Program Ideas: HOW TO...

association for experiential education

...REPLICATE SUCCESS

Healthy organizations constantly examine how to make their unique experiential education (EE) programs and other offerings stronger and more beneficial to the clientele they serve. During this process, they occasionally think that new EE programs are the answer to stability, growth, and productivity for their organization.

However, developing a new EE program from scratch often comes with a high price compared to copying from an effective model and then changing several elements to suit the culture or clientele. Choosing to replicate reduces the costs of development, diminishes the worrying risks of failure, and can boost productivity.

REPLICATION PROCESS

The process follows four steps based on the Replicating Effective Programs (REP) frame from the US Center for Disease Control & Prevention.

1. **Pre-conditions**: identify the target clientele, their needs and a program worth replicating that will meet their needs, within the local situation and beyond the cultural barriers.
2. **Pre-implementation**: plan the program with input from a stakeholder group who also help pilot test and prepare for the program.
3. **Implementation**: offer the new EE program with stakeholder assistance and continuous evaluation, feedback, and improvement.
4. **Maintenance & Evolution**: find unique ways to support the permanence of the program.

The replication process should be guided by **minimum critical specification**. In other words, identify the fewest program elements that will need modifying to produce the desired benefit. Success comes from knowing which elements are necessary for an effective program and which ones need modifying to benefit clients. Before replicating, check that you:
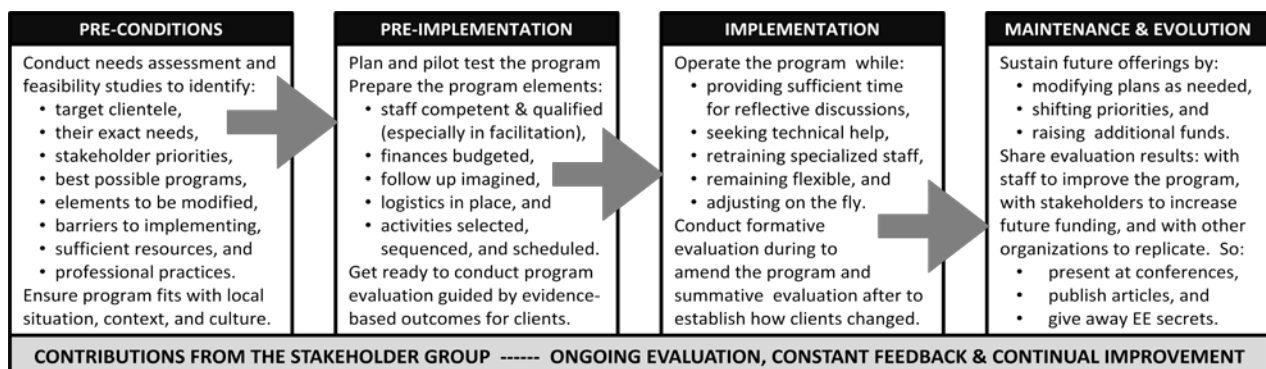
1. are well prepared for program evaluation,
2. have strong evidence that the EE program will produce positive results for clients,
3. know which program elements are required to bring effective change for clients, and
4. possess the necessary finances in reserve.

Whereas many fields might baulk at the notion of copying others, the EE community is about sharing and helping others to replicate success. Society clearly benefits when we collectively help make a difference in our clients' lives. Be sure to acknowledge sources, avoid plagiarizing, and give full credit to the replicated program.

Read some of the CHIP advice herein and study other programs for their potential for adoption, adaptation, and improvement. Try the process by replicating programs with few elements that need modifying. Like any new skill learned, this takes much practice coupled with reflection.

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PRE-CONDITIONS	PRE-IMPLEMENTATION	IMPLEMENTATION	MAINTENANCE & EVOLUTION
Conduct needs assessment and feasibility studies to identify: • target clientele, • their exact needs, • stakeholder priorities, • best possible programs, • elements to be modified, • barriers to implementing, • sufficient resources, and • professional practices. Ensure program fits with local situation, context, and culture.	Plan and pilot test the program Prepare the program elements: • staff competent & qualified (especially in facilitation), • finances budgeted, • follow up imagined, • logistics in place, and • activities selected, sequenced, and scheduled. Get ready to conduct program evaluation guided by evidence-based outcomes for clients.	Operate the program while: • providing sufficient time for reflective discussions, • seeking technical help, • retraining specialized staff, • remaining flexible, and • adjusting on the fly. Conduct formative evaluation during to amend the program and summative evaluation after to establish how clients changed.	Sustain future offerings by: • modifying plans as needed, • shifting priorities, and • raising additional funds. Share evaluation results: with staff to improve the program, with stakeholders to increase future funding, and with other organizations to replicate. So: • present at conferences, • publish articles, and • give away EE secrets.

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE STAKEHOLDER GROUP ------ ONGOING EVALUATION, CONSTANT FEEDBACK & CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT

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FURTHER RESOURCES

READING

Kilbourne, A.M., Neumann, M.S., Pincus, H.A., B auer, M.S. & Stall, R. (2007). Implementing evidence-based interventions in health care: application of the replicating effective programs framework. *Implementation Science, 2*, article number 42. https://doi.org/10.1186/1748-5908-2-42

VIEWING

The QUERI Roadmap for Implementation and Quality Improvement:
https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK566221/

Replicating Effective Programs (REP) at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):
https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/research/interventionresearch/rep/