



Coaches recognize learning is change

As I travel around the nation working with schools, school systems, and state education agencies, some of the most powerful discussions occur when we explore the research on change. We have thought-provoking conversations about practices that promote or inhibit long-term implementation of knowledge, skills, dispositions, and behaviors acquired during professional learning. Through these discussions, new ideas, actions, and practices emerge on ways to apply change research to professional learning.



These applications of change research are at the heart of the Implementation standard. The standard encourages leaders of learning to know and use research on

change to lead, plan, design, facilitate, support, and sustain professional learning.

Interestingly, much of what we know about change is not new. For decades, researchers and experts have explored the impact of change on learning. From the work of Ambrose (1987), Bandura (1986), Fullan (2007), and others, we've learned about the assumptions, processes, behaviors, and practices that support learning during and as a result of change. This research informs how

we approach learning, build capacity, manage change, and overcome resistance.

Specifically, one influential piece of research provides coaches and teacher leaders with a conceptual framework for guiding implementation, the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (Hall & Hord, 2011). The model covers four components that explain how people experience change, including Stages of Concern. This component describes seven stages in which people express concerns about any new practice, initiative, or program through their questions and actions.

Research such as the Concerns-Based Adoption Model provides coaches valuable insight into ways adults learn and subsequently change, and possible interventions to use before, during, and following professional learning.

The following questions help coaches respond to adult learning needs, identify levers and barriers, and improve results for long-term implementation of professional learning.

- What will I do to deepen my understanding of change research?
- How will I demonstrate the value of change research to others?
- Which learning designs will I select to advance implementation?
- What will I use or develop to communicate and clarify change expectations?
- How will I adjust professional learning for differences in learning

preferences and rates?

- Which tools and strategies will I use and make available for giving and receiving ongoing feedback in a variety of formats (e.g. face-to-face, blended, and technology-enabled)?
- With whom and how will I analyze, share, and respond to feedback data?

When teacher leaders and coaches develop knowledge and skills to lead change, they elevate their role and can make timely decisions to address other factors affecting implementation, such as identifying approaches to ongoing support for long-term change and using frequent and constructive feedback.

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