

PUTTING EVIDENCE TO WORK: A SCHOOL'S GUIDE TO IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation card sort activity

Instructions:

This card sort activity provides an introduction to some of the themes and ideas in *Putting Evidence to Work: A School's Guide to Implementation*. It works well as an introductory activity at the beginning of a workshop or Senior Leadership team meeting.

Steps:

1. Ask participants to work in pairs or groups.
2. Sort the cards into characteristics of “effective implementation” and “less effective implementation”. Explain that you will return to this activity later in the session, so keep the cards on the table.
3. At the end of the workshop or meeting, having explored the content in the guide, ask the group to revisit the cards and reflect on which statements they placed where. Ask colleagues to then consider their own implementation projects and which statements are:
 - Out of scope for the project
 - Already covered
 - Need more attention.

Those cards that ‘need more attention’ can then be taken away by participants as action points to address back in their context.

A school decides on a few clear choices and pursues them diligently.

A culture of shared leadership ensures changes are led at different levels in the school.

Professional development activities span a number of sessions but aren't clearly connected.

A school takes on multiple (>5) implementation projects simultaneously.

Improvement programmes are focused on people, activity and resources, but not climate and culture.

A clear, well-specified and logical plan sets out the problem, intervention, activities and outcomes.

There isn't a culture of quality improvement—staff feel pressured to get it right immediately.

A tight area of focus for improvement is specified prior to considering what to implement.

We work on the basis that schools know how to implement changes effectively.

Less effective strategies are stopped to free up time and resources.

A programme of activity is based on evidence of what has and hasn't worked before.

New skills, knowledge and strategies are introduced through explicit up-front training.

A detailed implementation plan is written but tends to sit on the shelf.

A programme of activity is based mainly on impressions of what has worked before.

Training is reinforced with follow-on support from expert coaches and mentors.

We know where to be 'tight' and where to be 'loose' for our intervention.

Some staff know what is expected of them for the project.

Peer-to-peer support activities are carefully structured, with clear objectives, content and processes.

Behaviour change is attempted solely through mandated "non-negotiables", followed up by performance linked observation.

Training sessions are followed up by discussions between self-selecting groups of teachers.

Plans for sustaining and scaling up the approach are addressed from the outset.

Once a new programme or practice is introduced it is assumed no further leadership support is required.

Implementation is monitored regularly and that information is used to improve delivery over time.

No contingency plans are in place for unexpected changes.

Leaders engage in the implementation process by modelling expected behaviours.

Monitoring implementation involves complex processes for capturing and reporting data.

Changes are implemented across the school in a structured and staged manner.

There is a culture of top-down change—people are denied the opportunity to contribute to, and shape, the implementation process.

Communication about the innovation and change happens on a regular basis.

People come to the process from a perspective of fear – e.g. Am I going to lose control? Will this be more work?