fiscal units. The role of each member participating in the OE initiative must be communicated throughout the organization so staff understands the initiative and the support functions involved. The organizational communication must also describe clearly the importance of working collaboratively to carry out the OE initiatives.

Success Factors for Effective OE Facilitation

Effective facilitation of continuous improvement using the DAPIM™ approach generally includes the following tasks:

- Determining the general readiness of the work teams to begin the DAPIM™ process of defining the OE problems/issues, assessing the contributing conditions/factors, developing a corrective action plan, implementing the plan, and monitoring the effectiveness of the OE project plan;
- Establishing the role clarity of each support function early in the facilitation process;
- Establishing a safe learning environment amongst the participants that allows for sharing and risk taking and building a shared sense of accountability;

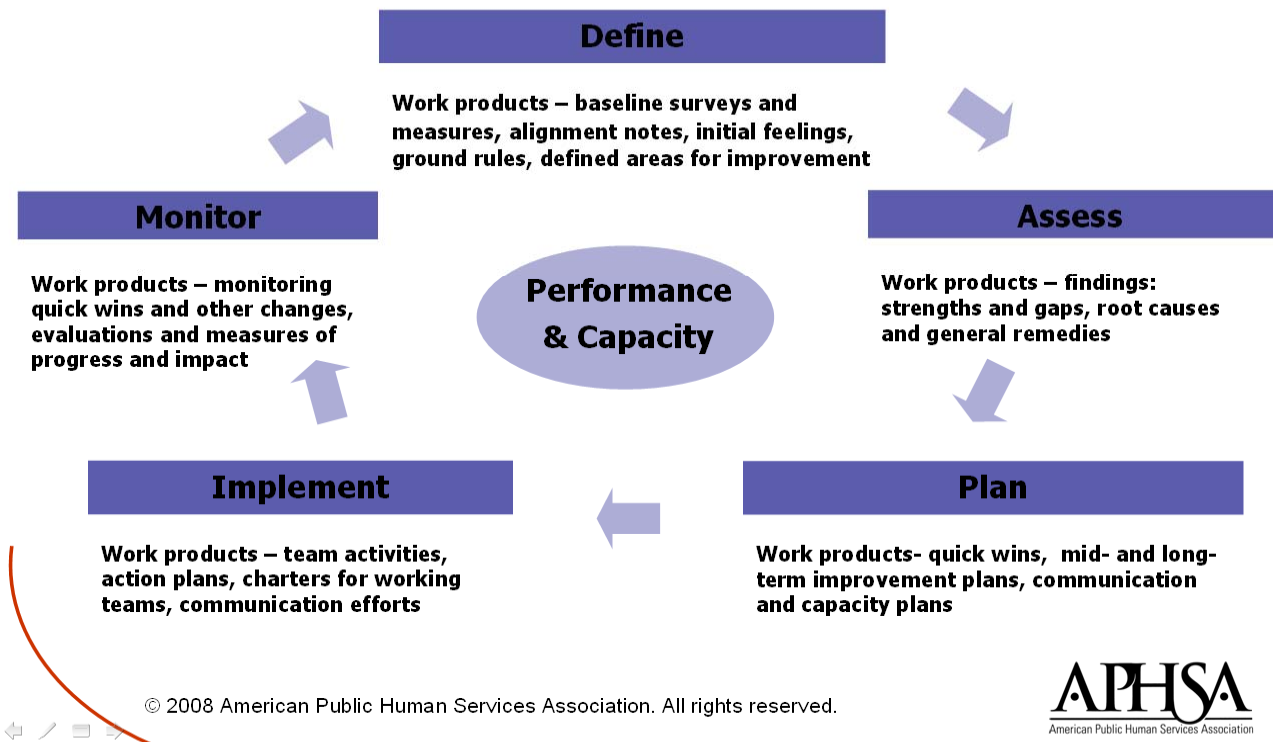
- Following a 4-6 month DAPIM™ process that allows for a “learning by doing” approach to real life situations and generates “work products” of lasting value and significance;
- Ensuring solid linkage throughout a project using the DAPIM™ approach between the organization’s sponsors of continuous improvement and the continuous improvement team itself;
- Handling typical facilitation challenges such as the influence of observers, participant or sensitive topics, balancing relationship and task orientations, teams jumping too quickly to solutions, teams going off into tangents, and bringing new team members into the process;
- Displaying markers of an effective facilitator such as charting participant discussion, group processing, and having difficult conversations; and,
- Being a “good doctor”, for example, balancing control and dependency, and helping the client to internalize the DAPIM™ process and make it a normal way of doing business”.

A complete set of success factors for internal OE facilitators is located in the appendix of this Guidebook.

Work Products from OE Facilitations

Specific work product should emerge during each phase of DAPIM™ process with the workgroups. The following DAPIM™ flywheel shows the main work products of the DAPIM™ approach during each phase of the work. Work products -- the documents generated in sessions that use the DAPIM™ approach themselves -- serve as the ongoing record of discussions, observations, conclusions, decisions, and commitments that are generated by the group. They serve as the project record of accountabilities and commitments for the group as well as for others assigned to subsequent tasks and work teams. Well-developed work products are vital to the success and sustainability of any continuous improvement initiative.

DAPIM™ Work Products



The OCIA Tool can be used by an OE specialist as a guide to facilitate the DAPIM™ process. The tool is a step-by-step guide on how to facilitate each phase of the DAPIM™ process effectively and the critical thinking questions to consider in each phase. The Continuous Improvement (CI) Plan template can help the work team document decisions, communicate planned improvements, and plan solutions. Both the OCIA Tool and CI Plan template are located in the appendix of this Guidebook.

An Example from the Field: A Work Plan from Pennsylvania

WORK PLAN: *Organizational Effectiveness Process/ Workforce Development*

County: *Sample County*

CWTP Staff: *Practice Improvement Specialists; Curriculum and Instructional Specialist; Program Development Specialists; Parent Ambassador*

University of Pittsburgh Staff: *Principle Investigator*

Suggested Time Frame: *18-24 Months beginning in February 2009*

Major Areas of Responsibility

Define

The purpose of this work by Children and Youth Services, facilitated by the Child Welfare Training Program, is to improve outcomes for children, youth and families through development of an enhanced organizational climate. The hypothesis is that a better climate in the work environment will result in improved staff retention and these experienced, qualified, consistent staff will lead to improved safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes.

Assessment:

- *Provide Overview of the Organizational Effectiveness Process to leadership team by March 2009*
- *Conduct focus groups to assess strengths, concerns, organizational climate by End of April 2009*
- *Conduct Organizational Readiness for Change survey (ORC)*
 - *Meet with supervisors to get feedback on ORC and choose survey to administer on February 18, 2009*
 - *Administer Survey to all managers, supervisors and staff by April 2009*

- *Analyze survey responses using SPSS by June 2009*
- *Meet with Administrator and management team to share focus group information May 2009*
- *Develop “quick wins” to present to administrator and management team and present to that group by May 2009*
- *Meet with Administrator and management team to share survey results by July 2009*
- *Holds focus groups with parents and youth to obtain their input and potential involvement in Sample County’s project September 2009*
- *Facilitate the development of case flow process within Sample County Child Welfare and the specific responsibilities of each department by December 2009*
- *Facilitate the development and completion of a assessment of job function and responsibilities form for each department within the agency by December 2009*

Planning

- *Facilitate the merging of Strategic Plans involving initiatives and internal operations into one planning document July 2009*
- *Facilitate the development of a staff steering committee designed to assist in addressing the agency’s areas of concern and developing solutions June 2009*
- *Assist in developing a mentoring program within the agency for staff and supervisors*
- *Assist the agency in identifying projects for CWEL interns that support the Workforce Development efforts*

Implementation

- *Assist in facilitating monthly staff steering committee meetings*
- *Facilitate monthly meetings with the senior management team to assess progress and develop next steps*
- *Hold monthly meetings with the agency administrator to assess progress and develop next steps*
- *Facilitate Team Building Activities*
- *Transfer of Learning (TOL) in 2010-11:*
 - *Address strength-based practice Strength-based, Solution Focused Supervision*
 - *Address family engagement through Strength-based, Solution-focused for staff*

- *Address permanency concerns through Concurrent Planning*
- *Address reunification efforts through Reunification Through Visitation*
- *Training in 2010-11:*
 - *Kinship Foster Care*
 - *Diversity*
 - *Personal safety/De-escalation techniques*
 - *Policy Development*
 - *Strength-based Performance Appraisals*
- *Caseworker field guide development and implementation*

Feedback/Evaluation

- *Re-administer ORC in April 2010 and either October 2010 or April 2011 to assess agency progress through staff perception*
- *Hold focus groups with Leadership, staff, parents and youth April 2010 and either October 2010 or April 2011*

These will occur throughout the described processes with a final evaluation of the organization's implementation conducted in two years. An After Action Review (AAR) will be conducted every 6 months to determine how we as a team are doing in our work with the county – it will ideally include feedback of at least 2 people from each level of the Sample County.

Sustainability Factors for Implementing CI Plans

As part of the facilitation process, the OE specialist must work with the sponsors of OE work to put the following key elements in place to ensure sustainability of the OE initiative and follow-through on planned tasks:

1. Ongoing monitoring by “DAPIM™ Alumni” teams. Support in post-project monitoring from leadership and sponsor groups and from facilitators of the DAPIM™ approach.
2. Continuous improvement work, modeling, and related communication from sponsors and stakeholders, resulting in a two-way ripple effect.

3. Internal facilitators of the DAPIM™ approach (vs. external consultants) selected, trained, performing well and with sufficient work plan capacity to offer ongoing support.
4. Program success measures are defined and evaluated, validating or pointing out improvements required of the DAPIM™ approach itself.
5. Ongoing support from Organizational Development or a comparable internal function. Policy and budget alignment, on-line resources to support internal facilitators and ongoing continuous improvement efforts, knowledge management programs and processes, oversight of internal facilitators, and general contracting for external resources (e.g., APHSA products and consulting) are all examples.
6. Agency executive team support, resulting in the alignment of agency strategy and efforts using the DAPIM™ approach and the participation of a broad set of constituents and partners.
7. Ongoing DAPIM™ Alumni networking and materials repository, so that best practices and success stories can be generated, shared and leveraged over time.
8. A continuous improvement point-person in place to champion sustainability and manage an overall sustainability plan.
9. A multi-year continuous improvement plan for embedding continuous improvement and the DAPIM™ approach as a way of doing business for all agency levels, functions, and local settings.

An Example from the Field: the DAPIM™ approach in Texas

In Texas, APHSA's Organizational Effectiveness model known as the DAPIM™ (define, assess, plan, implement, and monitor) approach has been used across the state to develop and implement continuous improvement plans. Quality Assurance Specialists have been coached by APHSA in the development of OE facilitation skills. The following is the result of facilitation in Texas using the DAPIM™ approach to continuous improvement.

In the fall of 2008 two regions within the state worked together on developing a definition of "Staff Development" with the goal of using this definition as a desired future state to work towards and a baseline to assess themselves against. The definition of "Staff Development" that they agreed to was:

Definition of Staff Development:

Staff Development is an ongoing process of growth of skills, values, abilities, knowledge, behaviors, and attitudes that continues throughout a person's entire career regardless of tenure, title, or expertise.

Staff Development extends beyond the training classroom and the office. It's the feedback, role modeling, and other interactions where discussion and problem solving occurs.

Staff Development is most productive in an organizational culture that promotes giving and receiving guidance, support, and direction.

Once this work was done each region set out to assess their current state and develop a set of findings, strengths and gaps in relation to their desired future state, and do a root cause analysis of why they have gaps in regard to staff development.

Each region then set about developing continuous improvement plans based on their root causes for gaps. In one region the continuous improvement team developed an improvement plan for supervisor development and chartered two workgroups:

- Leadership development and*
- Rewards and recognition based on mission, vision, and values.*

Each work group was accountable for the ongoing planning, implementation, and monitoring of their work and the result was a very successful Supervisory skills conference held for supervisors across programs lines throughout the region and the rollout of a recognition and rewards program based on demonstration through performance of the Child Protective Services vision, mission, and values.

In the other region, the management team developed a Continuous Improvement Plan to market, rollout out, and sustain the incorporation of the agency's mission, vision and values into their daily work. The region also chartered a workgroup for a supervisor orientation program.

The result of the chartered workgroup was the development of a complete region wide supervisor orientation program meant to support new supervisors and assure they received the information and support that was needed during their crucial first year in the role. The regional leadership team continues to meet monthly to monitor the implementation of the orientation program.

Influencing Strategic Direction and Work of the Organization

Human service agencies are increasingly focusing on organizational effectiveness. Agency leaders are looking for tools, models, and real life examples of success in building OE capacity, both within support functions across organizations at large. As a result, agency support functions are beginning to redefine their roles to help plan and implement OE strategies. APHSA is committed to providing state and local agencies the technical assistance needed to implement OE initiatives and build internal OE capacity. This Guidebook is one such effort to provide a systematic approach to improving organizational effectiveness to achieve positive outcomes for children, youths, families and communities.

A CALL TO ACTION: Support functions must leverage their credibility to get sponsorship from organization leaders to develop the capacity to facilitate OE work. Over time, they must get sponsorship to work with managers and leaders to continuously improve operations, key processes, structure and culture, and strategy through OE initiatives. Support functions must take responsibility for ensuring that leaders understand the full impact they can have on all areas of work, not just traditional areas of service and product delivery.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Markers of Effectiveness: Building Organizational Effectiveness Capacity within the Training System

The “*Markers of Effectiveness: Building Organizational Effectiveness Capacity within the Training System*” offer guidelines to help organization leaders understand how their training system can operate most effectively to provide the strategic support necessary to achieve the organizations mission.

Defining the Expanding Role of Training Systems

In most organizations the training and/or staff development functions are referred to as the Training System. In the publication “Building Effective Training Systems for Child Welfare Agencies” by the National Resource Center for Organizational Improvement, a Training System is defined in as follows:

The Training System typically is comprised of people representing different entities (public and private agency managers and training directors, and universities), resources (fiscal, computers hardware, physical facilities, staff with technical expertise), and policy and procedures that govern the development of curriculum and delivery of formal and informal training. The purpose of a Training System is to plan, provide, support, and evaluate formal and informal instruction, learning opportunities, and professional development aimed at improving agency outcomes.²

To be an effective partner in OE initiatives, the Training System will need to expand the scope of its traditional role of training the frontline staff to include technical expertise needed to facilitate and support the organization’s continuous improvement efforts. The following new tasks will enable the Training System to contribute more to achieving organizational outcomes and creating learning organizations while continuing to contribute in more traditional ways:

² Kanak, S., Baker, M., Herz, L., Maciolek, S. (2008). Building Effective Training Systems for Child Welfare Agencies. Portland, Maine: National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement.

- Identify individual and organizational learning needs that support professional development and build performance capacity – traditional function;
- Develop formal training and technical assistance plans, identify informal learning opportunities, and facilitate OE initiatives stemming from developed plans and strategies – expanded function;
- Develop and implement professional development plans that address beginning and advance level training needs of the frontline staff and OE-specific learning needs of other agency staff – traditional and expanded functions;
- Partner with other support functions such as quality assurance, human resources, information systems, and program planning to ensure an integrated approach to professional development – expanded function;
- Monitor and assess all professional development activities – traditional function;
- Evaluate the continuum of learning and application of learned skills to the job from individual learning, individual job performance, agency performance and organizational effectiveness – traditional and expanded function; and,
- Generate evidence-based practice information for use for continuous improvement, and share with others in the field information and feedback from lessons learned to improve professional development and OE work – expanded function.

Markers of Effectiveness for the Training System

When building its capacity to provide technical support, the Training System needs to recognize that it has an opportunity to influence the organization's strategy, structure and culture, key processes, and operations OE work. By extension, it can influence the organization's inter-departmental collaboration needed to improve outcomes. The following markers were developed by the *Building OE Capacity Work Team* to explain the essential components of a redefined Training System that incorporates both traditional and OE-related tasks:

1. Continuing to develop internal skill sets for curriculum development and delivery

Training System staff must include training professionals able to develop and deliver traditional training that meets the organizational needs. "A New Key to Success," a publication of the National Staff Development and Training Association (NSDTA), provides guidelines for optimal Training System staffing for organizational development work that supports the organization's programs goals, objectives, and priorities. The key players engaged in the development and implementation of the training program include training unit staff, organization staff, community members, and university training partners. APHSA's Markers of Effectiveness are consistent with the NSDTA's position that successful training programs need to be seen as having an integral role in the larger organization's structure and purpose. (See NSDTA document, p. 3)

2. Developing OE Strategic Support Function Capacity

The performance of non-traditional OE support functions requires staff with training platform skills and OE technical expertise. Staffing levels and skills should align with the OE work the Training System is being asked to take on and the organization's larger OE priorities.

Staffing levels need to be such that OE specialists have the time and availability to work "on-site" with leadership and work teams throughout the organization. OE specialists need time to prepare for team meetings and process information for the team following meetings. By means of meetings with teams to develop, implement, and monitor complex and long-term improvement plans, OE specialists model facilitation and planning behaviors the organization desires. In doing this work OE specialists draw on new OE facilitation skills as well as their own experience within the Training System.

3. Creating strategic alignment with OE initiatives

As the organization's Leadership Team creates strategic alignment between the organization and the Training System, the Training System has opportunities to do the following:

- Develop a strategic playbook that links the goals, objectives, priorities and activities of the training system to the overall vision, mission, values, and practice standards of the organization;
- Establish Training System standards, products, services, and day to day operations that reflect the organization's mission and values and a structure to support the key OE initiatives and projects;
- Participate as a member of the organization's management team to provide expertise and guidance on the strategic direction and facilitating the discussion toward OE goals;
- Establish boundaries and role clarity within the training system on how it will interface with the organization, specifically around:
 - Inclusion of training staff on organizational work teams
 - Decision-making on priorities within the training system
 - Leadership styles demonstrated in the training system
 - Create a balance between what time and energy the training system spends directly with the organization and what it does internally
 - Develop and implement communication plans and processes between the training program and the organization management team
- Develop key processes within the training system from the organization's point of view, which supplement and complement the existing training program operations and serve the need of the training system and the organization, such as forecasting resource needs based on comprehensive needs assessments;
- Facilitate meaningful planning in support of the organizational development efforts and coordination of activities at all levels of the organization; and
- Foster the growth of learning organizations by developing an integrated evidence-based approach to professional development that includes both formal and informal learning opportunities.
- Facilitate collaboration among agency components that perform the support functions tasks. Facilitation Skills are different than typical training or platform skills and are crucial to the success of any OE specialist. Skilled OE facilitators must be comfortable leading groups through system assessments and problem solving and planning while keeping groups on

task with a balance of safety in the room and accountability for the work. This must be done while using the participants in the room as the subject matter experts of their own system.

Further information on facilitation skills can also be found in the following resources; APHSA's Organizational Effectiveness Handbook; "The Skilled Facilitator" by Roger Schwarz, Jossey-Bass, Inc publisher, 1994; "Best Practices from the Leading Organization in Facilitation" Jossey-Bass, 2005; and, "The IAF Handbook of Group Facilitation" by Sandy Schuman.

4. Developing and delivering products and services that are outcome focused, evidence- based and focused on continuous improvement efforts

As the Leadership Team begins to accomplish the strategic alignment between the organization and the training system, the training system has opportunities to provide the following services to improve strategic alignment:

- Develop and deliver products and services that are aligned to advance the organization's strategy for culture change to achieve positive outcomes for children, youth, families, adults and communities;
- Develop key processes and operational practices to facilitate the implementation of OE initiatives;
- Deliver formal structured classroom training for staff at all levels of the organization and key stakeholders that supports the outcomes identified in the organizations strategy;
- Provide informal learning opportunities (such as facilitated team dialogue and learning, e-learning, distance learning, and webinar) for staff at all levels of the organization and key to advance the OE initiatives;
- Establish methods to define products and services of the training system and how they support the strategy of the organization;
- Establish methods to conduct organizational needs assessments and develop and deliver timely, relevant, and actionable training, technical assistance and consultation plans that are based on the assessments and articulate how products and services appropriately match the needs of the organization-staff, support continuous improvement efforts, and promote positive outcomes for the clients;
- Establish methods to continually scan for best practices and innovations in the field in efforts to provide consultation and facilitated discussions on how to effectively implement these practices;
- Deliver an array of quality products and services, addressing a variety of learning styles, in a timely manner, to create a learning organization and

support the overall operations and effectiveness of the organization including:

- Individual and organizational needs assessment
 - Outcome focused curriculum resulting in transfer of learning
 - Facilitated learning opportunities, using a systematic and systemic approach to utilizing information and feedback to plan for meaningful improvement to advance OE initiatives
 - OE resource guides, tools, and templates
 - Training opportunities for staff at all levels of the organization and key stakeholders; foster, adoptive and kinship parents; and families on regulation, policy, procedure and basic knowledge and theory content
 - Technical assistance and consultation for staff at all levels of the organization and key stakeholders; foster, adoptive, and kinship parents, and families,
 - Technical assistance grounded in building learning organizations and using feedback on lessons learned as an opportunity for improvement to support transfer of learning and advance OE initiatives
- Employ experts within the training system to perform traditional training services such as curriculum development and delivery experts
 - Employ OE experts within the Training System that can develop and deliver facilitations concentrated on OE goals
 - Engage the training system OE specialist in daily efforts of the organization, which would require spending the majority of time on the development and delivery of OE products and services that meet the specific needs of the organizations, and
 - Use teams and collaborative efforts in the development of all training system services and products, including participation by:
 - Staff from all levels of the organization it supports,
 - Key partners (e.g. community providers, university social work programs, families served by organization, and political and business leaders),
 - Other agency staff involved in support functions (e.g. technology, human resources, policy), and,
 - Staff from within the training system.

5. Building and demonstrating engagement skills

As a member of the Leadership Team, which conducts sessions to discuss OE improvement plans and/or is considering implementation of new initiatives, the Training System OE representatives have opportunities to demonstrate the following engagement skills:

- Bring to the table expertise specific to the most current OE models, tools, and practices;
- Facilitate the work of continuous improvement that is based on organizational needs assessments, conducted with the use of “learning by doing” approach;
- Effectively "contract" services with the organization leaders in ways that lead to the expected follow-through related to the Leadership Team decisions and desired impact on the organization outcomes; and,
- Facilitate informal learning sessions and transfer of learning with staff within the organization.

6. Monitoring Effectiveness of OE initiatives and measuring impact on agency performance and client outcomes

When making decisions, the Leadership Team may rely on the Training System, as one source, to monitor OE initiatives and collect and analyze program data generated by the organization and the Training System to assess the effectiveness of the OE strategy and make recommendations for improvements. In performance of this task, the Training System has opportunities to demonstrate expertise in the following areas:

- Establish guidelines for monitoring performance, impact, and effectiveness of the training system and how data and feedback on lessons learned will be collected and used to continuously improve the training system;
- Establish guidelines for the analysis and interpretation of client outcomes data, generated by the organization, and the use of such analyses to develop recommendations for OE improvements;
- Establish guidelines for using data collected by the organization on client outcomes and client satisfaction feedback to influence the training system’s delivery of OE support services, curriculum development, and delivery of the traditional training function;
- Establish guidelines on using data and lessons learned feedback collected by the training system that can lead to future learning opportunities and support continuous improvement for the organization;
- Establish guidelines on using data and lessons learned feedback collected by the organization’s other strategic support functions that can lead to

- future learning opportunities and support continuous improvement of the training system and the organization;
- Establish guidelines to generate data from embedded evaluation during classroom training as well as evidence based practice research to address training curriculum as well as OE issues;
 - Establish guidelines to generate data and lessons learned feedback from transfer of learning, technical assistance and consultation efforts to address training development as well as OE issues;
 - Establish guidelines to conduct “learning assessments” ; generating data and lessons learned from the organization and individual staff on the impact of training system efforts on building the performance and performance capacity of the organization through various learning opportunities; and,
 - Create a feedback system using quantitative and qualitative data that scans for lessons learned, including both strengths and gaps, from the product development and delivery process, using data to continuously improve both OE supports and curriculum development and delivery.

When the markers are implemented, the Training Systems can contribute to continuous improvement by doing the following:

- engaging the organization in a facilitated decision making process that creates pathways toward the adoption of improvements;
- communicating excitement, possibilities and details about continuous improvement to those internal and external to the organization;
- bringing expertise around best practices and standards of operation to the organization, relying on the expertise in the organization to reach conclusions on how the best practices and standards apply in the organization; and
- providing tools and techniques to reconcile and resolve disparate points of view.

Appendix B: Fact Sheet: Success Factors for Internal Facilitators

Success Factor	Comments
<p>1. Facilitate versus lead the sessions. Avoid being prescriptive and overly directive. Instead, guide clients based on a balance between their energies and need to complete work products.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop trust and respect of participants ○ Maintain focus in group ○ Ability to talk in front of people (confidence) ○ Identify key themes from a group discussion ○ Ability to remain objective ○ Leading a brainstorm ○ Channeling discussions 	
<p>2. Acknowledge others' comments explicitly by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Using interpersonal communication skills ○ Paraphrasing conversations positively ○ Good rapport building skills including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Smiling and nodding ● Paraphrasing and reflecting back ● Making connections between individual comments and the work as a whole 	
<p>3. Adjust the session agenda in real time, balancing the speed the team can reasonably achieve with the ultimate objectives of the project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Keep meeting moving towards objectives/accountabilities ○ Ability to set the content and parameters of the meeting ○ Time management skills 	

<p>4. Actively and empathetically listen to and engage with others. Read body language and facial expressions to gauge participants' state of mind, while respecting cross cultural communication of participants through their use of language and non-verbal gestures. Use your assessment of participants' state of mind to ask probing questions or call out and test apparent issues with the team's dynamics (e.g., feelings, trust, ground rules) within the cultural context of each participant. Having an understanding of ourselves and our own cultural frames of reference and being open to learn about peoples cultures can help us appreciate one another and respectfully work together.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use good communication skills such as active listening and reflective questioning and other listening skills ○ Engagement skills, ability to engage a variety of audiences 	
<p>5. When flip charting, record <i>their</i> thoughts and specific words versus your own. Avoid impressing your own ideas on top of theirs. This is a nuanced factor as clients will often benefit from your advice, but only when requested, considered and accepted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ability to summarize discussions 	
<p>6. Always allow participants to critique and adjust your notes after you process them. Adjusting notes based on participant feedback builds understanding, buy-in, and a willingness to adapt one's self to agreed-upon findings and commitments.</p>	
<p>7. Avoid influencing teams to make decisions they are not ready or willing to make. Be patient and take small steps in these situations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Decision making skills 	

<p>8. Make sure that <i>each</i> individual participant is feeling and doing OK at the end of each day. As difficult conversations are had in the room, seemingly stable temperaments may waver, and you need to know it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ability to enforce ground rules and explain boundaries ○ Facilitation of participants from various levels within the organization 	
<p>9. Make sure that <i>you</i> are OK with everyone in the room. If you have misgivings or negative feelings about someone, always avoid making that the basis for your decisions and actions in facilitation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No perceived biases ○ Don't alienate people ○ Facilitation of participants of diverse backgrounds 	
<p>10. Allow the teams to go off on tangents, confident that the DAPIM™ method allows you to bring them back to the work objectives. These tangents often yield new insights and important ideas for later use within the work.</p>	
<p>11. When teams are going off on tangents, provide them a line of sight to how their discussion fits into the DAPIM™ model (e.g., “right now you are adding a finding to one of your priority topics”).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recognize if there is a lack of progress in the meeting and help get participants back on track ○ Ability to maintain focus and purpose of group-keep them on target 	

<p>12. Balance the group’s overall dynamics. Gauge their collective temperament and lean the other way as needed for them to practice balance themselves (e.g., encouraging an overly task-oriented team to focus on relationships).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Manage sidebar conversations ○ Keeping conversations balanced among participants 	
<p>13. Always allow for hot topics to be raised, but diffuse the emotional pitch that often accompanies them, through either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Non-personal techniques (e.g., introducing a related model) ● Empathic mirroring (in 1-on-1s or in the room) ● Ability to mediate when necessary ● Conflict resolution skills 	
<p>14. Guide the appropriate level of involvement of observers. If ground rules for observers are not being met, challenge this overtly. If observers are controlling a discussion, back them off openly so the team sees that this is their process.</p>	
<p>15. Technical skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Using outlines and agendas ○ Using equipment and tools such as power point and projectors ○ Transcribing notes after sessions ○ Flip charting in operational terms that allow for work products to be reviewed and understood at future meetings 	

<p>16. Using resources and support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Using peers as mentors and liaisons○ Co-facilitation○ Using Sponsors and leaders (RD or others) to clarify requests of service and review agendas○ Be accountable to sponsors○ Understand boundaries on projects○ Use clerical support/supplies appropriately○ Connect with Logistics Lead for information sharing○ Complete duties within specified times	
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Appendix C: Organizational Continuous Improvement Assessment Tool

This guide is designed to help the organization gain a clear view of itself - current state, desired state, critical gaps, and key priorities for addressing those gaps - through a systematic review of the organizational system. The assessment tool is designed to guide the user through a DAPIM™ continuous improvement process. Completion of the assessment tool results in the development of an overarching continuous improvement plan for the organization, linking improvement efforts, professional development, technical support, and training to the organization's strategy and desired outcomes.

This Organizational CI Assessment Tool (OCIA) can be used in multiple ways:

First, the leader of an organization may use the tool to think independently about the organization when planning for its future. The leader could use the information to develop budgets and secure resources for organization.

Second, the leader of an organization may use the tool with their leadership team (managers) and/or an assessment team (such as key managers, supervisors, front line staff and stakeholders) , allowing the team to think together when planning for the future of the organization and how to secure the necessary funding and resources to achieve the organizations desired outcomes.

Third, the tool can be used by a facilitator in a “Learning by Doing” session to guide a team from the organization through the DAPIM™ approach. Using a facilitator will allow full participation of all team members and to obtain insight from a third party.

Regardless of which of the above methods is utilized, the tool can help the organization develop an overarching continuous improvement plan.

Taking time to think about the organization, whether independently or as a team, is the very work and essence of leading any organization. Effective leadership requires spending time thoroughly understanding where the organization is at any given point in time in relation to the outcomes it hopes to achieve for its clients.

Organizational Effectiveness (OE) is a “systematic and systemic approach to continuously improving an organization’s performance, performance capacity and client outcomes”. The DAPIM™ approach is APHSA’s model for systematic continuous improvement. APHSA has found that to improve anything, you have to do the following:

Step One: Define priority improvements in operational terms.

Step Two: Assess observable, measurable strengths and gaps. Identify root causes and general remedies for priority gaps.

Step Three: Plan quick wins, mid-term, and longer-term improvements.

Step Four: Implement action plans while managing communication and capacity.

Step Five: Monitor progress, impact, and lessons learned impact for accountability and on-going adjustments.

DAPIM™ is sequential and cyclical. It operates as an iterative flywheel in real time, with definitions crafted during step one and assessments completed during step two being continuously refined by insights generated while planning, implementing, or monitoring. Organizations experienced in the DAPIM™ approach use it to continuously improve everything they do, no matter how big or small. At any given time, they may be engaged in a multi-year “big DAPIM™” to make fundamental improvements to practice while running multiple “little DAPIM™s” to eliminate inefficient processes, respond to unexpected shifts in the environment, etc. In this way, an organization can be doing work associated with any and all steps of the DAPIM™ approach at any given time.

The Organization Continuous Improvement Assessment tool is designed to assist the organization in looking at itself as a whole versus a specific operational or practice issue. The tool is easily adaptable to focus on a specific issue.

At each stage of the DAPIM™ process, team members first reflect independently on the reflective thinking questions provided and/ or task to be completed for the stage of the assessment. A group discussion of their findings then takes place to lead to group consensus. Group decisions should be recorded on flip charts, typed and shared with the team.

Upon completion of the assessment, the organization has a continuous improvement plan outlining task and activities designed to support the organization in achieving its strategy, as well as the professional development, technical support, and training required to support staff in the completion of the identified task and activities.

As plan objectives are completed, the organization should complete an After Action Review (AAR) of the process asking participants: What went well? What didn't go well? And what should we do differently next time?

Prior to completing the assessment tool as many of the following documents that are currently available should be obtained and reviewed by everyone participating in the Organizational Continuous Improvement Assessment process:

- ***Vision, mission, values statement for the organization;***
- ***Organizational chart;***
- ***Organizations budget*** for past fiscal year, current fiscal year planned fiscal year;
- ***Annual reports*** for past fiscal year, current fiscal year planned fiscal year;
- ***Agency demographics*** – what type of positions are in the organization, how many positions are filled, how many positions are vacant, what is your turnover rate, how are new workers oriented to the position, how is new worker training conducted, how is on-going training provided to experience staff, how are new leaders (supervisors, managers, directors) oriented, how are leaders trained, what type of technical support is provided to help with organizational effectiveness, and how are training and technical support needs currently assessed, developed and delivered;
- ***Demographics of the community served*** – who is the population and what are the economic, social and political issues effecting the community;
- ***List of services currently provided to the community served*** – brief paragraph of each services and its intended outcome, if available evaluation data on each service; and,
- ***Strategic Playbook*** (if one exists. If one does not exist, pulling the above documents together and completing the assessment tool will lead to the development of a Strategic Playbook).

First, define the desired state of the organization by asking the following questions:

- **Defining the client** – Who is the population you should be serving, and how might this population change and/or remain the same in the future based on current political trends and social trends, both positive and negative? What outcomes do you want for the client?
- **Defining the desired practices, products and services** – Based on the population served and desired outcomes, what practices, products and services should you offer to your client? How should these practices, products and services be offered? Why would you offer them? What value are they to your client?
- **Defining the organizational structure** – What should the vision and mission of the organization be to lead you to your desired state? How should your organization be structured to support the work that needs to be completed to reach your desired state? What procedures should be in place to support the flow of work that needs to be completed? How many staff do you need to employ, what roles and responsibilities should they have and what educational and work experiences are you looking for in staff? How should your staff be trained and what technical support needs to be provided to the organization to reach your desired outcomes for clients?
- **Defining performance capacity to achieve desired state** –
 - ***Data & Analysis*** – What type of data will you need to monitor desired outputs and outcomes and who will you need it from?
 - ***Trust*** – What behaviors do you expect of your staff to create a trusting environment?
 - ***Values*** – What should the values of the organization be to lead you to your desired state? How should these values be displayed in the work environment – both internally and externally?
 - ***Budgeting & Fiscal Capacity*** – What type of monetary resources will you need to reach your desired state – deliver products and services and employ qualified staff, manage improvement effort?

- **Workforce Capacity** – What type of leadership will be needed to manage continuous improvement efforts? What qualifications will staff need so their performance will lead to desired outcomes? What type of technical assistance and training will the organization need to achieve desired outputs and outcomes?
- **Strategic Support Capacity** - What should the capability of the organizations strategic support functions look like to assist the organization in achieving its desired outcomes - human resources, information technology, policy and finance?

First, review the questions independently and record your findings in the space below.

Then discuss the findings as a group to reach consensus. Group decisions should be recorded on flip charts, typed, and shared with the team.

Second, assess the current state of the organization. Start by reviewing the materials collected prior to the assessment while reflecting on the “desired state” the team just defined. Next, reflect on the same list of questions from the “define” section for each of the categories below. The assessment should lead to tentative hypotheses of “findings” that identify current strengths and gaps in the organization

- **Assessing who the client is**
- **Assessing current practices, products and services**
- **Assessing the current organizational structure**
- **Assessing current performance capacity**
 - *Values*
 - *Budgeting & Fiscal Capacity*
 - *Workforce Capacity*
 - *Strategic Support Capacity*

Review the materials collected prior to the assessment and the analysis from the define stage independently and record your findings in the space below.

Then discuss the findings as a group to reach consensus. Group decisions should be recorded on flip charts, typed, and shared with the team.

Building the bridge from assessment to planning involves prioritizing findings and identifying root causes and general remedies.

Root causes and general remedies can be more task oriented or relationship oriented. The following are examples of more task oriented root causes and general remedies:

- Organizational Structure:
 - Tiers and Functions,
 - Roles and Numbers;
- Goals, Standards and Measures;
- Policies and Procedures;
- Processes and Methods;
- Internal Programs, Services, and Tools; and,
- Staff Capacity:
 - Time Management,
 - Skill Set (technical/general).

The following are examples of more relationship oriented root causes and general remedies:

- Culture and Values;
- Politics and Power;
- Communication;
- Decision-Making;
- Teamwork and Collaboration;
- Community Partnerships; and,
- Daily Behaviors and Motivations.

When identifying root causes and general remedies, the organization should ask itself “What isn’t working well, and why?” until something very tangible and actionable is discovered. It is important to remember that root causes can apply to multiple findings within the organization.

First, identify the root causes you believe are impacting the organization from reaching its desired state and record your findings in the space below.

Then discuss the findings as a group to reach consensus. Group decisions should be recorded on flip charts, typed, and shared with the team.

After root causes have been identified, remedies to address each root cause can be explored. Remedies can address multiple root causes. Remedies can take many forms, but generally speaking there are three types of actionable remedies for identified root causes. The following are the three types of general remedies:

- Recommendations – remedies not in the continuous improvement team’s control that must be referred to others in the organization for consideration;
- Decisions and Commitments – remedies in the continuous improvement team’s control that do not require development of new tools and/or processes to implement; and,
- Team Activities – remedies in the continuous improvement team’s control that require development of new tools and/or processes to implement. Team activities may involve chartering a work team to perform the “mini-DAPIM™” work of designing and planning implementation of specific remedies.

First, identify the remedies you believe will assist the organization in reaching its desired state and record your findings in the space below.

Then discuss the findings as a group to reach consensus. Group decisions should be recorded on flip charts, typed, and shared with the team.

Third, plan for change that will lead to continuous improvement. There are essentially three types of continuous improvement planning – quick wins, mid-term improvements and long-term improvements.

Quick wins can be implemented within 0-90 days. Select improvements from your remedies list that accomplish the following:

- Enhance key initiatives already underway.
- Address needs that are obvious, big, and essential to client service delivery and relationship stability.
- Build the involvement and the confidence of clients and staff- quick, visible wins.
- Stretch current resources to an untried level, yet...
- ...Eliminate or curtail lower-priority capacity eaters.
- Enable deeper future assessments and planning.
- Are symbolically powerful.

First, identify the “quick wins” from the remedies list, you believe can be implemented to have the most impact on the organization and record your findings in the space below.

Then discuss the findings as a group to reach consensus. Group decisions should be recorded on flip charts, typed, and shared with the team.

Use the tracking quick wins improvement tool located in the appendix of chapter two of the OE Handbook to record commitments made by the team to quick wins.

Longer range improvements identified take place over time, generally six months to two years. Longer range improvements often need additional levels of support, buy-in and resources in order to be effective.

First, identify the long ranges changes, from the remedies list, you believe should be implemented first to support the organization in reaching its desired state. Record your findings in the space below.

Then discuss the findings as a group to reach consensus. Group decisions should be recorded on flip charts, typed, and shared with the team.

Once longer range improvements have been agreed upon by the team, it needs to develop written continuous improvement plans for each action item. The purpose of the continuous improvement plan is to:

- Commit explicitly to improving client outcomes and services over time,
- Build agency credibility with stakeholders and staff,
- Get everyone on the same page about organizational improvement work to be done, how it will be rolled out over time, how different initiatives are connected, and why they matter, and
- Reinforce a culture of accountability, data-driven assessment, follow-through and ongoing adjustment.

The elements of an effective continuous improvement plan include the following:

- Brief Description: What do you intend to do?
- Rationale: Why do you intend to do it (your business case)?
- Objective: What will success look like for the organization and its clients?
- Timeframes for Rapid Improvement Initiatives: When will the change take place; both immediately and within 60-90 days?
- Responsible Group: Who will be accountable for implementing the change?
- Specific Activities and Tasks: Who will do what by when? (both immediate and within 60-90 days)
- Overcoming Obstacles: What are your potential obstacles and how will you overcome them?
- Communicating the Effort: What will you say and to whom? Who will deliver the message (director, managers, or supervisors)? What form will the message be delivered in (written, verbal)? Where will the information be shared (all staff meeting, department/unit meetings)?
- Monitoring Plan Progress: How will you chart your progress? What will you track? What methods/tools will be used?
- Sustaining the Effort: How will you ensure the improvement effort continues to be implemented? What methods/tools will you use for accountability?
- Budget and Resource Implications: Is this a “no-cost” “low-cost” effort or will money be needed to support the change? If funds are needed how will they be secured? What resources, if any, will you need and who will you need them from?

A Continuous Improvement Plan Template is located in the appendix of chapter two of the OE Handbook to assist in the development of effective continuous improvement plans. Development of continuous improvement plans is an ongoing process based on the priority order selected by the assessment team and completion of plans.

Fourth, implement the improvements. The Tracking Quick Wins tools and Continuous Improvement Plans for each major initiative when pulled together, into a single document, form the Organization Continuous Improvement Plan. Preparing for implementation of the major initiatives in the organization continuous improvement plan involves doing the following:

- Assign individuals or charter teams to complete the work;
- Develop workforce capacity plans;
- Develop finance and resource plans;
- Develop communication plans that clearly explain the change improvement;
- Share detailed written improvement plans internally and externally as appropriate; and,
- Develop and implement on-going evaluation and monitoring tools and techniques for accountability.

Templates and reflective thinking guides to support the assessment team in developing charters, assessing workforce capacity (training and technical assistance planning), and communication planning are located in the appendix of chapter two in the OE Handbook.

Charters, capacity plans (training and technical assistance plans) and communication plans should be added to the organization continuous improvement plan. Development of charters, capacity plans and communication plans is an on-going process designed to support the organization continuous improvement plan.

The fifth and final stage of the assessment, monitoring, ensures accountability. Monitoring techniques the organization can use include the following:

- Implementation Reviews – measure accomplishments versus plan milestones and commitments;
- Impact Reviews – measure actual versus expected impact on organizational capacity and client outcomes; and,

- Lessons Learned Reviews – address new and emerging questions and findings and drive further innovations
 - You can use an After Action Review format by asking stakeholders and participants the following: What went well? What didn't go well? What should we do differently next time?

Monitoring measures the organization can use include the following:

- Client Outcomes;
- Efficiency and Quality of Client Service (e.g., client experience of a service);
- Specific Staff Capacity to Deliver a Service (e.g., knowledge and skill, performance); and,
- Foundational Staff Capacity (e.g., retention, safety, leadership bench strength).

Discuss which monitoring activities the team will engage in and what measures will be used to define success. Group decisions should be recorded on flip charts, typed, and shared with the team.

A **Data Planning** template and sample tracking tools are provided in the appendix of chapter two of the OE Handbook.

In conclusion, at the end of this process the assessment team will have the following materials that can be shared as part of the communication plan:

- Group process notes for each section of the DAPIM™ discussions – informing stakeholders how your conclusions about the agency were reached;
- Tracking Rapid Improvements tool completed with quick win commitments;
- Long range improvement plans for areas selected by the team to work on; and,
- Any charters that were developed for team activities.

Appendix D: Continuous Improvement Plan Guide and Template

This template is designed to assist the organization in thinking about how to plan and implement improvements, both rapid and longer range. The template contains the key areas that the organization should think through prior to moving forward with implementing an improvement.

This template can be used in multiple ways:

First, a leader of an organization may use the template to think independently about the organization when planning for an improvement. The leader can use the template to ensure they have thought through all aspects of the improvement prior to moving forward. In an improvement situation, where leaders want to think through the steps of the improvement plan independently, they must ensure a sound diagnosis by including senior staff and stakeholders in the “assessment phase” prior to writing the plan and after the plan is developed to obtain feedback prior to implementing it.

Second, the leader of an organization may use the template with their leadership team, allowing the leadership of the organization to think together when planning for the improvement.

Third, a department/unit within the organization may use the template to plan an improvement within the department/unit, allowing all staff within the unit to clearly understand the purpose for the improvement and the role each member of the department/unit will plan in carrying out the improvement.

Fourth, a facilitator can use the template to guide a team from the organization through thinking and problem solving to plan improvements within the organization prior to implementation. The use of a facilitator allows for full participation of all team members and to obtain insight from a third party.

Regardless of which of the above methods is utilized, the template will assist the organization in developing an understanding of all of the things that must be thought through prior to implementing an improvement.

Taking time to think about the organization, whether independently or as a team, is the work of leading any organization.

The objectives of the template are to help agency leaders drive rapid and longer range organizational improvement that maintains high-quality core service delivery, curtails or eliminates activities outside the core services, targets improvement in areas of greatest return on investment, and identifies and eliminates inefficiencies.

Creating detailed plans for improvement that begin with a sound diagnosis of strengths and needs, drive immediate action, detail communication actions at every step, take advantage of quick wins, identify non-negotiable items, and leverage working teams and taskforces within the organization will assist in the success and sustainability of the improvement effort.

The improvement planning template is a shell format that includes elements contained in most sound improvement plans. Users are, however, encouraged to modify this template to meet their unique needs. The following are the minimum elements of a sound improvement plan:

- Assessment of Current Situation: Findings, root causes and remedies
- Rationale: Why will you implement the improvement?
- Objective: What will success look like for the organization and the client?
- Timeframes for Improvement Initiatives: When will the improvement take place? Will the improvement be rapid or long term? Responsible Group: Who will be accountable for implementing the improvement?
- Activities/Task that will be engaged in to Support the Improvement: Who will do what by when?
- Overcoming Obstacles
- Communicating the Improvement Effort: What will you say and to whom?
- Monitoring Plan Progress: How will you chart your progress? What methods/tools will you use?
- Sustaining the Improvement Effort: How will you ensure the improvement effort continues to be implemented? What methods/tools will you use for accountability?
- Budget and Resource Implications

Continuous Improvement Plan Template

Complete this template only after completing a thorough assessment of the current situation. Include senior leaders and key stakeholders in the assessment and share findings (both current strengths and challenges) to ensure a high level of confidence in the findings, root causes and remedies.

Brief Description: What do you intend to do?

Rationale: Why do you intend to do it (your business case)?

Objective: What will success look like for the organization and its clients?

Timeframes for Improvement Initiatives: When will the improvements take place? Quick win improvements typically can be implemented within 0-90 days. Mid range improvements take 3-6 months. Long range improvements take 6 months to 2 years.

Responsible Group: Who will be accountable for implementing the improvements?

Specific Activities and Tasks: Who will do what by when?

Overcoming Obstacles:

Potential Obstacle	How We'll Overcome It

Communicating the Improvement Effort: What will you say and to whom? Who will deliver the message (director, managers, or supervisors)? What form will the message be delivered in (written, verbal)? Where will the information be shared (all staff meeting, department/unit meetings)?

Monitoring Plan Progress: How will you chart your progress? What will you track? What methods/tools will be used?

Sustaining the Improvement Effort: How will you ensure the improvement effort continues to be implemented? What methods/tools will you use for accountability?

Budget and Resource Implications: Is this a “no-cost” “low-cost” effort or will money be needed to support the improvement? If funds are needed how will they be secured? What resources, if any, will you need and who will you need them from?

Improvement Plan Goals and Action Steps At-a-Glance

The following chart could be developed for each identified goal in the improvement plan. The chart provides an at-a-glance view of the improvements committed to in the continuous improvement process. The chart can keep everyone on the page about the intended improvement and can assist with on-going monitoring and evaluation of the improvement.

Goal Statement:

ACTION STEP	BENCHMARK* (Quality)	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	TIMELINE	RESOURCES NEEDED	COMPLETED

Appendix E: Fact Sheet: Sustainability Factors for CI Work

1. Ongoing monitoring by “DAPIM™ Alumni” teams. Support in post-project monitoring from leadership and sponsor groups and from facilitators of the DAPIM™ approach.
2. Continuous improvement work, modeling and related communication from sponsors and stakeholders, resulting in a two-way ripple effect.
3. Internal facilitators of the DAPIM™ approach (vs. external consultants) selected, trained, performing well and with sufficient work plan capacity to offer ongoing support.
4. Program success measures are defined and evaluated, validating or pointing out improvements required of the DAPIM™ approach itself.
5. Ongoing support from Organizational Development or a comparable internal function. Policy and budget alignment, on-line resources to support internal facilitators and ongoing continuous improvement efforts, knowledge management programs and processes, oversight of internal facilitators, and general contracting for external resources (e.g., APHSA products and consulting) are all examples.
6. Agency executive team support, resulting in the alignment of agency strategy and efforts using the DAPIM™ approach and the participation of a broad set of constituents and partners.
7. Ongoing DAPIM™ Alumni networking and materials repository, so that best practices and success stories can be generated, shared and leveraged over time.
8. A continuous improvement point-person in place to champion sustainability and manage an overall sustainability plan.
9. A multi-year continuous improvement plan for embedding continuous improvement and the DAPIM™ approach as a way of doing business for all agency levels, functions, and local settings.