MICIP
MICHIGAN INTEGRATED CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

# Leading and Managing Change

## A Toolkit to Support Continuous Improvement Leaders, Facilitators, and Team Members

August 2021

MICHIGAN Department of Education

# Contents

Introduction ..... 1

Learner Outcomes ..... 1

Introductory Level ..... 2

Why It Is Important to Think about Leading and Managing Change ..... 2

Overview – Managing Change ..... 2

Levels of Change ..... 2

Digging Deeper ..... 3

Leading System Change ..... 3

Leading Individual Change ..... 3

Readiness Considerations - Facilitator and District Leader ..... 4

Facilitator Readiness: ..... 4

District Leader Readiness: ..... 4

References and Additional Resources ..... 4

Other Helpful Resources ..... 5

Acknowledgments ..... 5

# Introduction

The purpose of the MICIP toolkits is to help a district dig more deeply into topics that are critical to the continuous improvement mindset and process. This toolkit considers the impact of change on the organization, the individual members, and on the continuous improvement process. It will provide information on how leaders can plan systems change and support personal transitions. Users will find research and professional development plans, including agendas, slides and resources, and staff meeting suggestions. Users can review materials and choose those that might best fit their current context. The kit has been scaffolded into introductory and digging deeper information. The introductory information is appropriate for the entire continuous improvement team while the digging deeper information is primarily designed for those leading continuous improvement efforts. Near the end of the toolkit are recommendations regarding facilitator and district leader readiness to lead the change process as well as additional resources.

***"No change effort in education should be divorced from a direct connection to student instruction." Fullan, M. (2006)***

## Learner Outcomes

- Understand the nature of change and its role in the continuous improvement process.
- Explain the relationship between the state of change and transition phases during change.
- Identify the purpose of organizational readiness and its role in successfully initiating and implementing change to drive continuous improvement.
- Understand how planning for change can increase the chance that continuous improvement will be successful.

# Introductory Level

## Why It Is Important to Think about Leading and Managing Change

Change is a natural state. It is critical for continuous improvement team members to understand change processes and how they impact the continuous improvement process. Continuous improvement is by its very nature a process of change. Once team members understand the potential impact of that change on both the organization and system as well as on the individuals implementing the change, they can use careful planning to both increase the likelihood that the change will be successful as well as to mediate any potential negative impact.

People like to say they like change. But in reality, no one likes change. No one wakes up in the morning saying, "I hope someone rocks my world today". In fact, there is a book titled, ***Change is Good, You Go First***. Humans like stability, predictability, knowing they can count on the sameness of their world. And yet change is ultimately what district and school leaders are called to do. William Bridges, in his book, ***Transitions: Making Sense of Life's Changes***, differentiates between "change" and "transition". He defines **change** as the shift in the **external** situation - system advancements. **Transition**, on the other hand, is the **internal** psychological reorientation that people make in response to change, in other words, personal adaptations.

It is also important to remember that, while there are some basic elements and patterns to most changes, the timelines for change and adaptation to it can vary due to a number of factors. Being sensitive to the timeline is critical. While on the one hand it is important to consider the time needed to successfully implement a change, on the other hand it is critical to encourage those making the change not to be afraid of making the transition while also providing them essential levels of support.

## Overview – Managing Change

This presentation gives an overview of Change Management and what a continuous improvement team needs to consider prior to designing and implementing a plan. It is appropriate for the entire continuous improvement team. Before engaging with the presentation, have attendees identify a change process in which they participated that was successful. Also have them identify one that was not successful. These experiences will be used during the presentation. Resources include a PowerPoint with notes, a recording, and a handout; the entire session will take approximately 50 – 75 minutes depending on the amount of conversation.

- Change Management Recording
- Power Point
- Handout - Phases of Transition During Change

## Levels of Change

The Continuous Improvement Process is a change process. It is important to note that not all change is of the same magnitude, and some changes have greater implications than others for various stakeholders. Before implementing changes that result from the Continuous Improvement Plan, it is important to recognize the level of change the plan calls for. Anticipating the response to the change and designing activities to help accommodate the change can go far in ensuring its success. This activity will help develop a teams' understanding of the change process. Resources include a handout with a reading, an activity, and an answer sheet. We suggest keeping the answer sheet separate from the reading and activity so it can be distributed independently. The entire activity will take approximately 45 – 60 minutes.

- Handout - Understanding Change Activity

# Digging Deeper

These presentations dig deeper into the impact of change on the organization/system itself as well as on the individuals that are part of it. They are primarily meant for those in charge of leading change efforts. Before using these materials, facilitators will need to familiarize themselves with the major ideas and be prepared for the suggested mini presentations.

## Leading System Change

- **Leadership Professional Learning - Systems Change (Kotter Research).** Harvard Business School and author John P. Kotter first published his "8-Step Change Model" in 1995. It has become the definitive guide for conscientious leaders. This 2.5-hour session will teach the model as individuals apply an identified change initiative.
  - Systems Change – Agenda
  - Systems Change - Slides
- **Leadership Professional Learning - Creating a Coherent System (Fullan & Quinn Research).** Much of the research on change has been done in the private sector. However, in 2016, Michael Fullan and Joanne Quinn published their book, ***Coherence: The Right Drivers in Action for School, District, and Systems***. They share a four-component framework that district and school leaders can implement for coherent change. This 2.5-3 hour professional learning session provides a manageable understanding of the model.
  - Creating a Coherent System – Agenda
  - Creating a Coherent System – Slides
  - Fullan and Quinn Framework - Handout

## Leading Individual Change

- **Staff Circle - What We're Feeling Is Normal; Change Is Difficult (Bridges Research).** William Bridges says it is not the change that's the problem; it's "coping with the difficult painful and confusing times." This staff circle (1-1.5 hours) will normalize the feelings everyone experiences during change and provide coping strategies to address them.
  - Staff Circle – Script
  - Staff Circle – Handout
- **Leadership Professional Learning - Managing Individual Change (McREL & Blanchard Research).** McREL introduced the concepts of "1st & 2nd Order Change" in their book, ***School Leadership that Works*** and recently in the book, ***Balanced Leadership for Powerful Learning***. When leaders understand that one change initiative can have different personal reactions, they can consider which stage of development is needed and what they need to do next to support individuals in moving forward. This professional development session will explain two models of research and provide opportunities to create individual action plans. It can be adapted for staff professional development ranging from 3-6 hours.
  - Managing Individual Change – Agenda
  - Managing Individual Change – Slides

## Readiness Considerations - Facilitator and District Leader

### Facilitator Readiness:

What skills does a facilitator need to support the change process?

- Working knowledge of organizational change theory and models.
- Working knowledge of existing district change experiences.
- Understanding of systems change.
- Understanding of the phases of individual change.

### District Leader Readiness:

What do district leaders need to lead the change process?

- Ensuring that perspectives of various educational systems are represented on the continuous improvement team - MICIP Process Guide - page 8.
- MICIP Professional Learning for MICIP team assembly: Learning Bites - "Building Your Team" and "Working as a Team"
- Knowledge of the change process and the elements that need to be present to successfully implement change.
- Understanding of the current district leadership capacity and ability to facilitate change.
- Identification of person(s) responsible for facilitating continuous improvement efforts with your team. i.e. District leader, ISD/RESA facilitator, co-facilitation model (district leader & outside facilitator).

## References and Additional Resources

The resources below are provided to support the information above; their inclusion does not indicate endorsement by the Michigan Department of Education. Access to these resources may be time-limited or may require a subscription.

- Blanchard's Research: SLII Powering Inspired Leaders. Ken Blanchard's Situational Leadership model has been around for a long time. Educational authors have used it to move their research forward. They include Wellman & Lipton's ***Mentoring Matters: A Practical Guide to Learning-Focused Relationships*** (2017) and Jackson's ***The Instructional Leader's Guide to Strategic Conversations with Teachers*** (2008). This model helps leaders consider how to adjust their leadership style to meet individual's developmental stages.
- Bridges' Transition Model: Guiding People Through Change. Bridges' Transition Model has 3 stages that people experience during change. This brief article offers the stages and emotions that accompany them.
- Choosing the Wrong Drivers for Whole System Reform. Michael Fullan shares that the typical "drivers" in leading education change are wrong. He encourages leaders to rely on a different group of "drivers".
- Kotter's 8-Step Change Model: Implementing Change Powerfully and Successfully. This webpage provides an overview of the model. [article and video (2:20 minutes)]
- McREL's Balanced Leadership Framework. "First and Second Order Change" is part of a larger framework created through a meta-analysis by McREL on school leadership and its impact on student achievement. The Balanced Leadership Framework has four components: Leadership Responsibility & Practices, Managing Change, Focus of Leadership, and Purposeful Community. Check out the McREL website for more information.

## Other Helpful Resources

Successful leaders understand that managing change takes a certain amount of finesse. One cannot just declare a change and expect that everyone will be compliant. Systems change should be a thoughtful process. Many researchers have published information on how to approach this part of change. Most leaders intuitively or intentionally lead initiatives. But as George E.P. Box says, "All models are wrong, some are useful." Another way to say this is "All models are (incomplete), some are useful." Therefore, it is important for leaders to have multiple models to consider as they lead change. Recognizing that change only occurs when the members of an organization commit to implementation, it is important for leaders to remember the individual transitions to the new way, including the feelings that are at play.

- Managing Change in Education - Practical Strategies to Improve Change Outcomes in K-12.
- Oakland Schools Collaborative Inquiry Toolkit. Once you have started implementing change, how do you ensure that there is a whole-system shift in practice? In May, 2020, Oakland Schools consultants created a toolkit for Collaborative Inquiry, *"a structure in which members of a professional learning community come together to systematically examine their educational practice"*. (Donohoo, 2013) to support this work.
- Educational Improvement Through Systems Course - This course will address a variety of ideas around how systems in classrooms, schools, and districts support continuous improvement. This course is designed to help you learn about systems by examining a case study and looking at examples of systems from your daily life and your experiences in schools.
- MTSS Change chart - According to the MDE MTSS Practice Profile, the five essential components of MTSS are inter-related and complementary. Effective change in MTSS requires attention and commitment to all five components. Used in collaboration with a fidelity check, this Complex Change model can help district and school-based teams consider various aspects of their MTSS and potential pitfalls for missing components.

## Acknowledgments

We would like to thank Oakland Schools Leadership Consultant colleagues Marty Chaffee and DeLisa Jones for providing much of the content and resources in the Digging Deeper section. We appreciate the time and energy they put into sharing their deep knowledge and expertise around leading change so that facilitators and district leaders can find success in leading Continuous Improvement efforts.

This toolkit was designed by the Michigan Continuous Systems Improvement (MI-CSI) Team, with layout done by Christi Lopez, MDE. Questions about the toolkit can be directed to mde-micip@michigan.gov.