What makes a High Quality CQI Plan

Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Office Hours

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Angela Rachidi, Consultant to Mathematica
Scott Richman, Mathematica
Pamela Holcomb, Mathematica
Liz Pollock, Consultant to OPRE

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What is CQI?

- CQI is a process focused on:
  - Identifying and analyzing strengths and challenges
  - Implementing, testing, and revising solutions
  - Continuously improving your program!!

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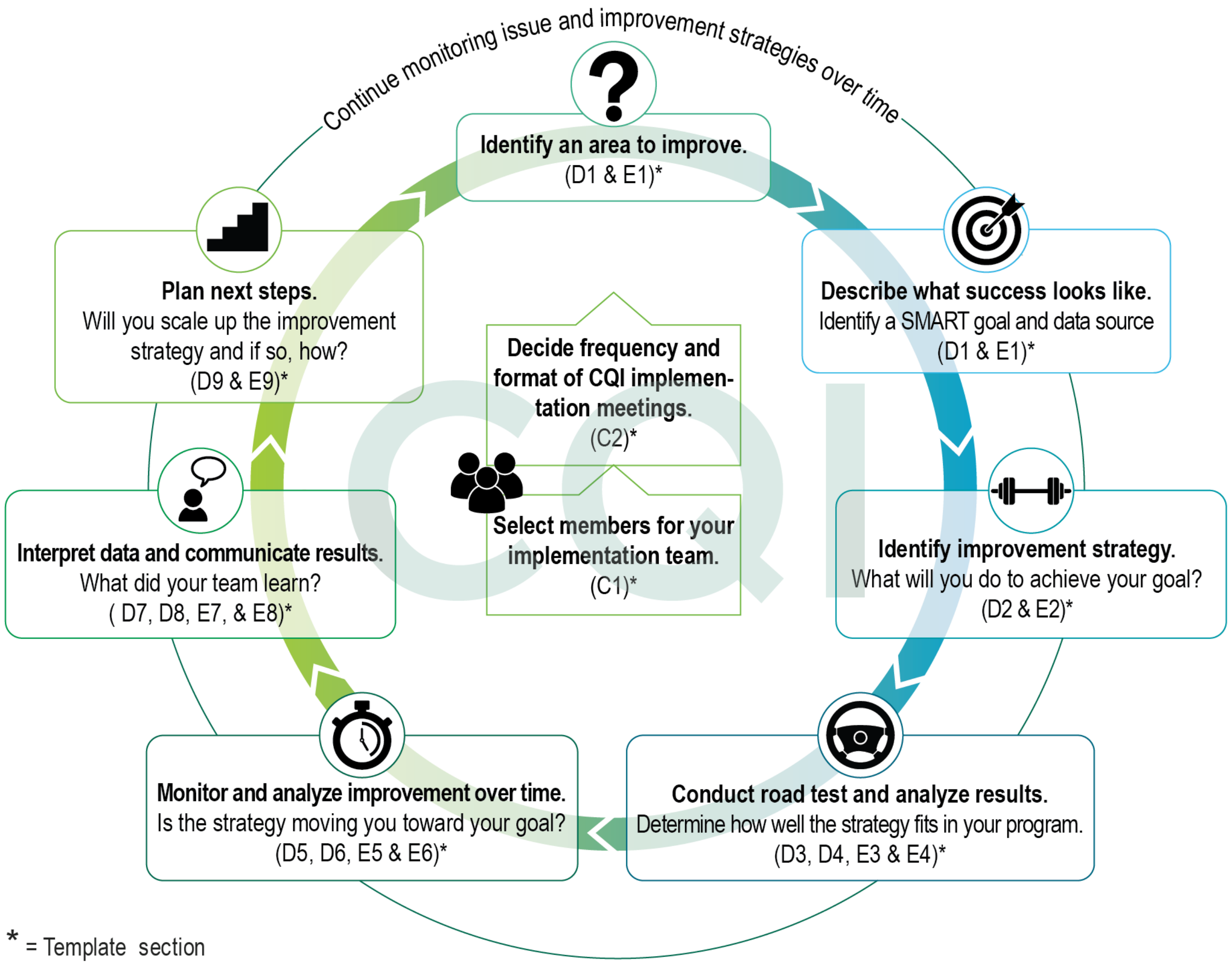
A High Quality CQI Plan:

- Is specific and detailed
- Sets clear responsibilities
- Identifies reasonable timelines
- Follows some key steps

A Successful CQI Approach Requires Planning

- ACF developed a CQI Plan Template for use by grantees
- 9 components to the plan
- Let’s review each one…..



* = Template section

Your CQI template can keep you on the right track…

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CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN TEMPLATE

Instructions

Please use this template to describe your continuous quality improvement (CQI) plan for OFA. You can either (1) add your text within each section and submit this document as your written plan for CQI (note that each table is fillable), or (2) use these headers and describe your CQI plan in another document. This document is meant to be updated and changed over time as you work on CQI.

A. Grantee and CQI plan information

Grantee name	
Type of grant (HM, RF-New Pathways, RF-ReFORM)	
Date of CQI plan	
Changes to this version of the CQI plan	

B. Summary of CQI work to date (if any)

Please summarize past CQI issues that your team has worked on and the current status of those issues in Table B1. If you have not engaged in any CQI, leave this blank. Strategies for improvement should be monitored over time to check if they are still working as intended or need to be revisited.

Section D1 (& E1): Area for improvement and SMART Goals

	Ok	Even better…..
What is the specific problem or issue you are trying to solve?	Low exit survey completions	We only achieved an average quarterly exit survey completion rate of 50% in the last quarter of Grant Year 4.
What is the SMART goal that would show an improvement on this issue?	More people completing the exit surveys	Increase the rate of exit survey completions from 50% (% of enrolled participants who complete an exit survey within 4 months of program entry) to 60% by quarter 1 of Grant Year 5 and 70% by quarter 2 of Grant Year 5.
What data source could you use to measure progress towards that goal?	nFORM	nFORM query tool data (and data export) of individual program enrollment, participation, and entrance/exit survey completion.

Greater specificity of the extent of the issue

Specific and reasonable timeline that shows short- and long-term goals

Section D2 (& E2): Developing Improvement Strategies

	Example: Area for improvement	Strategy for improvement	Process for how strategy was developed	Rationale for the strategy: Why might this strategy lead to improvements?
Ok	Low exit survey completions	Incentivize participants to complete the survey.	Staff brainstormed ways to improve attendance.	People like to get money.
Even better…..	We only achieved an average quarterly exit survey completion rate of 50% in 2019.	Provide participants who complete the exit survey a $100 gift card at the end of their last class and inform/remind them of the incentive following each class.	IT interviewed 7 program non-survey completers to find out why they didn't complete. They learned that child care was needed to cover the amount of time needed to attend classes and paying for child care was an issue. Participants suggested that financial help to cover their time might work.	Participants have costs related to their time spent in classes and some people might not be able to afford it, including child care. Helping them with these costs can facilitate their class attendance and ultimately exit survey completion.

Details on the strategy implementation and timeline

Information on who was involved in developing strategy

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Section D3 (& E3): Conducting a road test: Assessing how well the strategy fits with the program

- The template presents a series of questions to help you plan your road test
- Examples of questions include:
  - What are your learning questions?
  - When and how will you conduct the road test?
  - When and how will you analyze the results?
  - When and how will you make adjustments?

D3. Conducting a road test: Assessing how well a strategy fits with the program

A road test allows you to examine how well a strategy fits in your program. In a road test, small numbers of staff and clients participate over a short period (about four-to-six weeks) and provide feedback about their experiences using the new approach or strategy. Afterward, the team analyzes the data and feedback to develop concrete recommendations for refining or revising the strategy. Road tests often include two or more of these feedback periods.[2]

[2] The road test is based on the Learn, Innovate, and Improve (LI^2) approach. For more information on LI^2, see www.mathematica-mpr.com/our-publications-and-findings/publications/learn-innovate-improve-li2-enhancing-programs-and-improving-lives.

Why take the extra steps for a road test?

Change can be difficult and some changes have unintended results. For these reasons, it is important to test the proposed strategy on a small scale and gather feedback on it. This gives the team practical information, such as how staff and clients responded to the change, and whether and how you could

Section D3 (& E3): Conducting a Road Test

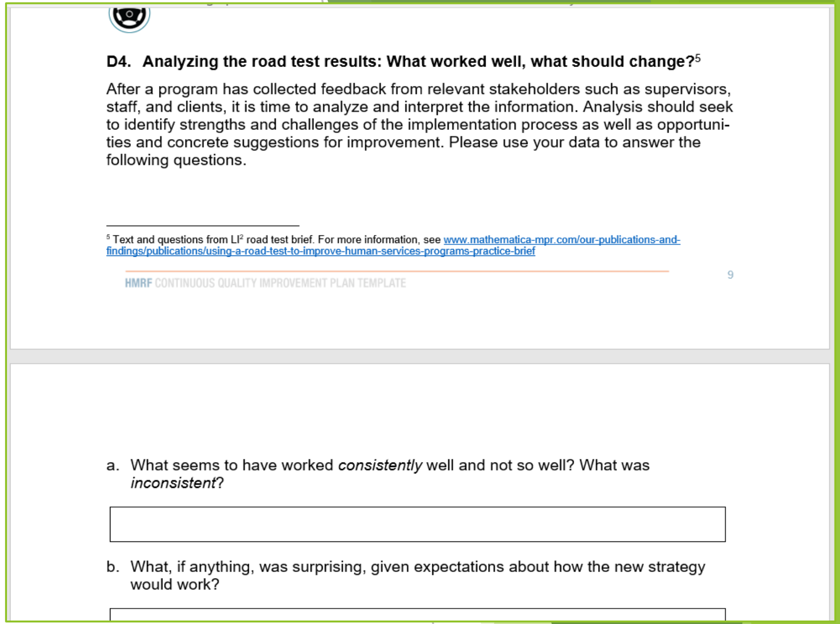
	Ok…	Even better!
Road Test Design	We want to know if an incentive will increase exit survey completion. We will start providing an incentive the first week of February for exit survey completers and then discuss how it goes.	Learning objectives: - What worked well and not well with communicating the incentives? - What did staff observe about participants' reactions to the incentive? - What worked well and not well with distributing the incentives? - How did participants (if at all) change their behavior? Plan: We will start informing new enrollees of the incentive the first week of February. We will continue for 4 weeks and then follow-up for 4 weeks (8 weeks total). We will talk to 5 staff and 5 participants to learn how well the incentives were communicated and distributed. We will track exit survey completion by week and assess results. Within one week of analyzing the data, our Implementation Team will meet to discuss the results and decide to continue the incentive as is or tweak it.

Specificity in what the CQI team wants to learn from the road test

Timeline on how the road test will unfold

Staff involved in the road test and their roles

Section D4 (& E4): Analyzing the road test results - Implementation



D4. Analyzing the road test results: What worked well, what should change?[5]

After a program has collected feedback from relevant stakeholders such as supervisors, staff, and clients, it is time to analyze and interpret the information. Analysis should seek to identify strengths and challenges of the implementation process as well as opportunities and concrete suggestions for improvement. Please use your data to answer the following questions.

[5] Text and questions from LI[2] road test brief. For more information, see www.mathematica-mpr.com/our-publications-and-findings/publications/using-a-road-test-to-improve-human-services-programs-practice-brief

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a. What seems to have worked *consistently* well and not so well? What was *inconsistent*?

b. What, if anything, was surprising, given expectations about how the new strategy would work?

	Ok…	Even better!
How to analyze the results: **- What worked well** **- Does behavior seem to be changing?** **- How might we build on the results?**	We were able to distribute 50 gift cards to exit survey completers. We talked about how well participants liked it. We decided to continue with the incentives.	After talking with 5 staff and 5 participants we learned: - Staff thought communicating the incentive early on was important. Connecting the incentive to child care costs was useful. No problems reported. - Some participants did not understand why they were getting the incentive. Some did not understand what the purpose of the exit survey was. - We plan to give the staff a script and include additional information to address what participants wanted to know.

Specific findings on staff implementing strategy and participants experiences with it

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Section D5 (& E5): Monitoring improvement over time

	Ok….	Even better!
Frequency of monitoring	Review the completion rate at the end of quarter 1 and quarter 4	- Staff enter data into nFORM - Implementation Team lead analyzes data and informs IT at the end of each month
Staff responsibilities	Review the completion rate weekly. Analyze whether the completion rate differs by certain characteristics.	- Program manager enters data into nFORM the day of collection - Data lead analyzes data and presents to IT - IT reviews data and discusses at IT meeting - IT suggests different ways to analyze the results

Timeline that monitors strategy effectiveness as it unfolds

Specifying which sta
are involved and the
specific roles

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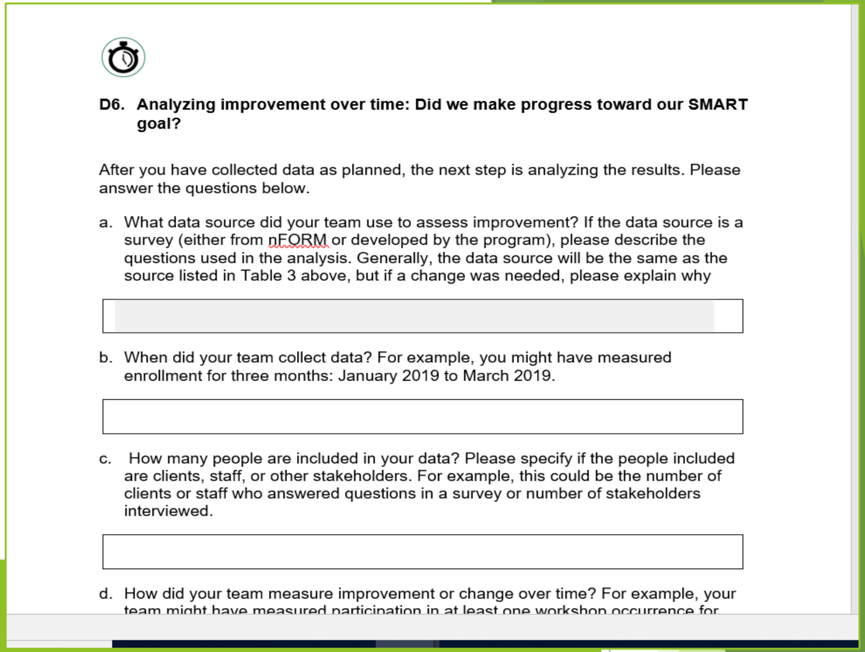
Section D6 (&E6): Analyzing the results over time



D6. Analyzing improvement over time: Did we make progress toward our SMART goal?

After you have collected data as planned, the next step is analyzing the results. Please answer the questions below.

a. What data source did your team use to assess improvement? If the data source is a survey (either from nFORM or developed by the program), please describe the questions used in the analysis. Generally, the data source will be the same as the source listed in Table 3 above, but if a change was needed, please explain why

b. When did your team collect data? For example, you might have measured enrollment for three months: January 2019 to March 2019.

c. How many people are included in your data? Please specify if the people included are clients, staff, or other stakeholders. For example, this could be the number of clients or staff who answered questions in a survey or number of stakeholders interviewed.

d. How did your team measure improvement or change over time? For example, your team might have measured participation in at least one workshop occurrence for

	Ok…	Even better!
What did the results show?	nFORM data showed that the exit survey completion rate increased to 55%.	We used nFORM enrollment and survey response data to assess weekly exit survey completion rates for the first 3 weeks of March 2020, to correspond with participants who were enrolled in February 2020. Our sample included 25 participants. We noticed that the rate improved each week. By week 3 the rate increased to 55% from 50%.

Details on the results and change over time

Specifies data sources and timeframe

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Section D7 (&E7): Interpreting the data – Putting it all together

Description of how and why strategy led to the intended outcome (or not)

	Ok…	Even better!
We learned that:	- Incentives worked - People like incentives - Exit survey completions increased	- Incentives needed to be communicated well to participants, including why and when they would receive them. - Staff need to communicate why participants are getting the incentives (to cover costs). - Once additional information was provided, participants felt that the incentives resulted in them attending more classes. - The incentives seemed to increase exit survey completion, but not as much as we hoped. Other strategies might be needed.

Section D8 (&E8): Communication

	Ok…	Even better!
How will we communicate the results to staff?	We will send out an email to all staff about offering the incentive to participants to complete exit surveys.	- Within one week after the road test, IT lead will send out an email explaining the incentive strategy and a quick summary of the road test results. - IT lead will present the results at the next all staff meeting. - IT will solicit additional feedback at the all staff meeting. - Within two week after the road test, IT will develop a script for staff to explain the motivation and purpose behind the incentives to participants.

Detailed communication steps and specifics on which staff are involved

Timeline for how communication will unfold and by when key tasks will be completed

Section D9 (& E9): Plan next steps

Specifics on decision to scale and how/by when the team will do so

	Ok…	Even better!
What are the next steps?	- Phew….we are done! - We will wait until the results of our next Capstone review to see if we need to improve more.	- Program team will "scale-up" - begin offering incentives to all participants, incorporating the feedback to properly communicate the purpose to participants. - IT will continue to monitor the exit survey completion rates weekly. - After 3 months, IT lead will reassess whether the exit survey completion rates are meeting goals. - If not, IT will implement another CQI cycle on this issue. - IT will brainstorm another strategy to road-test with the same issue and goal.

CQI is a continual effort.

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Resources

CQI Resources

- A series of CQI Best Practices is being distributed over winter and spring 2020
  - Overview of CQI and key best practices
  - Implementation team agreement
  - Sample Implementation team agenda
- Webinars (materials available on FastTRAC)

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Want to learn more about the Learn, Innovate, and Improve framework?

- ACF’s CQI template draws on the Learn, Innovate, and Improve (LI^2) process for CQI
- Two briefs are available on the Mathematica website
  - An overview of the LI^2 approach to CQI
  - Testing a strategy

Your CQI template can keep you on the right track…

- Everyone is likely in a different place when it comes to CQI – and that's ok!
- Remember to document your efforts and reasons.
  - This will really save everyone time down the road!
  - And keep everyone on the same page and pointed in the same direction.
- The template can help you deepen your CQI inquiries and improve the quality of your program in a methodical and efficient process.
- More to come!

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Links to Resources

- Brief: Overview of LI^2
  - www.mathematica-mpr.com/our-publications-and-findings/publications/learn-innovate-improve-li2-enhancing-programs-and-improving-lives
- Brief: Testing a strategy using the LI^2 approach
  - www.mathematica-mpr.com/our-publications-and-findings/publications/using-a-road-test-to-improve-human-services-programs-practice-brief
- nFORM help page
  - www.famlecross-site.com/nForm/Contact
- FastTRAC
  - www.hmrffasttrac.com

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Questions?

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