WestEd
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national center for systemic improvement

Leading by Convening Modules:
A User Guide

Introduction

This suite of five learning modules was created by the National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI) in collaboration with multiple stakeholders. The suite is based on *Leading by Convening: A Blueprint for Authentic Engagement*, developed by the IDEA Partnership. Leading by Convening is an overarching framework and a new discipline that works on the technical and adaptive sides of change. It focuses on authentic stakeholder engagement as a core commitment for leaders at every level of a system, with convening as the leadership strategy that makes learning partnerships possible.

The suite consists of five self-paced modules, each with three or four lessons. While *Leading by Convening: A Blueprint for Authentic Engagement* and the resources are available online for download, the modules contain interactive learning activities, scenarios, informal assessments, and provide tips for applying the principles, tools, and strategies of Leading by Convening. The approximate durations of each module range from 30 to 60 minutes, depending on the length of time participants spend on the learning activities in the module and the suggested activities from this user guide. These self-study modules introduce and explore the *Leading by Convening* habits of interaction, to help state leaders engage stakeholders as allies to reach shared goals.

Download the paper here: http://www.ideapartnership. org/building-connections/the-partnership-way.html

NCSI recommends that users who are new to Leading by Convening view the modules sequentially. Users who are familiar with the framework and content are encouraged to view the modules in the order that best meets their individual learning needs and goals. This user guide is primarily designed to assist facilitators in developing learning sessions that support implementation of the principles, tools, and strategies presented in the Leading by Convening suite of modules.

Recommended Audiences

One of the key tenets of Leading by Convening is that everyone is a leader, everyone is a learner, and therefore, the principles, tools, and strategies presented in the modules can be used by leaders at all levels and positions in a system or organization. The leadership strategy operationalized in Leading by Convening requires that leaders, regardless of title, accept the value of bringing groups with authority and groups with influence together in a shared leadership strategy. This leadership style supports authentic stakeholder engagement.

In the context of education and early learning, state-level participants could include state division directors from across a state office of education and/or department of health; a division director and his or her staff; early childhood service providers; or members of a state advisory panel or of national organizations. District-level participants could include local education agency superintendents; directors of curriculum, assessment, and federal programs; school board members; therapists; or interventionists. School-level participants could include school principals; special education and regular education teachers; parents; family advocates; or other community members.

Using the Modules

Independent Study

The modules can be viewed by independent learners interested in adopting the Leading by Convening principles, tools, and strategies via a self-study, self-paced activity. While activities and opportunities for sharing are embedded into the modules, independent learners are encouraged to review this user guide for additional questions and activities to consider.

Professional Learning Networks and Communities

We strongly recommend that people engaged in the module trainings have regular opportunities to come together in professional learning networks and communities to discuss their experiences using the principles, tools, and strategies presented in the modules and to learn from one another. Professional networks and communities — such as learning communities or communities of practice — promote supportive and shared leadership, collective creativity, shared values and vision, supportive learning conditions, and shared personal practice.

Workshops

The modules are suitable for use in a traditional learning environment, such as a one-day workshop, during which participants view all of the modules in a single sitting and are guided through the materials and activities by an instructor or trainer. Alternatively, each module could be the topic of several half-day or after-school workshops. The modules are also suitable for use in a flipped-classroom approach, as participants can view the modules or specific lessons independently and use a series of face-to-face or virtual meetings to complete the learning activities and explore the module topics in greater depth.

Duration

The five modules and their embedded activities take approximately **three hours and 40 minutes to complete**. However, additional time should be set aside for discussion and reflection. Each module is divided into three or four lessons. **Each lesson is between 3 and 15 minutes long.**

Suggested Materials and Supplies

- **Participants:** Laptop/computer or tablet, pens, writing pads to make notes, sticky notes, highlighters, markers, printed copy of the module outline, and downloads of module-specific related resources.
- **Facilitator:** Self-adhesive chart paper, markers, and materials to lead activities from a particular module, as needed; list of participants; and evaluation forms.
- **Technology:** Internet access, extra laptops, projector, and screen.

Technology Considerations

Ensure that all participants have computer and internet access. We recommend using Chrome as your browser to view the modules.

Preparing for the Session

A successful learning event requires thorough preparation. Please consider using the following suggestions.

- Review the module beforehand and become familiar with the content and the learning activities. Determine whether each activity will be completed during the meeting or outside of it as individual or small-group work.
- Clearly communicate with participants regarding expectations, format, and any preparation needed.
- Download any resources that participants will need during the meeting, e.g., module outline, related resources.
- The module outline can be used to structure the learning session. Each outline contains an overview of the module and each individual lesson, includes additional learning activities, and provides opportunities for reflection.
- Consider establishing group norms, guiding principles, and ground rules of interaction and revisiting them on a regular basis. It is never too early to model authentic engagement and to practice the habits of interaction that are integral to Leading by Convening.

Doing the work together

Coalescing around issues

Leading by Convening

Ensuring relevant participation
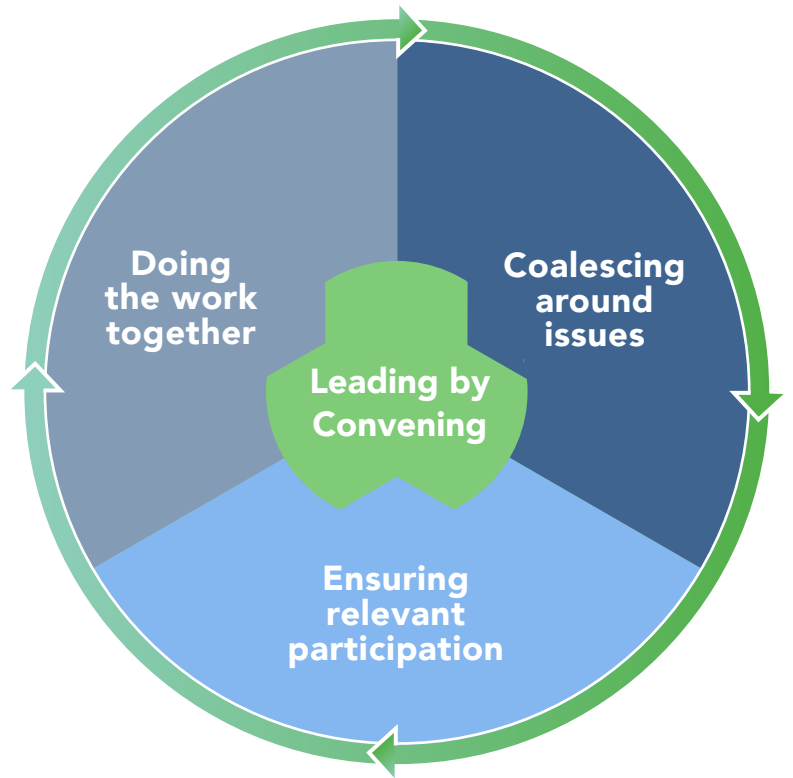
Outline of Module 1:
Authentic Engagement

Use this outline to follow along with the module's main features. The blank "Notes" panels at the end of each module section are interactive and can be filled in using Adobe Acrobat. Alternatively, print this document and record your notes by hand.

About Module 1

This module provides users with an overview of the IDEA Partnership blueprint for Leading by Convening. It outlines the essential habits that leaders need to cultivate to build allied relationships across convening groups. The tools and learning activities in Module 1 help groups identify their values and shared interests and work together to improve practice.

Approximate Duration
30-40m

Related Resources

Partnership: A Hybrid of Top Down and Bottom Up
Leading by Convening requires that leaders — regardless of title — accept the value of bringing groups with authority and groups with influence together in a shared leadership strategy to support authentic engagement. This resource document describes key elements of three leadership styles: top-down, bottom-up, and a hybrid model based on convening that respects both authority and influence.

Module Objectives

After completing this module, you should:
- Understand why authentic stakeholder engagement is important and how to make it a reality.
- Recognize that sustaining systemic change is hard work and requires support from stakeholders.
- Recognize two common approaches to leadership and learn about the leadership approach articulated in Leading by Convening.
- Be familiar with the Leading by Convening framework, including its research-based foundations.

Key Learning Questions

- Why is authentic stakeholder engagement important?
- What does authentic stakeholder engagement look like?
- How can I make authentic stakeholder engagement a reality in practice?

Lesson 1: Authentic Stakeholder Engagement

15m In this lesson, you will learn about authentic stakeholder engagement, why it is important to the change process, and how the IDEA Partnership project developed an innovative method of engaging stakeholders in special education reform.

Suggested Activities

- On Slide 5, there is a quote from the IDEA Partnership concerning sustainable change: "Sustainable change depends on change in the system and change in the people in the system." Think about this quote for two or three minutes and then share your responses with a partner.
- On Slide 8, social learning theorist Etienne Wenger-Trayner explains why stakeholder engagement is important to achieving change. Discuss why identity and shared experiences are important in the context of change.
- The diagrams on Slides 12 and 13 show stakeholder management and stakeholder engagement. In small groups of three or four people, discuss your current relationships with stakeholders: Are you managing or engaging your stakeholders?

Gradually, shallow collaboration was replaced by authentic engagement that allowed us to act together when we were in agreement and made it safer to talk about issue on which we did not agree.

- The activity on Slide 16 shows some grounding assumptions about stakeholder engagement from Leading by Convening. In small groups, try to reach consensus on these grounding assumptions of stakeholder engagement in systemic and sustainable change.
- Slide 18 shows eight images representing stakeholder engagement. Take a minute to identify the image that best illustrates stakeholder engagement to you, and then share your choice with the whole group.

Lesson 1 Reflection

- Slide 25 shows three levels of stakeholder engagement: shallow engagement, structured participation, and authentic engagement. In small groups, reflect on your own current level of stakeholder engagement.

Lesson 2:
Leadership Approaches

⏱ **10m**   In this lesson, you will learn about two common leadership approaches: top-down and bottom-up. You will also be introduced to the Leading by Convening approach to leadership and develop a new understanding of who can be a leader.

Suggested Activities

- Slides 31 through 35 describe two kinds of leadership: top-down and bottom-up. Take two or three minutes to reflect on your approach to leadership, and then share it with a partner.
- In a small group, identify any changes in leadership style that you would like to make in yourself as you work with people in your organizations.
- Slides 36 through 40 describe the Leading by Convening approach to leadership as a hybrid of the top-down and bottom-up approaches. As a large group, spend five or six minutes sharing your thoughts about this hybrid leadership style.

Leadership is an action, not a title... in the right time and the right place, every person—even you—has the ability to lead.

- Slide 42 shows 12 leadership characteristics from the bottom-up, top-down, and Leading by Convening approaches. In pairs, complete the activity beginning on Slide 42, and work together to assign each leadership behavior to its specific style of leadership: top-down, bottom-up, or Leading by Convening.

Lesson 2 Reflection

The leadership approach described in Leading by Convening emphasizes the importance of bringing people in authority together with people with influence. With a partner, reflect on how this combination could help support the change process.

Lesson 3: Nuts and Bolts of Leading by Convening

12m In this lesson, you will learn about the framework, principles, and habits of interaction that undergird the Leading by Convening approach to authentic stakeholder engagement.

Suggested Activities

- On Slide 65, Luann Purcell from the Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE) states, "One of the major points about Leading by Convening is putting yourself aside and everybody coming to the table as a learner." With a partner, discuss how this mindset could support authentic stakeholder engagement.

- Slides 71 and 72 introduce Heifetz and Linsky's work on specific types of challenges in the change process: adaptive challenges and technical challenges. In pairs, discuss which leadership challenges — adaptive or technical — you think are the most difficult to solve.

> **We have learned that we must do more than simply say we are attending to the elements of change; we must work at it. We must stretch individually and organizationally.**

- Slide 76 describes four levels of interaction with stakeholders: informing, networking, collaborating, and transforming. At what depths of interaction is your current level of collaboration with stakeholders? Share your thoughts with a partner.

- The activity on Slide 77 checks participants' understanding of the Leading by Convening framework. In pairs, complete this activity and compare your answers with those of another pair.

Module 1 Reflection

From what you heard in this module, what are some of the key messages about Leading by Convening and stakeholder engagement that resonated with you? Share your thoughts with the whole group.

Complete the following table to show the definitions of the key terms from module 1.

Stakeholders:

Leading by Convening Leadership Approach:

Habits of Interaction:

Elements of Interaction:

Elements of Interaction — Adaptive Elements:

Elements of Interaction — Technical Elements:

Elements of Interaction — Operational Elements:

Module 1 Reflection Cont.

Depths of Interaction:

Depths of Interaction — Informing Level:

Depths of Interaction — Networking Level:

Depths of Interaction — Collaborating Level:

Depths of Interaction — Transforming Level:

Notes on Module 1

Outline of Module 2:
Coalescing Around Issues

Use this outline to follow along with the module's main features. The blank "Notes" panels at the end of each module section are interactive and can be filled in using Adobe Acrobat. Alternatively, print this document and record your notes by hand.

About Module 2

This module helps users understand and develop a habit of practice in which diverse groups of people come together around shared issues or problems of practice that they want to resolve. This habit is called coalescing around issues. Individuals with differing backgrounds and experiences share, learn, and act together to achieve their common goal.

45-60m Approximate Duration

Related Resources

Four Simple Questions
Leaders cannot avoid complexity, but they can make it less complicated. This tool will help leaders create an inclusive path to shared work.

How People Are
Change is hard for most people. This tool will help leaders prepare for some of the most predictable challenges.

Meet the Stakeholders
For every issue, there are several groups that have deep and durable connections to the issue at the practice level. Use this tool to reach out and identify potential partners.

Seeds of Trust
Stakeholders will take in messages about a leader's sincerity in both direct and indirect ways. Little things convey a lot. Use this tool to identify small changes that leaders can make to build trust.

Module Objectives

After completing this module, you should:
- Recognize and appreciate the benefits of coalescing stakeholders around an issue to support the change process.
- Recognize and understand the adaptive, technical, and operational behaviors that support coalescing around issues.
- Become familiar with how to use several tools that support leaders as they work with stakeholders to coalesce around an issue.

Key Learning Questions

- How can coalescing stakeholders around an issue or problem support the change process?
- What behaviors should I adopt during the change process to support coalescing around issues?
- What tools are available to help me during the change process to begin coalescing stakeholders around an issue?

Lesson 1: Benefits of Coalescing Around Issues

15m In this lesson, you will learn about a Leading by Convening habit of practice called coalescing around issues. When coalescing around an issue, groups of people come together around a shared concern or problem that they all want to resolve.

Suggested Activities

- The illustration on Slide 5 shows several people who are blindfolded touching a different part of an elephant. Because they only have their own perspectives, they don't know what they are touching, or even that they are touching the same thing. In pairs, discuss how relying on one person's or group's perspective on a problem can hinder finding a solution.
- Download the Four Simple Questions tool from Slide 8. After listening to some examples of using the tool at the state and local levels, in a small group, practice using the Four Simple Questions tool. Debrief your experiences with the whole group.
- The How People Are tool excerpts quotes from Keller and Aiken, two organizational researchers. One of these quotes is shown on Slide 14 and in the following text box.

> **Inherent in coalescing about an issue is commonality: commonality of need, commonality of purpose and commonality of action. As individuals with differing backgrounds and experiences share and think together, all benefit by seeing what one might not otherwise see.**

- "Leaders are no more likely to start a social contagion than the rank and file... Success depends less on how persuasive the early adopter is and more on how receptive the society is." In pairs, think about this statement and how it applies to change in early learning and education. Develop a shared response and submit it via the online link on Slide 14 and/or share it with the rest of the group.
- Slide 15 presents a set of six statements about coalescing around issues. With a partner, determine whether each statement is true or false.

Lesson 1 Reflection

Slide 16 raises this question: "Why is it so hard for different groups to work together on a shared concern?" Reflect on your experiences of working with different groups. Share your thoughts with a partner.

Lesson 2: Adaptive Behaviors of Coalescing Around Issues

⏱ 10-15m In this lesson, you will learn about six adaptive behaviors that, when practiced by leaders, can support the habit of coalescing around issues. You will understand that what people think and believe has an impact on how they act.

Suggested Activities

- The first adaptive behavior is to value each and all perspectives. Think about a meeting that you recently attended. With a partner, discuss to what extent each and all perspectives were valued in the meeting.
- Download the Meet the Stakeholders tool from Slide 21. This tool helps leaders to identify stakeholder groups that have influence on what practitioners know, believe, and do. Think about a problem that is currently facing your organization. In small groups, complete the Meet the Stakeholders tool and debrief with the whole group on this experience.
- Download the Seeds of Trust tool from Slide 29. Divide the group into four smaller groups to complete the lessons learned from the Seeds of Trust activity. Have each group present one negative result and one positive result that could occur from applying one of the lessons learned from Seeds of Trust.

Many stakeholder groups have deep and long-standing connections to their members. Their members trust the messages they receive from them. Stakeholder networks can be important allies in moving new or proven practices into implementation.

Lesson 2 Reflection

In pairs or small groups, reflect on the six adaptive behaviors of coalescing around issues that you learned about in Lesson 2. Identify the adaptive behaviors that you already include in your work with groups and identify the behaviors that you wish to integrate in your work moving forward.

Lesson 3: Technical Behaviors of Coalescing Around Issues

⏱ 12-15m

In this lesson, you will learn about seven technical behaviors that, when practiced by leaders, can support the habit of coalescing around issues. These technical behaviors include turning to evidence-based or best practices and by following processes and protocols.

Suggested Activities

- The second technical behavior in coalescing around issues is to outline the existing knowledge base. Slide 33 describes three kinds of knowledge: theory, research, and practice knowledge. In small groups, answer the following questions:
  - Which kinds of knowledge are listened to in your organization?
  - Which kinds of knowledge do you bring to a group?
- The fourth technical behavior in coalescing around issues, described on Slides 35 through 37, is to develop a mission statement, guiding principles, and ground rules of interaction. In small groups, discuss why this behavior is important and the extent to which the groups that you belong to take time to develop and revisit these founding documents.

By theory knowledge, we mean an organized system of accepted knowledge that can be applied to explain a problem. By research knowledge, we mean that expert researchers have conducted high-quality studies to understand what the problem is and why it occurs. By practice knowledge, we mean that families, teachers, interventionists, and other practitioners have unique understandings of how the problem plays out in their experiences.

- The seventh technical behavior in coalescing around issues is to use a process for reflection. Slide 41 poses five questions to guide reflection. In small groups, consider an improvement initiative that you have recently been involved with, and answer the following reflection questions:
  - What did we think would happen?
  - What did happen?
  - How well was it done?
  - What was learned?
  - What will we do next?

Lesson 3 Reflection

In pairs or small groups, reflect on the seven technical behaviors of coalescing around issues that you learned about in Lesson 3. Identify the behaviors that you already include in your work with groups and identify the behaviors that you wish to integrate in your work moving forward.

Lesson 4: Operational Behaviors of Coalescing Around Issues

10-15m

In this lesson, you will learn to recognize the operational behaviors that leaders can identify in themselves and others as they move forward in coalescing around issues. You will become familiar with the four big ideas of coalescing around issues that characterize the habit's technical and adaptive elements. Finally, you will be introduced to a rubric for charting the extent and depth to which you and other collaborators put the operational behaviors into practice.

Four big ideas characterize the habit of coalescing around issues: acknowledging and valuing diversity; researching and agreeing on relevant data; decision-making through consensus; and coalescing to complete future work together.

Module 2 Reflection

Download the coalescing around issues rubric from Slide 45. In small groups, think about a workgroup that you belong to and use the rubric to reflect on the workgroup's depth of interaction with stakeholders across the four big ideas of coalescing around issues. Consider actions that you could take to increase your depth of interaction with existing and new stakeholders.

Complete the following table to show the definitions of the key terms from Module 2.

Coalescing Around Issues:

Authority:

Influence:

Networks:

Statistical Data:

Qualitative Data:

Module 2 Reflection Cont.

Collective Action:

Rhythm of Interaction:

Notes on Module 2

Outline of Module 3:
Ensuring Relevant Participation

Use this outline to follow along with the module's main features. The blank "Notes" panels at the end of each module section are interactive and can be filled in using Adobe Acrobat. Alternatively, print this document and record your notes by hand.

About Module 3

This module helps participants understand and develop a habit of practice that ensures the right mix of stakeholders is identified and participates meaningfully in solving a shared issue or problem. This habit is called ensuring relevant participation. Ensuring relevant participation encourages leaders to develop activities that are important and relevant to stakeholders.

35m Approximate Duration

Related Resources

What's in It for Me?
Participation does not mean involvement. Use this tool to engage people, encourage interactions, exchange views, and form opinions about the personal and professional value of continuing to engage.

Engaging Everybody
If you talk to a group about engaging the full range of stakeholders, you will likely hear a response such as "We will have 200 people at every meeting." This is a real fear, but is it a real problem? Use this tool to create manageable ways to involve the full range of stakeholders.

Learn the Language: Make the Connection
Different groups often have different ways of talking about the issues they share. Use this tool to help your stakeholders define key ideas and help them crosswalk vocabulary, programs, and funding streams that are important to their work.

The Web of Connections
Different groups often articulate various positions and perspectives about a shared issue. Use this tool

to identify groups and agencies that have shared interests. The tool enables leaders to consider what the issue looks like from the perspectives of potential partners.

Module Objectives

After completing this module, you should:
- Understand the benefits of ensuring relevant participation of stakeholders in solving a shared problem.
- Recognize and understand the adaptive, technical, and operational behaviors that support ensuring relevant participation in solving a shared problem.
- Become familiar with how to use several tools that support leaders in ensuring relevant participation in solving a shared problem.

Key Learning Questions

- How does ensuring relevant participation of stakeholders support the change process?
- What behaviors should I adopt during the change process to support relevant participation by stakeholders?
- What tools are available to help me during the change process to ensure relevant participation by stakeholders?

Lesson 1:
Ensuring Relevant Participation

15m In this lesson, you will learn about a Leading by Convening habit of practice called ensuring relevant participation. Leaders ensure relevant participation by bringing the right mix of stakeholders together and helping each member participate in the activities of the group.

Suggested Activities

- On Slide 5, convening is described as "a new discipline." In pairs, discuss how convening is different from a traditional meeting.
- Download the What's in It for Me? tool on Slide 9. This tool is designed to support and encourage group interactions. In small groups, discuss each strategy and identify how it helped turn participants into partners.
- On Slide 10, Sandy Schefkind, Pediatric Program Manager at the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), talks about bringing AOTA members into shared work. What strategies does she describe using to bring AOTA members into shared work?

In today's connected world, people expect to be engaged, and leaders must learn ways to convene groups differently.

- Slide 13 discusses the importance of two-way learning. With a partner, discuss the extent to which your organization engages in two-way learning with stakeholders.
- Slide 15 gives attendees an opportunity to practice using the Engaging Everybody tool. In small groups complete the Engaging Everybody activity for each of the two learning scenarios described on Slide 15. Each smaller group should then report out to the whole group on its experiences with the tool.
- Slide 16 presents a set of six statements about ensuring relevant participation. With a partner, determine whether each statement is true or false.

Lesson 1 Reflection

Think about a workgroup to which you belong. To what extent does the "right mix" of stakeholders participate in the activities of the workgroup and help to problem solve? Share your thoughts with the other participants.

Lesson 2: Adaptive Behaviors of Ensuring Relevant Participation

6m

In this lesson, you will learn about four adaptive behaviors that, when practiced by leaders, can support the habit of ensuring relevant participation. You will understand that what people think and believe has an impact on how they act.

Suggested Activities

- The first adaptive behavior of ensuring relevant participation, described on Slides 20 through 21, is to demonstrate a commitment to inclusion and participation. Think about a meeting you recently attended. In what ways did the group demonstrate such a commitment? Share your thoughts with a partner.
- The second adaptive behavior, described on Slide 22, is to engage stakeholders who are representative, relevant, purposeful, knowledgeable, and influential. In small groups, discuss why this is important. Consider how engagement of such stakeholders could help you move an initiative forward.
- The last adaptive behavior of ensuring relevant participation, described on Slide 25, is to engage through leadership. Think about a meeting that you attend regularly. To what extent is shared leadership practiced by the group? Share your experiences with a partner.

> **It is not enough to say we are inclusionary; we must demonstrate a commitment to participation... This is particularly important in empowering families and youth to participate meaningfully in content discussions.**

Lesson 2 Reflection

- In pairs or small groups, reflect on the four adaptive behaviors of ensuring relevant participation hat you learned about in Lesson 2. Identify the behaviors that you already include in your work with groups and identify the behaviors that you wish to integrate in your work moving forward.

Lesson 3: Technical Behaviors

⏱ 11m In this lesson, you will learn about six technical behaviors that, when practiced by leaders, can support the habit of ensuring relevant participation. These technical behaviors include turning to evidence-based or best practices and by following processes and protocols.

Suggested Activities

- The first technical behavior in ensuring relevant participation, described on Slide 29, is to implement a process of welcoming and orienting. Consider a group that you work with, and describe the activities that are part of its process of welcoming and orienting new members. Share this process with a partner.

- Listen to Jamal's experience on Slide 30. Think about a situation when you joined a new group. What did group members do to make you feel included? Share your experiences with a partner.

- The fourth technical behavior in ensuring relevant participation is to contribute to and create a shared vocabulary. Download the Learn the Language: Make the Connection tool from Slide 34. In small groups, refer to two or three initiatives taking place in your organization and complete the tool. Each group should share their experiences with the whole group.

It is important that stakeholders recognize the value of participation by others as well as by themselves. Be thoughtful and intentional about participation by the full array of stakeholders, even if the ways in which they participate differ.

- The fifth technical behavior in ensuring relevant participation is to conduct an environmental scan to find out who cares about an issue and why. Download The Web of Connections tool from Slide 38. This tool can help to surface the various positions and perspectives that people have on an issue. In small groups, consider how this tool could help you become more attentive to the perspectives of your potential partners.

Lesson 3 Reflection

- In pairs or small groups, reflect on the seven technical behaviors that you learned about in Lesson 3. Identify the behaviors that you already include in your work with groups and identify the behaviors that you wish to integrate in your work moving forward.

Lesson 4: Moving Forward Together

4m

In this lesson, you will learn to recognize the operational behaviors that leaders can identify in themselves and others as they move forward in ensuring relevant participation. You will become familiar with the four big ideas of ensuring relevant participation that characterize the habit's technical and adaptive elements. Finally, will be introduced to a rubric for charting the extent and depth to which you and other collaborators put the operational behaviors into practice.

Four big ideas characterize the behavior of ensuring relevant participation: ensure diversity among relevant stakeholder representatives; create opportunities for engagement on the issue; work together to facilitate understanding of the issue from diverse perspectives; and acknowledge evolving leadership roles.

Module 3 Reflection

Download the ensuring relevant participation rubric from Slide 45. In small groups, think about a workgroup that you belong to, and use the rubric to reflect on the workgroup's depth of interaction with stakeholders across the four big ideas of ensuring relevant participation. Consider actions that you could take to increase your depth of interaction with existing and new stakeholders.

Complete the following table to show the definitions of the key terms from the module.

Convening:

Core Team:

Key Participants/Advisors:

Extended Participants/Feedback Networks:

Dissemination Networks/Communication Linkers:

Shared Leadership:

Environmental Scan:

Module 3 Reflection

Download the ensuring relevant participation rubric from Slide 45. In small groups, think about a workgroup that you belong to, and use the rubric to reflect on the workgroup's depth of interaction with stakeholders across the four big ideas of ensuring relevant participation. Consider actions that you could take to increase your depth of interaction with existing and new stakeholders.

Complete the following table to show the definitions of the key terms from the module.

Convening:

Core Team:

Key Participants/Advisors:

Extended Participants/Feedback Networks:

Dissemination Networks/Communication Linkers:

Shared Leadership:

Environmental Scan:

Notes on Module 3

Outline of Module 4:
Doing the Work Together

Use this outline to follow along with the module's main features. The blank "Notes" panels at the end of each module section are interactive and can be filled in using Adobe Acrobat. Alternatively, print this document and record your notes by hand.

About Module 4

This module helps leaders understand and develop a habit of practice that focuses on the work being accomplished and on the interactions between and among stakeholders. This habit is called doing the work together. This module includes tools and messages from earlier modules to help leaders understand how the three habits of interaction are applied together.

33-40m Approximate Duration

Related Resources

Building Engagement
Anybody can deliver information. Stakeholders want engagement. Use this tool to generate learning activities around an issue.

Dialogue Guide Facilitator Handbook
Dialogue Guides are intended to promote dialogue centered on an issue of high interest to the education community. This facilitator handbook was written to assist facilitators in carrying out Dialogue Guide activities.

Defining Our Core
Leaders often need to describe work in straightforward ways that are understandable to potential partners and the public. Use this tool to express your driving purpose and to share it simply with others.

One-Way and Two-Way Learning
While formal systems often communicate through a one-way process, interaction demands two-way processes. Use this tool to transform one-way processes into two-way learning activities.

Module Objectives

After completing this module, you should:
- Recognize and understand why it is important for groups to work together.
- Recognize and understand the adaptive, technical, and operational behaviors that support group leaders and stakeholders as they do the work together.
- Become familiar with how to use several tools that support group leaders as they begin to do the work together with stakeholders.

Key Learning Questions

- How does engaging stakeholders in doing the work together support the change process?
- What behaviors should I adopt during the change process to engage stakeholders in doing the work together?
- What tools are available to help me during the change process to engage stakeholders in doing the work together?

Lesson 1: The Importance of Working Together

⏱ **5m** In this lesson, you will learn about a Leading by Convening habit of practice called doing the work together. While doing the work together, groups of people focus on the work to be accomplished and on the interactions between and among participants.

Suggested Activities

- On Slide 5 is a well-known African proverb: "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." Think about your current work and discuss with a partner what this proverb means to you.
- Slide 6 provides some examples of activities that groups can do together. Why is it important for groups to engage in meaningful activities? Share your thoughts with the whole group.
- Download the Building Engagement tool from Slide 7. In small groups, review the activities in the tool and discuss one or two activities that you think may be helpful to the groups you work with. Explain how each activity would be meaningful to the work that you are engaged in and to your stakeholders.

Working together effectively is critical if we are to have a significant impact across organizations and agencies and local, state, and national levels.

Lesson 1 Reflection

Think about a workgroup to which you belong. To what extent does this group focus on the work to be accomplished and the interactions between and among the participants? Share your thoughts with the other participants.

Lesson 2: Adaptive Behaviors of Doing the Work Together

🕐 **15m** In this lesson, you will learn about five adaptive behaviors that, when practiced by leaders, can support the habit of doing the work together. You will understand that what people think and believe has an impact on how they act.

Suggested Activities

- The first adaptive behavior in doing the work together, described on Slides 14 and 15, is to value and appreciate diversity among participants and interactions. Think about a meeting that you recently attended. To what extent did group members value and appreciate diversity in participants and interactions?
- Slide 15 poses some questions for groups to reflect upon periodically. In small groups, try to answer each of the following questions about a recent meeting you attended:
  - Does your group reflect a broad range of stakeholders?
  - What groups are included?
  - Who might be missing?
  - How are you acknowledging stakeholder contributions?
- Slide 17 introduces the concept of insider/outsider status. With a partner, answer each of the following questions:
  - Have you been an insider in a group? How did you feel?
  - Have you been an outsider in a group? How did you feel?

As members begin to feel welcome, they share different perspectives and experiences that contribute to the learning. People start to see both their commonalities and their boundaries.

- The second adaptive behavior in doing the work together, described on Slides 18 and 19, is to model and demonstrate respect to all participants. With a partner, suggest behaviors that show respect for all participants. Discuss whether these behaviors are common in groups that you belong to.
- The third adaptive behavior in doing the work together, practicing shared leadership, is introduced on Slide 20. In a small group, consider the extent to which leaders in your organization practice shared leadership. What barriers to sharing leadership exist in your organization?
- Slides 21 through 26 present a learning scenario about suspension in the early grades. Listen to the learning scenario, and, in small groups, complete the turning point activity on Slide 27. This activity further explores shared leadership.

- The fifth adaptive behavior in doing the work together is to acknowledge the human need for recognition. One way to do this is to create a value story, described on Slide 30. In pairs, create a value story from the learning scenario you heard earlier.

Lesson 2 Reflection

In pairs or small groups, reflect on the five adaptive behaviors in doing the work together that you learned about in Lesson 2. Identify the behaviors that you already include in your work with groups and identify the behaviors that you wish to integrate in your work moving forward.

Lesson 3: Technical Behaviors of Doing the Work Together

⏱ **10m** In this lesson, you will learn about seven technical behaviors that, when practiced by leaders, can support the habit of doing the work together. These technical behaviors include turning to evidence-based or best practices and by following processes and protocols.

Suggested Activities

- The first technical behavior, described on Slide 34, is to develop and maintain principles for interaction and engagement. Module 2 provided some examples of important founding documents, such as a mission statement, guiding principles, and ground rules of interaction. With a partner, discuss why is it important for groups to revisit founding documents as they begin to do the work together.

- Sharing a workgroup's purpose clearly and concisely can be hard. Download the Defining Our Core tool from Slide 35 and complete it about a workgroup that you belong to. With a partner, practice delivering your message from the Defining Our Core tool as an elevator speech. An elevator speech explains an idea or purpose in a way that any listener can understand it in a short period of time.

> **Change requires engagement. Too often, leaders try to persuade people to change. Engagement helps people make the personal decision to change!**

- Download the One-way/Two-way Learning tool from Slide 43. After viewing Slides 44 and 45, identify a policy topic that you care about. Imagine yourself in a role that requires you to share the key points so that others can learn more about the issue and implications for practice. How would you share the key points? Use the One-way/Two-way Learning tool to plot proposed activities by the extent to which they are formal or informal, and examine whether they are communicated from the leader or developed with the stakeholders.

Lesson 3 Reflection

In pairs or small groups, reflect on the seven technical behaviors in doing the work together that you learned about in Lesson 3. Identify the behaviors that you already include in your work with groups and identify the behaviors that you wish to integrate in your work moving forward.

Lesson 4: Practical Applications

3m In this lesson, you will learn to recognize the operational behaviors that leaders and collaborators can identify in themselves and others as they move forward in doing the work together. You will become familiar with the four big ideas of doing the work together that characterize the habit's technical and adaptive elements. Finally, will be introduced to a rubric for charting the extent and depth to which you and other collaborators put the operational behaviors into practice.

Four big ideas characterize the habit of doing the work together: engage diverse participants in completing the relevant work; support evolving leadership roles; work together to understand and articulate the issue; and work together to plan and implement action.

Module 4 Reflection

Download the doing the work together rubric from Slide 53. In small groups, think about a workgroup that you belong to, and use the rubric to reflect on the workgroup's depth of interaction with stakeholders across the four big ideas of doing the work together. Consider actions that you could take to increase your depth of interaction with existing and new stakeholders.

Complete the key terms and definitions in the following table.

Insider/Outsider Culture:

Shared Leadership:

Value Story:

Multiple Levels of Scale:

One-Way/Two-Way Learning:

Notes on Module 4

Outline of Module 5:
Reviewing and Reflecting on Engagement Over Time

Use this outline to follow along with the module's main features. The blank "Notes" panels at the end of each module section are interactive and can be filled in using Adobe Acrobat. Alternatively, print this document and record your notes by hand.

About Module 5

This module helps participants understand the changes that they are making in themselves and their practice when using Leading by Convening practices. It outlines skills that can be developed by consciously thinking and acting in ways that cultivate the technical and adaptive aspects of leading change. The resources in this module help participants learn to listen, value other perspectives, and practice shared leadership.

23-30m Approximate Duration

Related Resources

A Quick Chronology of Engagement
It is helpful for groups to look back on their work together and to tell the story of their engagement to each other and to new members. Use this tool to develop and reflect on the chronology of your group's engagement and to describe the value of its work together.

Give Value First
Do you have expectations as you enter a learning partnership? Use this tool to rethink how expectations shape a potential partnership.

Your Brand
Your brand is not your content, your logo, or your website. It's what your stakeholders perceive about you, and how you make them feel. Use this tool to build your brand.

Measuring Progress
The value of relationships as strategies is hard to describe and even more difficult to measure. Use this tool to identify and quantify the value of relationships as strategies.

Module Objectives

After completing this module, you should:
- Understand the importance of reflecting on engagement experiences and examining the extent of stakeholder engagement.
- Learn about the plan, do, study, act model of continuous improvement.
- Utilize strategies that promote deeper engagement of stakeholders in important work.
- Become familiar with tools that generate interaction data that can be used for continuous improvement of critical relationships.

Key Learning Questions

- Why is it important to regularly examine and reflect on changes in stakeholder engagement and experiences?
- What is an example of an improvement framework that I could use?
- What strategies can help me promote stakeholders' deepening engagement in important work?
- What tools are available to help me determine whether my engagement with stakeholders is deepening?

Lesson 1: Reflecting on Engagement Experiences

3m In this lesson, you will learn the importance of taking time to reflect upon and evaluate the collective influence of the work being done. This can be useful to sustain the energy of collaborators for the process, the issue, and the work yet to be accomplished. You will also be introduced to the plan, do, study, act cycle of continuous improvement. As you adopt the principles and practices of Leading by Convening, you can use this cycle to reflect upon deepening levels of stakeholder engagement.

Suggested Activities

On Slide 5, there is a review of the plan, do, study, act cycle. Discuss with a partner how you can use the cycle to implement one of the three habits of interaction that you have learned about through the Leading by Convening modules.

Leaders and group members must be active learners, open to unlearning as well as learning, and open to hearing, listening, and truly considering other perspectives.

Lesson 1 Reflection

One of the principles introduced in Leading by Convening is that everyone is a leader, everyone is a learner (Slide 7). As you reflect on what you have learned from the Leading by Convening modules, consider what this principle means to you. Does your organization treat everyone as a leader and a learner? Share your answer with a partner.

Lesson 2:
Reviewing Depth of Interaction

🕐 **10-15m** In this lesson, we will use two engagement scenarios to better understand the depth of interaction levels in bringing it all together. While the contexts and roles presented in the scenarios may differ from those of individual participants, the themes expressed should be familiar. Participants should consider how the themes apply to their own unique context and role.

Suggested Activities

This lesson presents two learning scenarios: one related to depth of stakeholder engagement in IDEA Part B, which serves school-age students, and the other related to depth of stakeholder engagement in IDEA Part C, which serves infants, toddlers, and their families. Divide the group into two or more small groups, and have each group choose the scenario that it wants to work through. Each group should choose one person to be the recorder for the group. Groups should complete the activities presented in the learning scenario and report out to the other groups.

Lesson 2 Reflection

Consider your own organization, and reflect upon the depths of interaction that it has with stakeholders. Share your thoughts with a partner. What specific behaviors can you identify to support your point of view?

Lesson 3: Tools for Generating Interaction Data

🕐 **10-12m** In this lesson, you will learn about tools for studying and measuring engagement. The lesson includes reflection tools to help partners review their work together, and rubrics to measure depth of engagement over time. Both types of tools can be used to help understand and deepen levels of engagement.

Suggested Activities

- *A Quick Chronology of Engagement* is a tool that groups can use to look back on their work together and tell the story of their engagement. In small groups, discuss how you could complete this activity with a work group that you have been part of for a while. Each small group should share its thoughts with the larger group.
- Slides 35 and 38 have activities designed to check participants' ability to recognize deepening levels of engagement. Complete these two activities individually, and then compare your answers with a partner's.

Lesson 3 Reflection

Consider your own organization, and reflect upon the depths of interaction that it has with stakeholders. Share your thoughts with a partner. What specific behaviors can you identify to support your point of view?

Module 5 Reflection

Download the bringing it all together rubric from Slide 34. Think about a workgroup that you belong to, and use the rubric to reflect on the workgroup's depth of interaction with stakeholders across the four big ideas of bringing it all together. Consider actions that you could take to increase your depths of interaction with existing and new stakeholders.

Complete the following table to show the definitions of the key terms from the module.

Plan, Do, Study, Act Cycle:

Depths of Interaction:

Depths of Interaction — Informing:

Depths of Interaction — Networking:

Depths of Interaction — Collaborating:

Depths of Interaction — Transforming:

Notes on Module 5

Conclusion

Congratulations on completing the Leading by Convening modules. We hope that you enjoyed learning how to engage stakeholders in improvement initiatives through a focus on authentic engagement as the core commitment and on convening as the leadership strategy that makes learning partnerships possible. Today's leaders face urgent challenges with short timelines for producing positive outcomes. Effective leaders understand that to support sustainable change, they need to cultivate habits that widen their area of impact across roles and levels of the system. The Leading by Convening modules introduced a new style of leadership, as well as strategies and tools to help leaders apply and share their learning. We encourage all participants to use the essential habits — coalescing around issues, ensuring relevant participation, and doing the work together — to help achieve their improvement goals at the state, district, program, or school levels. For additional resources, please check out the **NCSI website**.