

IDHS Specialist CQI Toolkit

RESOURCES TO SUPPORT SHARED VALUES AND GOALS

- Creating A Vision/CQI House and Exploring Values
- Identifying Core Values
- True Expertise Within Programs
- Values Clarification

Building a House of Quality

AN OVERVIEW OF CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

Let's look at the big picture to help us understand the role Continuous Quality Improvement plays in our quest for program excellence. The graphic on the following page summarizes the components of exemplary organizations. These components apply to all kinds of businesses, not just early care and education programs. Just as a frame of a house relies on each structural piece to stand firm, so too does each of these principles support one other to maintain a quality program. If one element is weak or lacking, the entire organization is in jeopardy.

First of all, every organization needs a solid foundation:

- **Shared values and goals**—A clear understanding and support of a program's direction and purpose.
- **Trust**—Each member of the team feels valued, respected and supported. They believe they are in a safe place.
- **Data-driven decision making**—Decisions are made using facts and information about the program. Priorities are then created around the areas most critical to the success of the program. Personal biases and "wants" should not dictate decision making. The evidence should be clear to support the choices being planned or implemented.

Next come the pillars of good practice. These provide the framework for quality.

- **Outcome focused**—Strategy is developed with the "end in mind." Once we are clear on what we want to achieve, we can build a plan to get there.
- **High-expectations**—High expectations are really the mindset of anticipating that what you want will happen along with the positive results you want people to achieve.
- **Involvement**—This pillar is all about a team approach to success and opportunities to share and participate in the process.
- **Assessment and feedback**—Collecting and analyzing data and benchmarking progress helps you see trends over time and improve future outcomes.

Finally, you see in the graphic the importance of the overarching philosophy of Continuous Quality Improvement. This is what holds everything together and keeps the organization thriving.

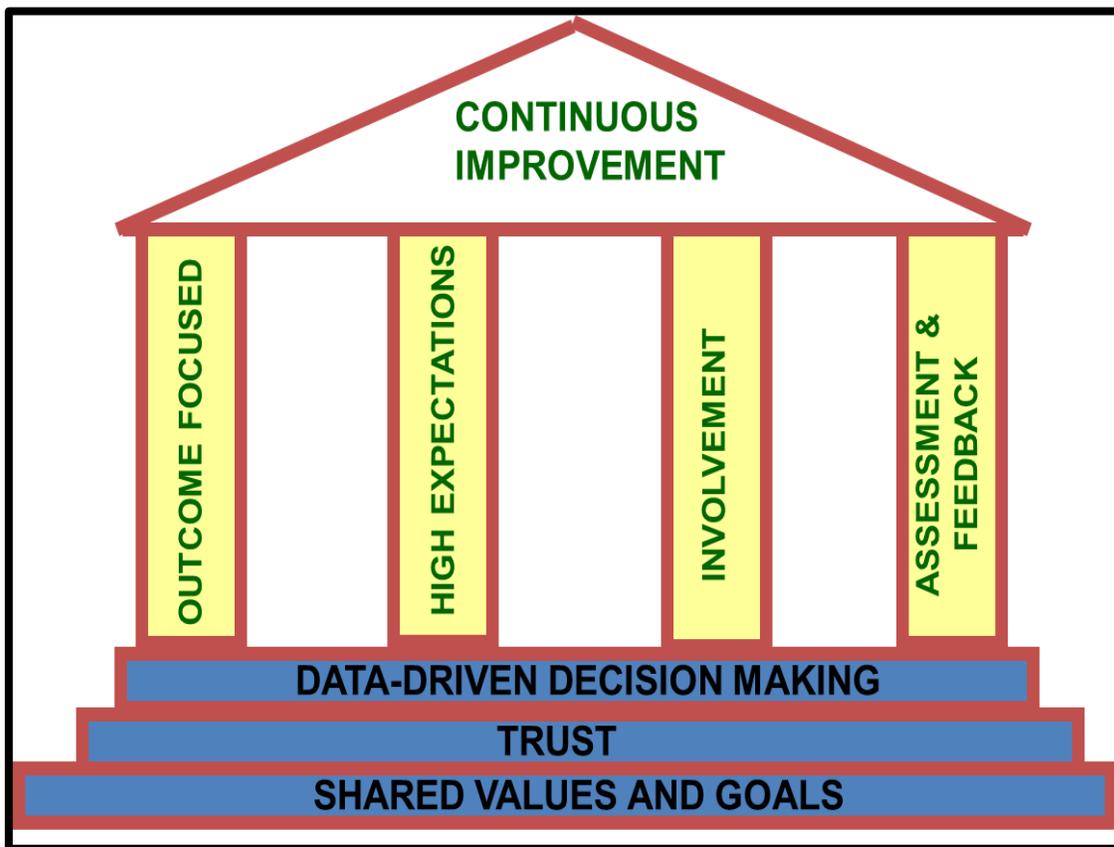
Continuous Quality Improvement is both a leadership philosophy and a set of techniques or processes that allow directors and administrators to look at what is going on in their programs and create plans for keeping current and strengthening program practices.

Let's Complete a House Inspection

Take a few moments—10 minutes or so, to consider the “house” structure as it relates to your program. Then as a staff, have an honest discussion of where the program is doing well in the framework of the “house” and where opportunities lie for growth. Feel free to use the SWOT tool below to chart and describe each component of the house. The information provided here can go a long way to grow the team and strengthen CQI efforts within the program. Keep in mind that change occurs in small, incremental steps. A contractor can't build a structure in a day, so don't expect different results for your program! The purpose of this activity is to “remodel your house” where needed and clearly identify the elements that are in place. The information can serve as a “floor plan” for your remodeling efforts.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS

The Components of Exemplary Organizations



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Exploring Values and Vision/Mission Statements

Now that your team has reflected upon what they value, let's see how those values align with your programs vision and/or mission statements. Could it be time to update those statements? Maybe it's just being intentional with one another as to how their values do align (even if in small ways) to the overall program goal. This activity can be a stepping stone to improvements that may need to be made to ensure that the staff are on board with the overall goal of the program or to adjust statements that perhaps have not been re-visited for quite some time and a broad, strategic planning group, or leadership team may need to look at the data from this activity and discuss next steps.

10 min	Introduce the program's vision/value statement	Call participant's attention to the program's vision/value statement that they were to look over before the meeting. The group facilitator should read the vision and/or mission statement aloud.
20 min	Reviewing the program's vision/value statement	<p>Break participants into small groups to work together on reviewing the statement (s).</p> <p>Facilitator should instruct them to think about the statement and reflect on whether it still seems to align with current beliefs and practices.</p> <p>Guiding question: What do we believe children, families, staff, and the community deserve? (Feel free to create your own guiding question.)</p> <p>Discuss and chart the results of the small group activity to see where there are trends or perhaps new ways of thinking. Post these around the room.</p>

30 min	How does your work support the vision and/or mission statement?	<p>Have participants work in small groups comprised of staff who work with the same age groups. Ask each group to create a list or make a web that shows how their work supports the program's vision/mission statement using the charts around the room.</p> <p>Have a designated person take notes and share out the results of this activity. Facilitator wraps up by asking the whole group what their take-aways are from the exercise. Chart these as well and share out with the group for further discussion or action, as required.</p>
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Creating a Vision

“All successful men and women are big dreamers. They imagine what their future could be, ideal in every respect, and then they work every day toward their distant vision, that goal or purpose.”

– Brian Tracy

EXACTLY WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT?

Organizations create mission and vision statements to convey the direction in which they're going. Both statements help communicate the intentions an organization has and its goals for the future. But each statement is created for a separate reason and each holds a different meaning. A mission statement is for internal use. A vision statement can be for internal or external purposes and can include ideas that have yet to be achieved. This is why both statements need to be reviewed often. We as individuals and organizations need to get beyond everyday tasks and consider our purpose and then plan for how to get there.

Rather than provide you a complicated comparison of definitions, I am going to use Gary Clayton's April 17, 2009 *Practical Leadership* blog post to break this down using Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech to explain the difference.

Vision:

"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character."

This is an idea that I can visualize, hence it is a vision of an ideal future state that Dr. King wished to see. The vision tells group members what is possible if we all work together for a common purpose.

Mission:

"With this faith we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day." and

"Now is the time to lift our nation from the quicksand of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood. Now is the time to make justice a reality for all of God's children."

OK, the mission is obscured here by the flow of Dr. King's speech, but it can be reduced to a mission of: *"Let's transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood, by which we can achieve our vision of judging all people by the content of their character, not their color."*

Stated that way, it's clear what has to be achieved, without the burden of stating specifically how it will be achieved. The PLAN is how it will be achieved— and the plan better be reviewed and updated regularly to reflect current realities.

Does the vision statement flow with the mission statement?

In this case, I believe the mission flows from the vision. I can imagine many cases where an organization was formed because of the immediate need or opportunity. Thus, it is closer to recognizing what its mission is than what its vision is. But once it recognizes its vision, I suspect the vision will help clarify both its mission and its planning efforts.

Source: <http://garybclayton.com/leadership/2010/06/visionary-leadership/>

WHEN CREATING OR REVISING A VISION STATEMENT, REMEMBER...

- The vision statement includes a clear description of the organization as it effectively carries out its daily operations.
- Developing a vision statement can come from many angles, i.e., participants may use methods ranging from highly analytical and rational to highly creative and divergent. This could include focused discussions, divergent experiences around ideals, or sharing stories. Therefore, the facilitator should have a discussion prior to taking on this task to determine how the group might like to arrive at their vision.
- Developing the vision can be the most enjoyable part of planning, but the part where time easily gets away from you. Establish time limits and ground rules to keep to time.
- Note that originally, the vision was a description of the state and function of an organization once it had implemented the strategic plan. It very possibly was guided by a very old strategic plan and the organization has had changes in leadership or function that might make that vision obsolete. Recently, the vision has become more of a motivational tool, that often includes highly idealistic phrasing and activities which the organization cannot realistically accomplish. It is also important to note that many staff may have never carefully read or considered the vision statement making it something they have no connection to, or a very limited one. It might be helpful to get some background information from the leadership team on some of these issues before diving into revisions or being asked to simply help a team “see” how the program’s vision is tied to their daily work.
- When refining the vision, a useful exercise is to add or delete a word from the statement to realize the change in scope of the vision and assess how concise its wording is.

WHEN CREATING OR REVISING A MISSION STATEMENT REMEMBER—

- Basically, the mission statement describes the overall purpose of the organization.
- If the organization elects to develop a vision statement before developing the mission statement, ask “Why does the image, the vision exist -- what is its purpose?” This purpose is often the same as the mission.
- Developing a mission statement can come from many angles, i.e., participants may use methods ranging from highly analytical and rational to highly creative and divergent. This could include focused discussions, divergent experiences around ideals, or sharing stories. Therefore, the facilitator should have a discussion prior to taking on this task to determine how the group might like to arrive at their vision.
- When wording the mission statement, consider the organization's products, services, markets, values, and concern for public image, and maybe priorities of activities for survival.
- Consider any changes that may be needed in wording of the mission statement because of any new suggested strategies during a recent strategic planning process. Has this strategic plan been shared with the staff? If not, that will need to probably occur to get everyone on the same page.
- Ensure that wording of the mission is to the extent that leadership and staff can determine the priorities expected of them in their work.
- When refining the mission, a useful exercise is to add or delete a word from the statement to realize the change in scope of the mission and assess how concise is its wording.
- Does the mission statement include sufficient description that the statement clearly separates the mission of the organization from other organizations providing similar services?

Source: Carter McNamara, Authenticity Consulting

As a facilitator, you may wish to carefully review your own organization’s mission and/or vision statement and walk through this activity before taking it “on the road”. Consider using the following questions when supporting a program on this topic:

1. What do you see as the primary purpose of your work? (personal mission)
2. Does this align with the organization’s purpose? (organizational mission)
3. How do you imagine the work you do could be? (personal vision)
4. How do you imagine your workplace could be in the work it does supporting children and families? (organizational vision)
5. What would you do differently, even if you aren’t able to yet? (Consider this individually and/or as a team.)

Allow the program to carefully consider these questions over time. Help them establish a plan and timeline for achieving this goal and support them as necessary. This activity will go a long way in establishing a shared purpose, which is foundational to the continuous quality improvement process.

SAMPLE GROUP CORE VALUES DOCUMENT HERE...OR CREATE OWN?

<http://www.theinnovationcenter.org/files/doc/B5/CLW%20pp%20113%20What%20Are%20Your%20Core%20Values.pdf>

Core value and descriptive statement:

1. What do we believe?
2. What do we think?
3. What do we do?

What is the evidence?

Shared Leadership

So, what does shared leadership “look” like? Let’s watch this video clip that takes a sport-minded look at this concept. Sit back and watch how [Phil Jackson applied shared leadership to his sports teams – the mighty Chicago Bulls!](#)

True Expertise Lies Within a Program

Implementing program change provides a great opportunity for empowering staff and engaging their best creative thinking. This is important for several reasons. First, Continuous Quality Improvement recognizes that true expertise rests within a program. Staff are the ones closest to the action. They are the true experts in knowing what is going well and what isn't. Staff see and experience daily what is going well to support children's positive outcomes and what opportunities exist for improvement. The challenge is finding and spending dedicated time to carefully reflect upon these experiences and make a plan for improvements. Second, when people are actively involved in assessing what needs to change, their commitment to the change process will be strengthened. Finally, most problems are found in the way things are done - not in the people doing them. Continuous Quality Improvement does not seek to blame but to improve the way things are done.

Have staff each review a copy of the ExceleRate Standards (or just one section at a time) and have them jot down the components of each standard that they feel they have expertise in. They should select the items that they feel are going really well in their classrooms.

As an entire staff, map out each standard and document where the expertise lies within your program. These could take several staff meetings. It may even start at a classroom or age level meeting. You know your program best, so scaffold as necessary so as to not overwhelm your staff. Are there standards or elements of a standard where you feel you need support from an outside expert? That is where your Quality Specialist can help. Contact your local CCR&R/SDA and determine where your resources are located.

This activity will help you determine who the right fit is as the person responsible for an objective or action step on your CQIP. It will also help you determine what staff can mentor their colleagues in their areas of expertise. Additionally, it will assist you in completing the resource and support portion of your CQIP. Intentionally planning and breaking down each piece of the standards can really assist programs in targeting their strengths as well as areas of growth as they implement CQI strategies.

Values Clarification

From the table “Some Things People Value” found on the following page, select the 10 values that are most important to you. Feel free to add values that are important but are missing from this list. Next to each value, write your definition of what this value means to you or an example of a behavior that demonstrates how you live this value in your personal or professional life.

VALUE	DEFINITION OR BEHAVIOR
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____
7. _____	_____
8. _____	_____
9. _____	_____
10. _____	_____

From the list of 10 important values you have created, put a star next to the 5 values that are *most important* in shaping your beliefs, attitudes, and behavior. Reflect on the importance of these 5 values as a cluster. How do they work together to help shape your belief system and guide your actions? How does sharing your values with a group inform it? How or why would you use this information in your program?

Bloom, P. J. (2003). *Leadership in action: How effective directors get things done*. Lake Forest, IL: New Horizons. Reprinted with permission.

Some Things People Value

Accountability	Excitement	Power
Achievement	Family	Prestige
Adventure	Fairness	Privacy
Aesthetics	Forgiveness	Recognition
Affiliation	Friendship	Reliability
Altruism	Happiness	Responsibility
Beauty	Harmony	Security
Challenge	Honesty	Self-control
Change	Independence	Self-expression
Community	Intellectual stimulation	Self-respect
Compensation	Intimacy	Service
Competence	Integrity	Social justice
Competition	Knowledge	Social relationships
Cooperation	Logic	Spiritual growth
Creativity	Loyalty	Stability
Decisiveness	Mutual respect	Teamwork
Democracy	Nature	Tolerance
Diversity	Neatness	Tradition
Efficiency	Open communication	Tranquility
Equity	Perseverance	Variety
Environment	Personal growth	Wealth
Excellence	Positive attitude	Wisdom

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