

The Impact Era: Impact Readiness Assessment

Instructions:

This tool is intended to help you engage in a thoughtful reflection process around your organization's ability to build evidence and deliver high-impact services. We've organized this assessment into several competency areas that are considered critical by experts in managing evidence-based programs. Within each competency area, we've outlined specific practices or behaviors that are typically present in high-performing organizations. Competency areas include*:

1. Adaptive Leadership and Disciplined Management
2. Well Designed and Well Implemented Programs
3. Culture of Learning, Improvement and Evaluation
4. Financial Health and Sustainability

For each behavior, you will be asked to choose from five options:

- Not Sure / Not Applicable – “This practice or behavior doesn't apply to us, or we don't have the information to answer this question”
- Not Started – “We haven't yet begun doing this practice or behavior”
- Partially Met – “We've begun this practice or behavior but have made little progress so far”
- Substantially Met – “We've made significant progress with this practice or behavior”
- Fully Met – “We do this practice or behavior regularly”

At the end of each area, you'll have the ability to tally a total score that you can use to identify which competency areas are strengths and opportunities for growth. When thinking about these results, keep in mind not all organizations want (or need) to have a perfect score in every competency area in order to deliver highly impactful services. Consider the score as a tool to help you focus your organization's energy to become increasingly ready for evidence building.

After you have your assessment results, we will facilitate break-out groups to discuss specific questions and strategies for improving in each of the four competency areas listed here. If you have any questions while completing this assessment, do not hesitate to ask one of the session facilitators.

**This assessment was informed by:*

- The Performance Imperative pillars of high performance:
<http://leapambassadors.org/products/performance-imperative/>
- Implementation Science and the National Implementation Research Network Implementation Drivers:
<http://nirn.fpg.unc.edu/learn-implementation/implementation-drivers>
- The Corporation for National and Community Service, Social Innovation Fund levels of evidence:
<https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/social-innovation-fund/evidence-evaluation>
- Nonprofit Finance Fund Pay for Success Service Provider Readiness Questionnaire:
http://www.payforsuccess.org/sites/default/files/resource-files/service_provider_questionnaire.pdf
- Blueprints for Healthy Youth Development Program Criteria:
<http://www.blueprintsprograms.com/criteria>

1 ADAPTIVE LEADERSHIP & DISCIPLINED MANAGEMENT

	Not Sure / Not Applicable	Not Started	Partially Met	Substantially Met	Fully Met
My organization's leaders foster a culture of learning and improvement.	0	1	2	3	4
My organization's leaders have successfully managed notable organizational changes such as major programmatic shifts or rapid growth.	0	1	2	3	4
My organization can cite specific cases in which we have cut back or eliminated efforts we found to be ineffective, redundant, or unsustainable and redirected resources to areas of greater opportunity.	0	1	2	3	4
My organization's leaders prioritize utilization of impact focused approaches (implementing evidence based programs, evidence building, PFS, pay for performance, etc.).	0	1	2	3	4
My organization's leaders understand that programmatic rigor is required to be successful with impact focused work and they have invested internally to support that.	0	1	2	3	4
My organization's management team has a high level of stability and includes experienced finance, programmatic and operational staff.	0	1	2	3	4
My organization is clear on the amount of staff needed to deliver our program(s), including supervision and management roles (staff/program recipient and supervisor/staff ratios are articulated).	0	1	2	3	4
Staff qualifications, training and coaching supports are clearly defined – specifically and explicitly for those delivering the intervention.	0	1	2	3	4
My organization has clearly defined roles responsible for monitoring the fidelity of our program(s).	0	1	2	3	4
Supervisors meet with their staff on a regular basis; the quality and content of supervision is consistent across the organization.	0	1	2	3	4

Total score for adaptive leadership & disciplined management: _____ out of 40.

2 WELL-DESIGNED AND WELL-IMPLEMENTED PROGRAMS

	Not Sure / Not Applicable	Not Started	Partially Met	Substantially Met	Fully Met
My organization has a clear Theory of Change that articulates the long-term outcomes related to our mission and maps existing activities to those long-term outcomes.	0	1	2	3	4
My organization has defined the core components of each of our programs (aka a program model).	0	1	2	3	4
Fidelity is explicitly defined for each of my organization's programs (clearly defined content, quantity, quality and sequence of services).	0	1	2	3	4
My organization's target population is tightly defined (including demographics, risk factors or geographic scope where appropriate).	0	1	2	3	4
There is a demonstrated and documented need for our services (via administrative data, referrals, waitlists, constituent research, etc.).	0	1	2	3	4
My organization has written training materials, protocols and explicit processes and procedures for how our programs should be implemented.	0	1	2	3	4
Documentation of our program design(s) exists and is kept current (e.g., program need; theory of change; target population, clearly articulated core program components).	0	1	2	3	4
Documentation exists to support our program delivery (e.g., staffing, training and coaching plans; training and coaching curriculum or guidelines; program calendar; daily schedule; enrollment procedures; attendance protocols; operating space requirements).	0	1	2	3	4

Total score for well-designed and well-implemented programs: _____ out of 32.

3 A CULTURE OF LEARNING, IMPROVEMENT AND EVALUATION

	Not Sure / Not Applicable	Not Started	Partially Met	Substantially Met	Fully Met
My organization’s leaders draw a clear distinction between outputs (e.g., meals delivered, youth tutored) and outcomes (meaningful changes in knowledge, skills, behavior, or status).	0	1	2	3	4
My organization collects data on our own programs, specifically around intervention delivery <i>and</i> outcomes.	0	1	2	3	4
Management and staff don’t collect excessive information, but focus on collecting information that is relevant for determining how well they are achieving the desired results.	0	1	2	3	4
My organization analyzes data on a consistent basis to adjust program delivery, inform strategy, and target future evaluation.	0	1	2	3	4
A measurement strategy for our program(s) has been defined (e.g., approaches to measure content, quantity, quality and sequence of services; outcome measurement tools; data collection timelines and responsibilities).	0	1	2	3	4
My organization has sufficient and manageable data collection system(s) that allow easy access to data on a weekly to monthly basis.	0	1	2	3	4
My organization’s board, management, and staff work together to establish clear metrics for each program.	0	1	2	3	4
My organization has a strategic evaluation plan guiding evaluation and evidence building.	0	1	2	3	4
My organization regularly invests in evaluation and performance management (people and systems) as demonstrated in the annual budget.	0	1	2	3	4
My organization has begun the process of evaluating our programs for effectiveness (beginning with outcomes studies and advancing to quasi-experimental and experimental studies).	0	1	2	3	4
My organization has commissioned third-party, external evaluations of at least one of our programs.	0	1	2	3	4
My organization has experience with evaluating at least one of our programs against a reasonable comparison group (utilizing a counterfactual).	0	1	2	3	4

Total score for a culture of learning: _____ out of 48.

4 FINANCIAL HEALTH AND SUSTAINABILITY

	Not Sure / Not Applicable	Not Started	Partially Met	Substantially Met	Fully Met
My organization can describe the costs to implement our program(s) including: start-up costs, intervention implementation costs, technical assistance and training, and fidelity monitoring and evaluation.	0	1	2	3	4
My organization's operating budget and balance sheet have grown or remained steady in the last five years.	0	1	2	3	4
My organization has a history of stable operating surpluses and sufficient liquidity (cash on hand) to meet regular and recurring expenses, handle unexpected expenses, pursue new opportunities, and manage financial risk.	0	1	2	3	4
My organization can calculate our full cost of services, including operational expenses and administrative overhead for each of our program(s).	0	1	2	3	4
My organization has the budgeting capability to create a multi-year budget, and budget(s) that model different scenarios of growth or organizational change.	0	1	2	3	4
My organization has experience managing multiple sources and types of revenue, including government contracts and foundation grants which have substantial audit and reporting requirements.	0	1	2	3	4
My organization has considered our mix of funding sources and is confident our current revenue structure can support future growth.	0	1	2	3	4
My organization has engaged in performance-based contracts or funding arrangements that were tied to certain milestones, and was successful at meeting those milestones.	0	1	2	3	4
My organization has a strong history of maintaining compliance with all regulatory requirements and funder demands.	0	1	2	3	4

Total score for financial health and sustainability: _____ out of 36.

5 NEXT STEPS: IMPACT READINESS PLANNING

After completing the Impact Readiness Assessment, what do you do next? Now that you know your organization’s unique competencies and challenges, here are three steps you can take this week to become Impact Ready.

1. Review your Impact Readiness Assessment results and determine which competency areas are strengths and which are areas of growth for your organization.

<u>Strength</u>	<u>Growth</u>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adaptive Leadership and Disciplined Management
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Well Designed and Well Implemented Programs
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Culture of Learning, Improvement and Evaluation
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Financial Health and Sustainability

2. **Strength Areas:** For areas of strength, ask the following questions:
 - What organizational characteristics allow us to be strong in this area?
 - What has allowed this success to happen?
 - What can we learn from this success and translate to other areas for growth?
 - Are there ways we can further use this strength to our advantage?
3. **Growth Areas:** For competency areas where your organization has an opportunity to improve, consider the following:
 - a. Which competency area is of strategic importance to your organization now? Do you currently have targeted initiatives that relate to a competency area that you could align new work with? Are there organizational considerations that lend you to focus on a particular competency area? Select **one** competency area based on these reflections.
 - b. Next, review your responses to the questions in your competency area of focus. Drill down to the questions that your score was the lowest, and identify no more than four goals that, if completed, will allow you to improve on these questions. For each goal, complete an action plan like that listed on the next page. Your action plans should include:
 - A clearly stated goal.
 - Who will lead the work towards the goal.
 - Who else needs to be involved.
 - Definition of success (or how do you know when you’ve succeeded?).
 - The timeline to reach your goals.
 - Timeline and protocol for progress reviews (how often will you “check in” on progress and through what mechanism or in what meeting?).
 - c. Once you’ve completed the planning table, set to work on your next steps. Consult the **Impact Era – Provider Resource List** provided during the session for further resources in each competency area.

Impact Readiness Planning Table

Competency Area	Goal(s)	Lead	Team Members	Indicator of Success	Timeline for the work	Progress Review Process
1. Example: <i>Culture of Learning, Improvement and Evaluation</i>	Example: <i>Org does not analyze data on a consistent basis</i>	Example: <i>Program Director</i>	Example: <i>Program Associates, Program Manager</i>	Example: <i>Quarterly data review meetings have been held on a consistent basis for 9 months; Action items identified in meetings have been completed</i>	Example: <i>April '17 – identify priority analysis areas & initial analysis Aug '17 – Second analysis; revisit results and action items from April Nov '17 & Jan '18 – follow up analysis, new areas explored</i>	Example: <i>Standing agenda item for senior management team meetings; data review includes review of improvement actions as a result of data reviews</i>
2.						
3.						
4.						