



The Role of Implementation Champions in Your Organization

Identifying and preparing champions in your setting is one of the many identified [Implementation Strategies](#) that can help an organization implement a change.

An implementation “champion” is defined as someone who is an integral part of the implementation process and is internal to the agency. The champion works to drive the implementation process or change effort. Common characteristics of *Implementation Champions* include, but are not limited to (1, 2, 3):

- Intrinsic interest and commitment to the implementation process;
- Commitment and diligence to drive the implementation efforts, even without formal recognition;
- Demonstrated capacity, credibility, engagement, and influence with the team/agency;
- Enthusiastic and energetic approach; persistent and dynamic style; and
- Strength of conviction.

Benefits of Utilizing an Implementation Champion

Champions are “necessary but not sufficient” for the process of implementing a new process or initiative. (1)

- Clinical champions are typically existing staff members already engaged in the role. (4)
- Limited data exist on methods of training champions, but outcomes indicate that champions are important to successful implementation and sustainment of the new program or intervention. (4)
- Champions can play a key role in identifying and remedying implementation challenges and often help improve team motivation. (1, 4)

How to Support an Implementation Champion:

- Identify a champion in your agency.
- Provide your champion with organizational support and resources (funding, time, staff, etc.).
- Remember that while a champion is an important component of an implementation change effort, they represent one of several key elements of a comprehensive process.

Share your thoughts here

List potential champions in your organization.

Share your thoughts here

Brainstorm ways to support champions in your organization.

Share your thoughts here

How do you plan to engage your champions in the bigger implementation process?

Additional Resources and References:

Resources

Additional information on Champions can be found at: <https://cfirguide.org/constructs-old/champions/>

References

- (1) Miech, E. J., Rattray, N. A., Flanagan, M. E., Damschroder, L., Schmid, A. A., & Damush, T. M. (2018). Inside help: an integrative review of champions in healthcare-related implementation. *SAGE open medicine*, 6, 2050312118773261. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/2050312118773261>
- (2) Bunce, A. E., Gruß, I., Davis, J. V., Cowburn, S., Cohen, D., Oakley, J., & Gold, R. (2020). Lessons learned about the effective operationalization of champions as an implementation strategy: results from a qualitative process evaluation of a pragmatic trial. *Implementation Science*, 15(1), 1-12. <https://implementationscience.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s13012-020-01048-1>
- (3) Powell, B. J., Waltz, T. J., Chinman, M. J., Damschroder, L. J., Smith, J. L., Matthieu, M. M., ... & Kirchner, J. E. (2015). A refined compilation of implementation strategies: results from the Expert Recommendations for Implementing Change (ERIC) project. *Implementation science*, 10(1), 1-14.
- (4) Wood, K., Giannopoulos, V., Louie, E., Baillie, A., Uribe, G., Lee, K. S., ... & Morley, K. C. (2020). The role of clinical champions in facilitating the use of evidence-based practice in drug and alcohol and mental health settings: a systematic review. *Implementation Research and Practice*, 1, 2633489520959072. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/2633489520959072>



ATTC

Addiction Technology Transfer Center Network
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration