14

Selecting and Implementing Strategies for Change

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Previous chapters have described methods to address recruitment, retention, and training challenges and ways to measure the extent to which these challenges affect an organization. Chapter 13 includes a detailed description of strategies for assessing challenges and evaluating the success of an intervention. This chapter answers the question, "Now what?" If by chance you have skipped ahead to this chapter hoping to find a quick answer, please review the previous chapters, paying special attention to Chapter 13. As that chapter also points out, having a baseline assessment helps an organization understand and define the challenge and can assist in selecting an intervention. The baseline also provides a point of comparison against which the results of the interventions can be compared.

This chapter focuses on a method to develop a comprehensive organizational plan to implement one or more interventions to address specific workforce challenges. It provides more detail about the organizational planning process introduced in Chapter 13 and introduces a process organizations can use to select an intervention to improve recruitment, retention, or training. The process helps an organization do the following:

1. Identify the challenge the organization wants to address (see the section of Chapter 13 called Identify the Problem).
2. Define the extent and nature of the challenge (see the section of Chapter 13 called Assess the Problem).
3. Select a strategy to address that challenge.
4. Detail what will be done, including strategies to involve stakeholders in planning and implementation.
5. Anticipate possible barriers impeding successful implementation.
6. Identify approaches to enlist support from stakeholders to overcome anticipated barriers.
7. Choose goals and monitor progress, then develop a time line for the intervention (see the sections in Chapter 13 called Select Goals and Measure Progress and Establish a Time Frame for the Intervention).
8. Evaluate whether the intervention succeeded (see the section in Chapter 13 called Evaluate Success).

These steps will assist organizations in addressing their workforce challenges by implementing a structured planning process and selecting the best intervention strategy for change. Although the process is designed to facilitate change, it emphasizes the need for stakeholder involvement and planning to increase the chance that the change process will be successful. This chapter assumes that the reader has completed a base-

line assessment, as described in Chapter 13, that includes both general assessments and specific assessments needed to discern the size and the scope of the challenge.

TARGETED FRONT-LINE SUPERVISOR COMPETENCIES

Competent front-line supervisors (FLSs) and administrators assess and evaluate workforce development challenges and use those assessments to guide the development of an intervention plan. In developing that plan, they maintain regular contacts with individuals receiving supports and their family members, support team members and other stakeholders to ensure that these individuals' concerns are addressed and to facilitate the involvement of these people in the change process.

Primary Skills

5

FLSs monitor turnover, recruitment success, and employee job satisfaction and use the results to improve personnel practices by selecting appropriate interventions.

FLSs support other FLSs in understanding and learning about recruitment and retention strategies and why they are important.

FLSs know how to develop and implement a plan for reducing unwanted turnover and vacancies at their own site or across the organization as a whole.

Related Skills

4

FLSs maintain regular contacts and follow up with individuals receiving supports and their family members and with direct support professionals (DSPs) and other support team members regarding complaints and concerns.

FLSs design, implement, and develop strategies to address issues identified in consumer satisfaction surveys.

UNDERSTANDING THE PROBLEM

Choosing, implementing, and evaluating the effects of an intervention require change, which can be difficult for individuals and organizations. So, whether an intervention is meant for a particular segment of an organization (e.g., one work site) or for the whole organization, some challenges should be expected. Chapter 12 provides an overview of organizational change models and theories and describes general principles for effective organizational change efforts.

RESEARCH SUPPORT FOR SOLUTIONS

Aisha is an FLS who has struggled with high turnover at the home she supervises. The organization she works for used several of the assessment strategies presented in Chapter 13 (measuring turnover and using a staff satisfaction survey, a new hire sur-

vey, and exit interviews) to learn more about the challenges that Aisha and other supervisors were struggling with. The organization learned that a high proportion of staff left the organization left during the first 6 months after being hired, mainly because the job did not match their expectations. Aisha and her fellow supervisors reviewed the information they had read about the various interventions and decided that realistic job previews (RJPs; see Chapter 3) might help to solve their organization's problem of early turnover (see the In the Spotlight segment at the end of this chapter for further discussion). As the organization's leadership team considered how its supervisors and other stakeholders could work together on developing an RJP, they realized that one of their challenges would be to help those involved in the hiring process to change their behavior. Changing one's behavior or trying new behavior is a difficult thing for most people. This section looks at some of the theories about how to set the right conditions to motivate individual behavior change.

Fishbein and Ajzen's Theory of Reasoned Action holds that people intend to engage in a behavior and that this intention is based on two considerations (Bagozzi, 1992; Sheppard, Hartwick, & Warshaw, 1988). A person must believe that the benefits outweigh the costs and must sense some social pressure to engage in the behavior (DeBono, 1993; Hinkle, 1996; Madden, Ellen, & Ajzen, 1992). Consider Aisha, who was asked to create an RJP for the site she supervises. Aisha may be more inclined to develop an RJP if she sees that the benefits (having DSPs who make it past the first week of employment) outweigh the costs (the amount of time she must invest in creating the RJP) and if she sees that other FLSs and her supervisor are excited about creating and using RJPs.

Bandura's social cognitive theory (1977, 1989) also states that the benefits of taking an action must outweigh the costs. In this theory, however, the person taking action also must have self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is the belief that one has the skills and knowledge needed to take a particular action. So, not only must Aisha see that the benefits outweigh the costs, but she must also believe that she has the skills and knowledge needed to create an RJP (or that she can readily acquire the skills to do so). To help Aisha with this, the organization she works for will have Aisha learn about RJPs and will support her as she practices her new skills.

The Stages of Change model (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1982) holds that all people move through certain stages on their way to making change: pre-contemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, and maintenance. In the pre-contemplation stage, Aisha has not yet recognized that there is a problem with how rapidly newly hired DSPs have been leaving her site. In the contemplation stage, Aisha has started to think about making a change: She recognizes that a lot of newly hired people have been leaving and wonders what actions she could take to address the problem. The preparation stage is the planning stage: Aisha gathers information about the extent of the retention challenge; learns about the various intervention strategies that are available by reading various resources; identifies strategies to address that challenge, such as using RJPs; and creates an action plan. The action stage is the implementation stage. Aisha uses an RJP to address her site's retention problem. Finally, in the maintenance stage, Aisha continues to use RJPs, but based on information she has gathered, she may modify her site's RJPs. Still, she continues to take action to address retention challenges.

Understanding what motivates change can be useful when communicating about a proposed intervention. For example, when discussing a proposed intervention with

the board of directors, a manager may need to talk about costs and benefits in terms of financial costs, but in presenting the same idea to FLSs, the manager may need to talk about costs and benefits in terms of the time that FLSs spend covering unfilled shifts because of vacant positions and recruiting and training new staff. Questions of self-efficacy need to be addressed on both an individual and an organization level. It is important to demonstrate that either the organization or the individual already has the skills and knowledge to implement the intervention or that these skills and knowledge are easy to come by. Organizations or people cannot be forced to move through the stages of change; however, knowing where people fall along the continuum can be very helpful to managers, organization leaders, or other change agents who need to offer appropriate support and information at each stage (people within an organization may be in different places at any one time). Table 14.1 shows Prochaska and DiClemente's (1982) stages of change model and how an organization might support a supervisor when an intervention is introduced and implemented. Understanding these stages of change can help organizations as they create and implement plans to address workforce challenges. This understanding can also help FLSs and managers as they begin to implement changes based within the units in which they work.

Efforts to improve workforce outcomes also involve change at an organizational level. See Chapter 12 for more information about how theories about organizational change can inform the process of selecting and implementing an intervention.

STRATEGIES FOR RESPONDING TO THE PROBLEM

As mentioned previously, there are eight components to crafting and implementing an effective organization recruitment and retention plan: 1) Identify the problem; 2) assess the problem; 3) select an intervention strategy; 4) identify components of the strategy (i.e., what will be done); 5) identify implementation barriers; 6) identify support for the strategy; 7) set goals, measure progress, and establish a time frame for the intervention; and 8) evaluate the intervention's success. Steps 1, 2, 7, and 8 are described in greater detail in Chapter 13. This chapter touches briefly on those components but focuses more on Steps 3–6. The strategies in Table 14.1 can be helpful in all

Table 14.1. Supporting a supervisor as he or she moves through the change process

Stage of change	Action
Precontemplation	Provide the individual with information about the problem. Discuss the costs and benefits of change with the individual.
Contemplation	Encourage the individual to take action.
Preparation	Provide the individual with the information and training that he or she needs to develop an action plan.
Action	Assist the individual with problem solving and data collection, and provide support.
Maintenance	Assist the individual in generating adaptations or alternatives to the action plan based on information gathered.

Source: The stages of change categories are from Prochaska and DiClemente (1982).

phases of the development of the plan but are particularly useful after the plan has been crafted and is ready to be implemented.

Identify and Assess the Problem

Before an intervention is selected, it is essential to understand the size and scope of the problem. Chapter 13 describes the processes of identifying and assessing the challenge in great detail. It is important for organizations to use the strategies described in that chapter to ensure that they have a comprehensive understanding of the nature and extent of the challenges they are facing. The information gathered using those techniques are essential to decisions about which interventions will best address the identified challenges. Having a summary of the information generated in identifying and defining the challenge are critical to selecting a strategy that matches the organization's needs most closely.

Select an Intervention Strategy

Once the challenge has been identified and an assessment of the size and scope of the challenge has been completed, the information gathered can be used to make an informed decision about which of the many possible interventions would be most appropriate. The organization should review the results of general and specific baseline assessments to pinpoint the challenges that are most troublesome or costly to the organization. Then, the organization can select an intervention strategy that directly addresses those specific challenges.

Many of the strategies described in this book can be useful in addressing more than one challenge. Some, however, are likely to have a more direct impact on certain challenges than others. Table 14.2 lists several of the most common workforce challenges reported by community human services organizations and intervention strategies that most directly affect these challenges. The table also lists the chapters in this book that provide more information about the listed strategies.

One challenge in reaching consensus about which intervention to select is that different people may have different information about the challenge. To overcome this challenge, the organization should make sure that all members of the planning team are involved from the beginning so that they have a complete summary of the baseline information. A chart or brief report that lists the major challenges and the data describing the size, scope, and impact of the challenge can be useful tools.

Once the baseline information has been summarized and reviewed, the planning team needs to prioritize the challenges to select one to address first. For example, one team's assessment revealed that turnover is 75% per year, that 60% of all new hires leave in the first 6 months, that 55% of new hires report that their expectations about the job did not match their actual experiences, and that 25% of the sites report significant interpersonal conflicts between staff members. (For further information and an intervention strategy for this organization, see the In the Spotlight segment at the end of this chapter). Each of these challenges by themselves are substantial, so trying to solve all of them at once could cause frustration and overload people who are already overwhelmed. The team may choose any one of those challenges as the first priority to address. That selection of the top priority should only be finalized after the baseline has

Table 14.2. Workforce challenges and strategies to address them

Challenge	Strategy (*and chapter[s] that describe the strategy*)
The organization has trouble finding new employees. The organization has difficulties recruiting qualified individuals.	*(The following eight strategies are discussed in Chapter 2.)* Expand recruitment sources. Use inside recruitment sources. Give recruitment bonuses. Advertise and give hiring bonuses. Devise long-term recruitment strategies. Draw on regional recruitment consortia. Market the organization. Implement internship programs for students.
New hires quit in the first 6 months. Supervisors are constantly hiring new employees to replace those who have left the organization.	Use inside recruitment sources. (*2*) Give recruitment bonuses. (*2*) Create realistic job previews. (*3*) Improve selection practices. (*4*) Develop structured interviewing. (*4*) Use effective orientation. (*5*) Improve socialization practices. (*5*) Establish peer mentoring programs. (*8*)
New employees are unsure of their job roles and functions	Use effective orientation. (*5*) Establish peer mentoring programs. (*5*) Improve co-worker support for new hires. (*5*)
Supervisors have difficulty finding time to coach and mentor new employees.	Establish peer mentoring programs. (*8*) Collaborate with other organizations to share training resources. (*6, 7*) Implement a strategy to reduce turnover so there are fewer new employees to coach and mentor. (*13, 14*)
The organization has difficulty finding training that addresses the skills needed by employees.	*(The following four strategies are discussed in Chapters 6 and 7.)* Offer web-based training or distance learning. Develop a training calendar. Collaborate with other organizations to share training resources. Create a staff development culture instead of offering only regulations-driven training opportunities.
Training does not produce desired results. Employees display poor skills on the job.	Establish competency-based training. (*6*) Have skills mentors to coach staff as they learn new skills. (*8*) Use performance evaluations and progressive discipline. (*6*)
Co-workers do not get along.	Use teams and team-building strategies. (*10*) Improve selection practices. (*4*) Train supervisors. (*6, 7, 11*) Offer training on conflict resolution. (*10*)
Supervisors report being overwhelmed or do not know how to do their job.	Support and train supervisors. (*6, 7, 11*) Provide mentoring for supervisors. (*8, 11*) Develop realistic job previews for supervisors. (*3*)

Challenge	Strategy (*and chapter[s] that describe the strategy*)
There is conflict between staff and supervisors or managers. Employees complain about the supervision they get.	Use teams and team-building strategies. (*10*) Provide networking opportunities. (*5*) Support and train supervisors. (*6, 7, 11*) Implement high-performance supervision practices. (*9, 11*)
Employees have morale problems.	*(The following four strategies are discussed in Chapter 9.)* Use participatory management. Set up employee recognition programs. Create mentoring opportunities for long-term staff to develop skills needed to advance in the organization. Reward long-term employees.
Long-term staff are dissatisfied with or quit their jobs.	Enhance career development opportunities. (*5, 6, 7, 11*) Establish peer mentoring programs. (*8*) Provide networking opportunities. (*5*) Treat DSPs as professionals. (*5*) Allow competent staff to test out of required training and take advanced training instead. (*6, 7*) Recognize tenure and reward long-term employees. (*9*) Implement equitable wage and benefit plans.
Individuals receiving supports/services are dissatisfied.	Conduct job analysis. (*6, 7*) Establish competency-based training. (*6*) Integrate code of ethics into socialization, orientation, and training practices. (*5*)
Employees have inadequate wages or benefits.	Investigate possible policy changes. (*15*) Tie competency-based training to salary increases. (*6*) Develop career paths. (*5, 6*) Professionalize direct support roles. (*5*)

been completed so that it is based on data rather than solely on the opinions or hunches of team members. It is better to prioritize and address the most important challenge first. Tackling several challenges at once can mean that the team wastes resources or gives unfocused, sloppy, and sporadic attention to each of the challenges. Once significant progress is made, the next challenge or intervention can become the focus.

Once the top-priority challenge has been identified, the next challenge is to select one of the several available interventions to try first. The first step in selecting an intervention is to identify the two or three interventions that seem most promising. Once two or three options have been identified, the planning team should make sure that everyone involved in the change process has a good understanding of each of the interventions and how they would be developed, implemented, and evaluated. A comparison of the costs and benefits of each intervention may be helpful in selecting which one to use. Discussing the relative strengths and weaknesses of each approach

can also help the team in making an informed decision about which intervention to pursue. Keeping a record of why a particular intervention was selected can be useful in describing the decision process to those who were not involved in the initial planning effort.

The process of selecting interventions to address particular workforce challenges involves both art and science. Table 14.2 includes several interventions for each listed problem, and several problems in each category. That is because not all interventions will work in every organization. Sometimes the interventions an organization is interested in do not match the challenges revealed in the assessment process. In these situations, we recommend that additional information be collected to ensure that the underlying problem has been identified before the intervention is selected. For example, one organization began an intervention project after having decided that it wanted to implement a peer mentoring program to address turnover problems. As we gathered information from the DSPs and others in the organization, however, it became clear that other issues would also need to be addressed. One year after the peer mentoring program had been implemented, the organization had spent a considerable amount of time and energy refining the mentoring program to make it as good as possible, and they had indications that peer mentors were appreciated (staff who were not offered access to the peer mentoring program began asking for it). The program had improved the orientation, socialization, and training of DSPs. However, it had not reduced turnover among new hires to the desired level. The organization then realized that it needed to intervene more specifically in the hiring and selection practices. In the second year, the organization designed an RJP intervention paired with an improved structured interview to address unmet expectations of new employees. As a result, applicants did not accept positions if they were not a good match for the job (which is exactly what RJPs hope to accomplish) and the organization received unsolicited comments from applicants about how much they appreciated learning more about the organization during the hiring process.

This experience illustrates several important concepts. First, it is important to wait until the assessments have been completed before selecting an intervention. Second, it is important to carefully match the intervention to the highest priority problems identified in the assessment (in this case, early turnover of new hires). Finally, it is important to assess the results of the intervention so that if the first intervention selected does not solve the problem, another can be tried. Peer mentoring is not a bad intervention. It can be very helpful in improving skills and helping the person being mentored make connections with others in the organization. In this particular situation, those outcomes simply were not the most important to the organization.

Identify Components of the Strategy

Before an intervention is implemented, the planning team should identify crucial components of the intervention, such as the people who will be involved, possible collaborators, the role each person will play, the tasks involved, and the costs of implementing the intervention. The array of people involved in implementing a strategy is likely to be broader than most planning teams first imagine, although some people's involvement may be indirect or peripheral. To identify the key people, the team lists everyone who will be affected by the intervention or who may be asked to make deci-

sions about the intervention. The list may include more obvious groups such as administrators, the board of directors, managers, and DSPs. Depending on the organization's size, other departments may be affected (e.g., accounting for paying bonuses, human resources for placing ads in community newspapers). The team needs to consider not only the people doing the work but also their supervisors. Individuals receiving supports and their family members are also likely to be affected by the intervention and should be involved either directly or indirectly in the planning and implementation process.

DSPs are one of the most important groups to involve in organizational change efforts. Several DSPs should be involved in planning and implementing the intervention. They should not be considered token participants but instead should be valued, integral members of the change process. Involving DSPs in change efforts is a change strategy in and of itself. Asking for input and valuing the opinions expressed by DSPs demonstrates increased respect for individuals in that role and is an important component of professionalizing the DSP role (see Chapter 5).

After listing the people who will be involved in the change process, the planning team should identify collaborators in the process. Each of the groups just mentioned may cooperate with the change initiative without being an active collaborator. For example, some people who are affected by the change (e.g., supported individuals) or who are interested in its outcome (e.g., service coordinators, taxpayers) may cooperate with the project without being collaborators in the change process. So, when thinking about possible partners for a collaborative effort, the planning team can think of those who have a common mission and who bring something new and diverse to the table. For example, the organization may wish to collaborate with disability advocacy organizations, other provider organizations, and local workforce development organizations to create a public awareness campaign about disabilities, direct support, and career opportunities.

Collaborators are people with a deep commitment to the change process. Collaboration requires shared mission, vision, and values and a joint planning process. It often means the redefinition of roles and requires trust among all of the involved partners (Reilly, 2001). Collaboration between and among similar organizations in the geographic region or between departments within the organization may be the result of an intervention, or may ultimately be the intervention.

Another step before the strategy is actually implemented is to define the roles and responsibilities of each person involved in the intervention. A person may simply present a plan to an administrator for approval and action or may be involved through every step of the process. Change is more likely to happen when there is a champion for the change—someone who is passionate about the idea and sees it through. Without a champion, the best plans can easily fail. Before assigning roles, the team should make an inventory the strengths, weaknesses, and interests of its members. If, for example, a team member loves to speak to groups but does not enjoy financial tasks, team members can define that person's role as one of sharing information and explaining the intervention, while assigning a partner with numerical strengths to work on cost–benefit analysis and budgeting.

Once the collaborators in the change effort have been identified, many different tasks will need to be assigned. The group will have to review relevant information

about the chosen intervention, select the particular form the intervention will take, and develop a list of tasks to complete in implementing the intervention. Information about how to implement various intervention strategies can be found in the chapters describing those interventions. If the planning team opts to use an intervention not described in this book, the team may need to identify and acquire other resources to assist in conducting the intervention. The team may also decide that an internal or external consultant may be helpful in implementing certain parts of the change strategy.

Finally, it is important to consider the costs of implementing and evaluating the strategy. Some costs are direct, such as the financial costs of a hiring bonus program. But, there are also indirect or hidden costs, such as the salary of the employee who keeps the records and issues the checks for cash bonuses. Other indirect costs may include covering the shift of a DSP who is participating on a work group to design and implement an intervention. The intervention team would be wise to list as many direct and indirect costs as can be identified and then to develop a specific strategy for acquiring the needed resources before the intervention is implemented. This strategy will be helpful both in managing the cost of the intervention and in getting buy-in from stakeholders who need to assist in paying for the intervention.

Costs are not only financial; they also include time and personnel costs. There may, in fact, be an intervention that could be an answer to a lot of an organization's recruitment and retention challenges, but if there are not enough people to cover the daily business of the organization while others work on that special project, or if other projects are underway and people do not have the time to fully invest in yet another project, then that would not be an appropriate intervention to choose. Another cost to consider is the political cost, or goodwill. An intervention that is intensive or a multitude of smaller interventions can stretch the goodwill of colleagues. People will grow tired of frequent inundations of new methods or practices and will be less likely to cooperate. The intervention team is therefore wise to select one intervention that is likely to produce demonstrable results and carry it through; once that intervention has proved successful, the team can try another.

Identify Implementation Barriers

There can be barriers of many different types to implementing recruitment, retention, or training interventions. The intervention team should think of the "yeah, buts" that it will encounter in implementing the intervention—those statements made by stakeholders about why the intervention would not work. For example, a board member may say "*Yeah*, that sounds like a great idea, *but* how will we pay for it?" The goal is for the team to anticipate the "yeah, buts" in the planning process so that it can devise strategies to overcome these challenges. Each of the chapters describing interventions in Sections I–III includes a discussion of common barriers and suggestions for overcoming them. In this chapter, the sections called Identify Implementation Barriers and Identify Support for the Strategy are used instead of a section on overcoming implementation barriers.

Lack of adequate resources—time, money, and personnel—is another common barrier. This barrier can be overcome through a variety of means. A demonstration that the benefits of the intervention may outweigh the costs may convince administrators or boards of directors to reallocate resources for an intervention effort. Col-

laboration may also overcome some of these barriers because burdens may be shared across organizations. Grant writing and other fundraising activities may also provide additional resources.

The biggest barriers may not be due to inadequate resources but rather to attitude. Often people are resistant to change and prefer to do what is familiar and comfortable, to "do what they've always been doing," even if it continues to "get them what they always got." The planning team may encounter skeptical board members, cynical long-time DSPs who "have seen it all," and worried FLSs who wonder how they are going to fit one more thing into their busy schedules. This is where knowing and understanding change theories can be helpful. The team can look back at the organizational change theories described in Chapter 12 and the behavioral change theories discussed in this chapter for assistance in tailoring its message to address the arguments of those reluctant to change.

An important strategy for addressing the "yeah, but" barriers is to include from the beginning those stakeholders who are most likely to raise them in the planning process. That way these people will know the process that the team uses to conduct a baseline assessment, will understand the size and scope of the challenge, and will have good information about what the intervention is and why it was selected. It may also be helpful to solicit recommendations about alternatives from those who raise objections. Sometimes if a "yeah, but" is not adequately addressed in the planning process, it results in failure of the intervention to achieve the desired outcome.

Identify Support for the Strategy

Part of bolstering the argument for change and promoting change is gaining support for the intervention. Support can come from information and from stakeholders. One important source of information is research-based evidence. This evidence can come from a variety of places: web sites of reputable organizations such as university research centers, professional organizations, or on-line journals. Professional organizations, research centers, and even state organizations often publish reports and manuals that may provide the evidence needed to support a given intervention. Professional journals are also important sources of research-based evidence. In the case of the interventions described in this book, the literature review in Chapter 1 and the section called Research Support for Solutions in each intervention chapter are good sources of this information.

A second source of information that the planning team can use to support the intervention is internal data. This is one more reason that doing a baseline assessment is so critical. This baseline assessment provides the information needed to clearly define the challenge and how the intervention may help. It describes the current situation and can help define the direction of the intervention.

A third source of support comes from stakeholders. Stakeholders are those people who have some interest in the organization and its business. Some stakeholders are obvious: individuals who receive supports and their families, organization employees, administrators, and boards of directors. Other stakeholders may also be less obvious. Licensing organizations, funding organizations or purchasing agents, taxpayers, and the community are all potential stakeholders. The planning team can use support from stakeholders in a variety of ways. Some of that support might come in the form of in-

formation. For example, people who receive supports can share their experiences of how a particular staffing challenge affects their lives. Other stakeholder support might come in terms of material or instrumental support. Stakeholders may be willing to share skills or make financial contributions to support an intervention they see as beneficial to their interests in the organization. For example, a parent of an individual receiving supports may work in the human resources department of a Fortune 500 company and may be able to offer assistance with calculating the cost of turnover to the organization. State departments of disabilities, local units of government, and/or advocacy groups may be sources of grants or other funds for a pilot project to address recruitment and retention issues. Stakeholders may also put pressure on the organization's board or administration to provide the resources necessary to address recruitment, retention, and training challenges. The intervention team can think broadly and creatively about who the stakeholders are and what they may be able to contribute in terms of support.

Set Goals, Measure Progress, and Establish a Time Frame

Once the team has selected an intervention, time lines and steps in the actual implementation will have to be identified, along with strategies to measure the effectiveness of the intervention. As mentioned in Chapter 13, these goals should be SMART: ***s***pecific, ***m***easurable, ***a***ttainable, ***r***ealistic, and ***t***ime bound (Sauer et al., 1997). The team can use goals that fit these guidelines to later demonstrate the effectiveness of a particular intervention, which will make the case stronger for the next change.

After identifying its goals, the team needs to decide how to implement the strategy. As Chapter 13 explains, implementation can either be done on a pilot test basis (in a few selected sites) or as a full-scale implementation (across the whole organization). Pilot trials are beneficial because they can be done with employees that are excited about implementing the project. Pilot tests generally use fewer resources than do full-scale implementations. Pilot tests also have the benefit of showing what works and what does not so that the bugs can be worked out of an intervention before it is applied to the whole organization.

Smaller organizations (e.g., those with five or fewer FLSs) may want to move straight to full-scale implementation. In some instances, full-scale implementation may be better than a pilot test, which can fade out or lose steam before the entire organization implements the intervention. An organization may also want to consider a full-scale implementation if the intervention is very focused or it only makes sense as a full-scale intervention (e.g., practices related to advertising open positions, wage increases, or benefits). Full-scale interventions are also a wise choice if the organization has other significant projects in the future that may require the organization's resources.

When planning an intervention, it is important for the team to lay out each of the steps necessary to implement the strategy, the person responsible for each step, and the date by which each step should be accomplished. Effective project management can keep the project on track within its planned scope, time lines, and budget and other resource allotments (Martin & Tate, 1997). The team can use a number of project management tools, from computer programs, to charts, to sticky notes. A simple In-

tervention Plan Questionnaire worksheet appears at the end of this chapter that could be used to track progress.

Implement and Evaluate the Success of the Intervention

Two final steps are to actually implement and evaluate whether the intervention succeeded. Chapter 13 describes the many tools and processes that can be used not only in baseline assessment but also in evaluations after an intervention has been put in place. The organization can use the lessons learned when planning future interventions.

QUESTIONS TO PONDER

1. Think about a workforce challenge that your organization is facing or has faced. What intervention is being planned or has been used? Which stakeholder groups must be included in planning, implementing, and evaluating the intervention?
2. To what extent has your organization assessed the nature and extent of the challenge before selecting an intervention? How can you be confident that the intervention you have selected will address your highest priority problem?
3. What process did/will the team use to select an intervention? What factors did/will the team use to select one intervention if team members were/are interested in several different interventions?
4. Given the baseline assessments your team has conducted, which intervention strategy should your team consider using to address your identified challenges?
5. What are the "yeah, buts" that could derail the selected intervention if they are not addressed?
6. How can the baseline information be used to bolster support for this intervention? What other support will be required?
7. At your organization, how are individuals receiving supports and their family members and DSPs involved in identifying challenges, selecting intervention strategies, implementing solutions, and measuring the results?
8. What process have you established to measure whether the intervention you selected has actually been implemented as it was designed? At what points in time will you reassess your decisions to see if the intervention should be modified, or if another intervention should be selected?

CONCLUSION

Planning an intervention to address a specific workforce development challenge can be daunting. This chapter provides guidelines to assist organizations to translate the ideas in this book into a plan that can be carried out. There is nothing magical about the steps in this task analysis. Some organizations may want to add additional steps or components, whereas others may wish to condense the number of steps. We have used the process described in Chapters 13 and 14, however, to assist many community human services organizations in dealing with workforce problems. We encourage organizations to at least discuss each of the steps during the planning process. Interven-

tion teams may also find it useful to refer to Chapter 12 to be sure that their plans incorporate each of the eight elements of change mentioned there (i.e., planned change strategy, action orientation, clear vision, strong leadership, organizational culture, continual staff support, flexible organizational structure, and strong coalitions).

RESOURCES

Dykstra, A., & Gustafson, D. (1999). *The exemplar employee: Rewarding and recognizing outstanding direct contact employees.* Homewood, IL: High Tide Press.

This book tells the story of how one organization developed an intervention to improve professionalization and recognition, providing a useful example of how to implement a workforce development intervention.

In the Spotlight: Intervention Plan Questionnaire — An Example

This In the Spotlight segment shares a hypothetical intervention plan questionnaire for XYZ Homes, Inc., an organization that is struggling with turnover among new hires. It illustrates the various steps in developing and implementing an intervention.

XYZ Homes, Inc., is a multisite organization providing community residential supports to individuals with intellectual disabilities in a large metropolitan area. The organization has experienced turnover and vacancy problems for the past few years. This has caused considerable problems for the organization as a whole. Some DSPs have had to work at multiple sites in the same week to cover unfilled shifts and thus log many hours on the road. FLSs report that they are feeling burnt out from having to do so much direct support work and from not being able to find adequate candidates. FLSs and DSPs feel so overwhelmed by the workload that they have not been able to figure out how to reduce turnover and vacancy.

A team consisting of Aisha (the FLS mentioned earlier in this chapter), her colleagues at the home where she works, and staff in two other homes in the same community completed the following Intervention Plan Questionnaire to develop a plan to address turnover and vacancy problems at XYZ Homes, Inc. (A blank copy of this questionnaire appears at the end of the chapter.)

Intervention Plan Questionnaire[1]

1. **What problem/challenge will your organization address?**
   We are constantly hiring new people but never have enough to fill all the hours. The new people barely get started before they quit.

2. **How big is the challenge? What is the baseline level of performance at your site in regard to this challenge (e.g., crude separation rate, percentage of new hires recruited by current workers, organizational commitment level, job satisfaction rates, areas staff have identified as needing improvement, average tenure of workers who quit, reasons workers give for leaving your organization, vacancy rates)?**

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[1]Questions from O'Nell, S., Hewitt, A., Sauer, J., & Larson, S. (2001). *Removing the revolving door: Strategies to address recruitment and retention challenges* (p. 44 of Module 1 in facilitator guide). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, Institute on Community Integration, Research and Training Center on Community Living; adapted by permission.

A baseline analysis reveals that the annual turnover rate is 75% per year; 60% of all new hires leave in their first 6 months on the job; 55% of new hires report that their expectations about the job did not match their actual experiences; and 25% of sites report significant interpersonal conflict between staff members. Exit interviews show that many of those who left within 6 months of being hired did not know what the job was really going to be like.

3. What strategy do you propose to address this challenge?
We will develop a realistic job preview (RJP) to increase the chance that newly hired staff members will have realistic expectations about their jobs and will stay in their jobs for at least 1 year.

4. What are the major components of the intervention strategy? (What will be done?)
We will use an RJP intervention. The major components are outlined in 4a–4c.

4a. Who will be involved in developing, implementing, and evaluating the intervention? What roles will each person play?

- A planning team consisting of an administrator, a manager, three FLSs (one from each of the three pilot sites), three DSPs, and an individual who receives supports will develop the intervention plan.
- Each FLS on the planning team will work with a team of DSPs and individuals receiving supports and their families to develop an RJP for the site they supervise.
- The planning team will reconvene quarterly to review progress and evaluate the RJPs.

4b. What are the steps involved in the intervention?

- Meet with the planning team to establish a time line for the project.
- Train team members about how to conduct an RJP intervention. Supplement that information with the lesson on RJPs offered by the College of Direct Support (http://www.collegeofdirectsupport.com).
- Survey current and new staff, asking the following:
  - What specific incidents would make you want to leave this organization or job?
  - What is the best part of your job? What would make you want to stay at this organization or in this job?
  - What could your employer do to make your job better?
  - What has been the hardest part of starting this job? Give specific examples.
  - What would you tell a friend if he or she were applying for your job?
- Use the results of the survey to review and revise the job description for DSPs to ensure that it is complete and accurate.
- Use assessment results to identify what to include in the RJP. Summarize information that recruits are unlikely to know or that they may have unrealistic expectations about, including the following:
  - Basic information about the job (e.g., hours and scheduling, pay, paid leave time policies, job prerequisites)
  - A description of typical job duties, such as cooking, shopping, assisting with personal care, helping supported individuals develop and maintain friendships, helping supported individuals manage their own behavior, and keeping records of supported individuals' activities and progress toward their personal goals
  - General information about the interests and needs of the people supported
  - A description of the organization's mission and vision
  - Basic expectations about work behavior (e.g., the importance of showing up and being on time for every shift, expectations about respectful interactions)
  - Testimonials from current employees about why they love their jobs
  - Testimonials from current employees about the hard parts of their jobs
- Develop a strategy to present the information to new recruits. (We can consider using photo albums or scrapbooks, structured observations at the sites, and interviews with current employees.)
- Get consent from DSPs and supported individuals or their guardians for use of their images in photographs and for the structured observations.
- Implement the RJP in pilot sites. (The RJP will be implemented with 10 new hires in each of the three sites.)
- Measure the results, evaluate success, and modify the RJP based on feedback, using the following steps:
  - The team will assess the extent to which each pilot study participants' expectations were met (30 days after hire).
  - The new hires will be followed for 1 year. The percentage of new hires that stay 3 months, 6 months, and 1 year will be calculated.

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    - The team will ask pilot study participants what they liked and did not like about the RJP, and should be added or removed.
    - The RJP will be revised based on the feedback received.
- Develop a training session for supervisors who did not initially participate to describe RJPs and how they worked in the pilot sites:
    - Identify trainers from FLSs and DSPs of pilot sites.
    - Develop training materials describing RJPs and pilot process.
    - Train participants how to create and implement RJPs.
    - Support the learners as they craft and implement an RJP.
    - Assess the competence of those implementing the RJPs by measuring whether people hired after the RJP is implemented have fewer unmet expectations about the job than people hired before the RJP was implemented.
- Implement the intervention organizationwide.
    - Once the three pilot sites have established successful RJP interventions, plan an opportunity with those involved in the RJP to share what they did and what happened as a result with supervisors in other parts of the organization.
    - Identify supervisors and others throughout the organization who are interested in implementing RJPs. Provide training and support to those individuals on how to develop a successful RJP intervention.
    - FLSs hold meetings with DSPs to identify site-specific job duties.
    - FLSs identify DSPs to lead RJP development.
    - Get consents for use of photographs and participation in structured observations.
    - Each site creates an RJP and uses it for interviews.
    - The success of the interventions are measured for each site and for the organization as a whole to learn whether the intervention made the anticipated difference in reducing turnover of newly hired DSPs.

4c. What are the costs associated with this intervention?

- Time for planning group meetings
- Time for each person to complete surveys
- Time to analyze and revise job descriptions, analyze surveys, and develop a list of content for the photo albums or scrapbooks
- Paper and printing for surveys and reports
- Purchase of scrapbook (albums, special pens, and paper) and photo (film, developing) supplies
- Time to create and update the scrapbooks

5. What are the main barriers to using this intervention? Consider the board, administration, staff, individuals receiving supports and their family members, and other stakeholders.

- Investment of time by all stakeholders can be stressful because people are already overwhelmed.
- Getting buy-in to actually use the scrapbooks during hiring could be difficult.
- People who are unfamiliar with RJPs may not understand how they might be helpful.
- Some may be concerned about confidentiality issues for the people whose photos would be included.
- Getting staff to participate in the surveys and discussions could be difficult.
- Individuals receiving supports and their families may object to the RJPs, especially if they do not understand the purpose of the RJPs.

6. Identify the arguments the planning team will use to support using this intervention. How will it enlist the support of various stakeholders?

- Research findings [described in Chapter 3] suggest that RJPs are especially effective when turnover rates are particularly high, and our turnover rates are high.
- Sharing our organization's baseline data will help demonstrate that we have a problem and that it is substantial.
- Providing training for supervisors about why and how to use the RJP will be an important part of the implementation process.
- Involving individuals receiving supports and their family members (including getting consent to include their photos in the scrapbook) is a critical part of the project. We will explain that we think we can improve the quality of services we offer by reducing turnover. We will also explain that showing a picture is better than having a DSP start, learn the intimate details of a supported individual's life, and quit within a week.
- We will encourage staff to participate by presenting the surveys at a staff meeting where great snacks are available.

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- We will increase buy-in by inviting all staff at the site to share their ideas about which pictures should be included in the scrapbook and by recruiting a champion at each site who is creative and likes to do crafts such as scrapbooking.
- Funds for the project will come from the cost savings of running one less ad in the major newspaper per month for 2 months.

7. What are the next steps? How will progress be monitored? What are the time lines?

- Month 1: Recruit planning committee members, train members about RJPs, and develop surveys to collect needed information.
- Month 2: Collect survey information from staff.
- Month 3: Analyze survey data, review and revise job descriptions as needed, plan how information about the project will be shared with all stakeholders, and get consent and buy-in from individuals receiving supports and their families.
- Months 4–6: Train staff at pilot sites on using RJPs, create RJP scrapbooks in each pilot site, and test the RJPs with new hires to make sure the scrapbooks do what they are supposed to do.
- Months 7–12: Use RJPs in pilot sites, maintain data about whether each applicant received an RJP, the percentage of applicants who were offered a position accepted, and tenure of new hires. Keep other sites informed of the progress of intervention at the pilot sites. Invite other sites that express interest to begin developing RJPs.
- Month 13: Evaluate how the RJPs are working, make any needed changes, and share process and outcomes with other sites in the organization to build excitement about full-scale implementation.
- Months 14–24: Implement RJPs organizationwide, train supervisors on how to develop and use RJPs effectively, and continue to collect and analyze evaluation data.

8. How will the planning team assess whether the intervention worked?

We will assess the extent to which we meet the following project goals to decide whether the RJP intervention worked:

- Project goal 1: Reduce the percent of new hires who have unmet expectations about the job from 55% to 20% within 6 months of implementation by presenting an RJP to each potential new hire before making a job offer.
- Project goal 2: Reduce the percent of new hires who quit within the first 6 months from 60% to 40% by the end of the first year of implementing RJPs.

Intervention Plan Questionnaire

1. What problem/challenge will your organization address? _____

2. How big is the challenge? What is the baseline level of performance at your site in regard to this challenge (e.g., crude separation rate, percentage of new hires recruited by current workers, organizational commitment level, job satisfaction rates, areas staff have identified as needing improvement, average tenure of workers who quit, reasons workers give for leaving your organization, vacancy rates)? _____

3. What strategy do you propose to use to address this challenge? _____

4. What are the major components of the intervention strategy? (What will be done?)
   a. Who will be involved in developing, implementing, and evaluating the intervention? What roles will each person play?
   b. What are the steps involved in the intervention?
   c. What are the costs associated with this intervention?

5. What are the main barriers to using this intervention? Consider the board, administration, staff, individuals receiving supports and their family members, and other stakeholders.

6. Identify the arguments the planning team will use to support using this intervention. How will it enlist the support of various stakeholders? _____

7. What are the next steps? How will progress be monitored? What are the time lines?

8. How will the team assess whether the intervention worked? _____

From O'Nell, S., Hewitt, A., Sauer, J., & Larson, S. (2001). *Removing the revolving door: Strategies to address recruitment and retention challenges* (p. 44 of Module 1 in facilitator guide). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, Institute on Community Integration, Research and Training Center on Community Living; adapted by permission.

Intervention Management Chart

Use this chart to track the major components of the intervention, including the tasks to be completed, the person responsible for making sure each task is completed, the target deadline for each task, and the date each task is completed.

Problem/challenge selected: _____

_____

Intervention selected: _____

_____

Goal(s): _____

_____

_____

Task	Person responsible	Target date	Date completed