# Using an Integrated Model to Implement Evidence-based Practices in Corrections

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## *Overview*

Criminal justice system costs have grown exponentially during the last twenty years, yet have failed to keep pace with the burgeoning offender population. Most of the increase in system costs can be attributed to the growth in prison and jail capacity during the 1980's, but these institutions continue to operate at or over capacity; and budget cuts have left policy makers without the resources to build more institutional beds. Therefore many states are focusing on community corrections as they search for more effective and efficient methods of managing offenders without compromising public safety.

The leaders of community corrections agencies, faced with their own shrinking agency budgets, are being called on to alleviate systemic pressures by managing this growing number of offenders in the community, and maintaining public safety. Meeting this challenge requires that corrections leaders make effective use of resources and provide services that work to reduce offender recidivism.

Until recently, the criminal justice field has suffered from a lack of research that identified proven methods of reducing offender recidivism. Recent research efforts based on meta-analysis (the syntheses of data from many research studies) have broken through this barrier and provided the field with concrete and scientifically proven indications of how to better reduce offender recidivism (McGuire, 2002; Sherman et al, 1998; Aos, 1998; Henggeler et al, 1997; Meyers et al, 2002). This research indicates that criminal justice agencies can significantly reduce offender recidivism by implementing a series of evidence-based practices.

## *An Integrated Model of Implementation*

Implementation of these evidence-based practices requires corrections agencies to change the way they operate and rethink the way they do business, which is no easy task. This level of change requires dynamic and committed leadership with the ability and willingness to place equal focus on evidence-based practices, organizational development, and collaboration. These three components, when implemented together, form an integrated model for system reform. Each component of this integrated model is essential:

- Evidence-based principles provide the content for effective service provision.
- Organizational development is required to successfully implement systemic change. To implement evidence-based practices organizations must: rethink their missions and values; gain new knowledge and skills; adjust their infrastructure to support this new way of doing business; and transform their organizational culture.

- Collaboration enhances internal and external buy-in in the change process, supporting successful implementation in the complex web of public safety agencies, service providers, and other stakeholders.

As a part of their strategy for facilitating the implementation of effective interventions, the National Institute of Correction (NIC), Community Corrections Division entered into a cooperative agreement with the Crime and Justice Institute (CJI) in 2002 to develop a model for implementing evidence-based practices in criminal justice systems. This *Integrated Model* emphasizes the importance of focusing equally on evidence-based practices, organizational development, and collaboration to achieve successful and lasting change. The scope of the model is broad enough that it can be applied to all components of the criminal justice system and across varying jurisdictions.

NIC and CJI have worked for decades to further the implementation of effective interventions in criminal justice. Their experience in the field of community corrections indicates that many organizations are able to successfully implement components of evidence-based principles, such as assessment tools or cognitive-behavioral programming. Unfortunately, very few organizations have successfully implemented or been able to sustain implementation of evidence-based principles throughout their operations. While some organizations may have developed a certain breadth of implementation, many have not managed to achieve the depth necessary to change the organizational culture and attain desired outcomes. As a result, change efforts often lose focus, stagnate, and are not institutionalized. An integrated approach to implementation provides the depth and breadth necessary to ensure lasting change.

**Figure 1**

Implementing Evidence-based Practice:
The Integrated Model
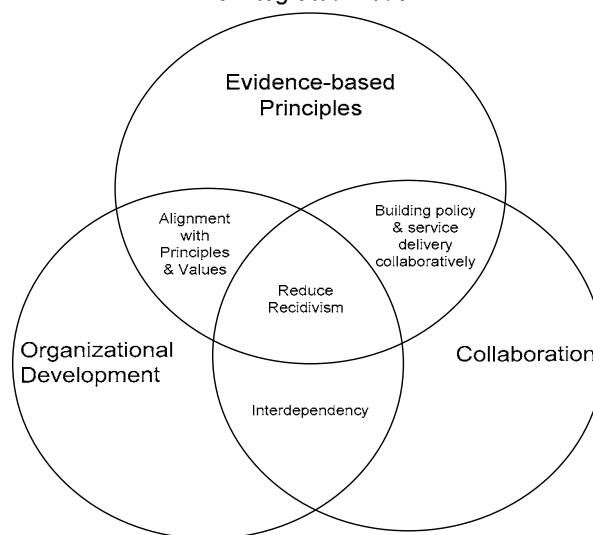
Many organizations are beginning to use or want to use evidence-based principles in their supervision practices and program design to better achieve reductions in recidivism. Most organizations have spent time on organizational development initiatives and collaborations. Few organizations though, have focused their attention simultaneously on all three areas, to achieve full integration. In September 2004, NIC and CJI began working with two pilot sites (Illinois and Maine) to implement this integrated model (Figure 2).

**Figure 2**

## Integration Continuum



No Integration ⟶ Learning Organization ⟶ Full Integration
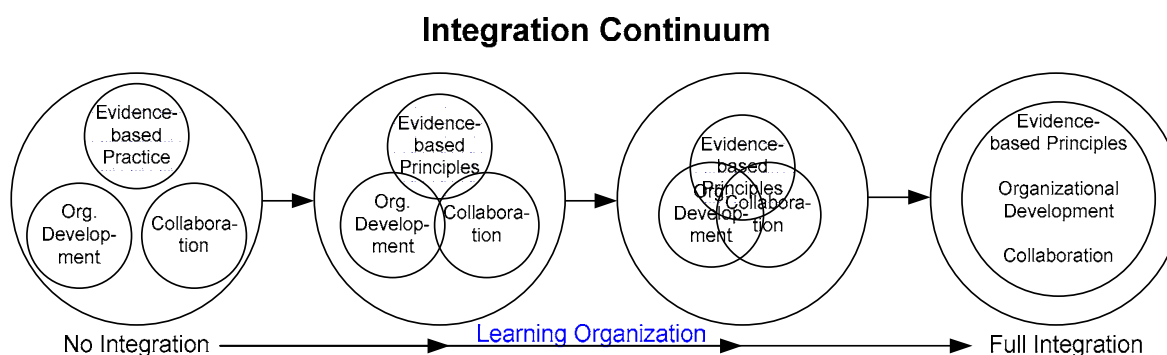
## *Evidence-based Practice*

As stated earlier, recent research efforts based on meta-analysis have provided the criminal justice field with much needed information about how to better reduce offender recidivism. This research indicates that certain programs and intervention strategies, when applied to a variety of offender populations, reliably produce sustained reductions in recidivism. Unfortunately, few criminal justice agencies are using these effective interventions and their related concepts/principles.

The conventional approach to supervision in this country emphasizes individual accountability from offenders and their supervising officers without consistently providing either with the skills, tools, or resources that science indicates are necessary for risk and recidivism reduction. Despite the evidence that indicates otherwise, officers continue to be trained and expected to meet minimal contact standards which emphasize rates of contacts. These standards largely ignore the opportunities these contacts provide for reinforcing behavioral change.

The biggest challenge in adopting these evidence-based practices is to change our existing systems to appropriately support the new innovations. Identifying interventions with good research support and realigning the necessary organizational infrastructure are both fundamental to evidence-based practice.

Evidence-based practice is a significant trend throughout all human service fields that emphasize outcomes. Interventions within corrections are considered effective when they reduce offender risk and subsequent recidivism and therefore make a positive long-term contribution to public safety.

The evidence-based principles component of the integrated model highlights eight principles for effective offender interventions. The organization or system that is most successful in initiating and maintaining offender interventions and supervision practices consistent with these principles will achieve the greatest recidivism reductions.

The following framework of principles is listed in developmental order and they are all highly interdependent. For example, offender assessments must consider both risk to reoffend and criminogenic needs, in that order. Research indicates that resources are used more effectively when they are focused on higher-risk rather than lower-risk offenders, therefore considering offenders' risk to reoffend prior to addressing criminogenic needs allows agencies to target resources on higher-risk offenders.

**Eight Evidence-Based Principles for Effective Interventions**
1. Assess Actuarial Risk/Needs.
2. Enhance Intrinsic Motivation.
3. Target Interventions.
    a. *Risk Principle*: Prioritize supervision and treatment resources for higher risk offenders.
    b. *Need Principle*: Target interventions to criminogenic needs.
    c. *Responsivity Principle*: Be responsive to temperament, learning style, motivation, culture, and gender when assigning programs.
    d. *Dosage*: Structure 40-70% of high-risk offenders' time for 3-9 months.
    e. *Treatment:* Integrate treatment into the full sentence/sanction requirements.
4. Skill Train with Directed Practice (use Cognitive Behavioral treatment methods).
5. Increase Positive Reinforcement.
6. Engage Ongoing Support in Natural Communities.
7. Measure Relevant Processes/Practices.
8. Provide Measurement Feedback.

**1) Assess Actuarial Risk/Needs.**
    Develop and maintain a complete system of ongoing offender risk screening / triage and needs assessments. Assessing offenders in a reliable and valid manner is a prerequisite for the effective management (i.e., supervision and treatment) of offenders. Timely, relevant measures of offender risk and need at the individual and aggregate levels are essential for the implementation of numerous principles of best practice in corrections, (e.g., risk, need, and responsivity). Offender assessments are most reliable and valid when staff are formally trained to administer tools. Screening and assessment tools that focus on dynamic and static risk factors, profile criminogenic needs, and have been validated on similar populations are preferred. They should also be supported by sufficiently detailed and accurately written procedures.

Offender assessment is as much an ongoing function as it is a formal event. Case information that is gathered informally through routine interactions and observations with offenders is just as important as formal assessment guided by instruments. Formal and informal offender assessments should reinforce one another. They should combine to enhance formal reassessments, case decisions, and working relations between practitioners and offenders throughout the jurisdiction of supervision.

(Andrews, et al, 1990; Andrews & Bonta, 1998; Gendreau, et al, 1996; Kropp, et al, 1995; Clements, 1996)

**Questions to ask**
❖ Does the assessment tool we're using measure for criminogenic risk and need?
❖ How are officers trained to conduct the assessment interview?
❖ What quality assurance is in place to ensure that assessments are conducted appropriately?
❖ How is the assessment information captured and used in the development of case plans?

**2) Enhance Intrinsic Motivation.**
Staff should relate to offenders in interpersonally sensitive and constructive ways to enhance intrinsic motivation in offenders. Behavioral change is an *inside job*; for lasting change to occur, a level of intrinsic motivation is needed. Motivation to change is dynamic and the probability that change may occur is strongly influenced by interpersonal interactions, such as those with probation officers, treatment providers, and institution staff. Feelings of ambivalence that usually accompany change can be explored through motivational interviewing, a style and method of communication used to help people overcome their ambivalence regarding behavior changes. Research strongly suggests that motivational interviewing techniques, rather than persuasion tactics, effectively enhance motivation for initiating and maintaining behavior changes.

(Miller & Rollnick, 2002; Miller & Mount, 2001; Harper & Hardy, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000)

**Questions to Ask**
❖ Are officers and program staff trained in motivational interviewing techniques?
❖ What quality assurance is in place?
❖ Are staff held accountable for using motivational interviewing techniques in their day-to-day interactions with offenders?

**3) Target Interventions.**

    **a. RISK PRINCIPLE:** Prioritize supervision and treatment resources for higher risk offenders.

    **b. NEED PRINCIPLE:** Target interventions to criminogenic needs.

    **c. RESPONSIVITY PRINCIPLE:** Be responsive to temperament, learning style, motivation, gender, and culture when assigning to programs.

    **d. DOSAGE:** Structure 40-70% of high-risk offenders' time for 3-9 months.

     **e. TREATMENT PRINCIPLE:** Integrate treatment into the full sentence/sanction requirements.


### 3a) Risk Principle

Prioritize primary supervision and treatment resources for offenders who are at higher risk to re-offend. Research indicates that supervision and treatment resources that are focused on lower-risk offenders tend to produce little if any net positive effect on recidivism rates. Shifting these resources to higher risk offenders promotes harm-reduction and public safety because these offenders have greater need for pro-social skills and thinking, and are more likely to be frequent offenders. Reducing the recidivism rates of these higher risk offenders reaps a much larger *bang-for-the-buck.*

Successfully addressing this population requires smaller caseloads, the application of well developed case plans, and the placement of offenders into sufficiently intense cognitive-behavioral interventions that target their specific criminogenic needs.


(Gendreau, 1997; Andrews & Bonta, 1998; Harland, 1996; Sherman, et al, 1998; McGuire, 2001, 2002)


### 3b) Criminogenic Need Principle

Address offenders' greatest criminogenic needs. Offenders have a variety of needs, some of which are directly linked to criminal behavior. These criminogenic needs are dynamic risk factors that, when addressed or changed, affect the offender's risk for recidivism. Examples of criminogenic needs are: criminal personality; antisocial attitudes, values, and beliefs; low self control; criminal peers; substance abuse; and dysfunctional family. Based on an assessment of the offender, these criminogenic needs can be prioritized so that services are focused on the greatest criminogenic needs.


(Andrews & Bonta, 1998; Lipton, et al, 2000; Elliott, 2001; Harland, 1996)


### 3c) Responsivity Principle

Responsivity requires that we consider individual characteristics when matching offenders to services. These characteristics include, but are not limited to: culture, gender, motivational stages, developmental stages, and learning styles. These factors influence an offender's responsiveness to different types of treatment.

The principle of responsivity also requires that offenders be provided with treatment that is proven effective with the offender population. Certain treatment strategies, such as cognitive-behavioral methodologies, have consistently produced reductions in recidivism with offenders under rigorous research conditions.

Providing appropriate responsivity to offenders involves selecting services in accordance with these factors, including:
a) Matching treatment type to offender; and

b) Matching style and methods of communication with offender's stage of change readiness.

(Miller & Rollnick, 1991; Gordon, 1970)

### 3d) Dosage

Providing appropriate doses of services, pro-social structure, and supervision is a strategic application of resources. Higher risk offenders require significantly more initial structure and services than lower risk offenders. During the initial 3-9 months post-release, 40-70% of their free time should be clearly occupied with a delineated routine and appropriate services, (e.g., outpatient treatment, employment assistance, education, etc.). Certain offender subpopulations (e.g., severely mentally ill, chronic dual diagnosed, etc.) commonly require strategic, extensive, and extended services. However, too often individuals within these sub-populations are neither explicitly identified nor provided a coordinated package of supervision/services. The evidence indicates that incomplete or uncoordinated approaches can have negative effects, often wasting resources.

(Palmer, 1995; Gendreau & Goggin, 1995; Steadman, 1995)

### 3e) Treatment Principle

Treatment, particularly cognitive-behavioral types, should be applied as an integral part of the sentence/sanction process. A proactive and strategic approach to supervision and case planning that delivers targeted and timely treatment interventions will provide the greatest long-term benefit to the community, the victim, and the offender. This does not necessarily apply to lower risk offenders, who should be diverted from the criminal justice and corrections systems whenever possible.
(Palmer, 1995; Clear, 1981; Taxman & Byrne, 2001; Currie, 1998; Petersilia, 1997, 2002, Andrews & Bonta, 1998)

#### Questions to Ask
❖ How do we manage offenders assessed as low risk to reoffend?
❖ Does our assessment tool assess for criminogenic need?
❖ How are criminogenic risk and need information incorporated into offender case plans?
❖ How are offenders matched to treatment resources?
❖ How structured are our caseplans for offenders, especially during the three to nine month period in the community after leaving an institution?
❖ How are staff held accountable for using assessment information to develop a case plan and then subsequently using that caseplan to manage an offender?

## 4) Provide skills triaining using cognitive-behavioral treatment methods.

Provide evidence-based programming that emphasizes cognitive-behavioral strategies and is delivered by well trained staff. To successfully deliver this treatment to offenders, staff must understand antisocial thinking, social learning, and appropriate communication techniques. Skills are not just taught to the offender, but are practiced or role-played and the resulting pro-social attitudes and behaviors are positively reinforced by staff. Correctional agencies

should prioritize, plan, and budget to predominantly implement programs that have been scientifically proven to reduce recidivism.

(Mihalic, et al, 2001; Miller & Rollnick, 2002; Lipton, et al, 2000; Lipsey, 1993; McGuire, 2001, 2002)

**Questions to Ask**
❖ How are social learning techniques incorporated into the programs we deliver?
❖ How do we ensure that our contracted service providers are delivering services in alignment with social learning theory?
❖ Are the programs we deliver and contract for based on scientific evidence of recidivism reduction?

## 5) Increase Positive Reinforcement.

When learning new skills and making behavioral changes, individuals respond better and maintain learned behaviors for longer periods of time when approached with *carrots* rather than *sticks*. Sustained behavioral change is better achieved when an individual receives a higher ration of positive to negative reinforcements. Research indicates that a ratio of *four positive to every one negative* reinforcement is optimal for promoting behavior changes. These rewards do not have to be applied consistently to be effective (as negative reinforcement does) but can be applied randomly.

Increasing positive reinforcement should not be done at the expense of or interfere with the administration of swift, certain, and real responses for negative and unacceptable behavior. Offenders having problems with responsible self-regulation generally respond positively to reasonable and reliable additional structure and boundaries. Offenders may initially overreact to new demands for accountability, seek to evade detection or consequences, and fail to recognize any personal responsibility. However, with exposure to clear rules that are consistently (and swiftly) enforced with appropriate and graduated consequences, offenders will tend to comply in the direction of the most rewards and least punishments. This type of extrinsic motivation can often be useful for beginning the process of behavior change. (Gendreau & Goggin, 1995; Meyers & Smith, 1995; Higgins & Silverman, 1999; Azrin, 1980; Bandura et al,1963; Bandura, 1996)

**Questions to Ask**
❖ Do we model positive reinforcement techniques in our day-to-day interactions with our co-workers?
❖ Do our staff understand and use the four-to-one theory in their interactions with offenders?

## 6) Engage On-going Support in Natural Communities.

Realign and actively engage pro-social supports for offenders in their communities. Research indicates that many successful interventions with high risk populations (e.g., inner city substance abusers, homeless, dual diagnosed) actively recruit and use family members, spouses, and supportive others in the offender's immediate environment to positively

reinforce desired new behaviors.  This Community Reinforcement Approach (CRA) has been found effective for a variety of behaviors (e.g., unemployment, alcoholism, substance abuse, and marital conflicts); and research also indicates the efficacy of twelve step programs, religious activities, and restorative justice initiatives geared towards improving bonds and ties to pro-social community members.
(Azrin, & Besalel, 1980; Emrick et al, 1993; Higgins & Silverman, 1999; Meyers & Smith, 1997; Bonta et al, 2002; O'Connor & Perryclear, 2003; Meyers et al, 2002)

### Questions to Ask
❖ Do we engage community supports for offenders as a regular part of case planning?
❖ How to we measure our community network contacts as they relate to an offender?

## 7) Measure Relevant Processes/Practices.
Accurate and detailed documentation of case information, along with a formal and valid mechanism for measuring outcomes, is the foundation of evidence-based practice.  Agencies must routinely assess changes in offeders' cognitive and skill development, and recidivism, if services are to remain effective.

In addition to routinely measuring and documenting offender changes, staff performance should also be regularly assessed.  Staff that are periodically evaluated for performance achieve greater fidelity to program design, service delivery principles, and outcomes.  Staff whose performance is not consistently monitored, measured, and subsequently reinforced work less cohesively, more frequently at cross-purposes and provide less support to the agency mission.
(Henggeler et al, 1997; Milhalic & Irwin, 2003; Miller, 1988; Meyers et al, 1995; Azrin, 1982; Meyers, 2002; Hanson & Harris, 1998; Waltz et al, 1993; Hogue et al, 1998; Miller & Mount, 2001; Gendreau et al, 1996; Dilulio, 1993)

### Questions to Ask
❖ What data do we collect regarding offender assessment and case management?
❖ How do we measure incremental offender change while they are under supervision?
❖ What are our outcome measures and how do we track them?
❖ How do we measure staff performance?  What data do we use?  How is that data collected?

## 8) Provide Measurement Feedback.
Once a method for measuring relevant processes / practices is in place (principle seven), this information must be used to monitor process and change.  Providing feedback to offenders regarding their progress builds accountability, and is associated with enhanced motivation for change, lower treatment attrition, and improved outcomes (e.g., reduced drink/drug days, treatment engagement, goal achievement).

The same is true within an organization.  Monitoring delivery of services and fidelity to procedures helps build accountability and maintain integrity to the agency's mission.  Regular performance audits and case reviews with an eye toward improved outcomes, keep

staff focused on the ultimate goal of reduced recidivism through the use of evidence-based principles.
 (Miller, 1988;  Agostinelli et al, 1995; Alvero et al, 2001; Baer et al, 1992; Decker, 1983; Luderman, 1991; Zemke, 2001; Elliott, 1980)

**Questions to Ask**
❖  How is information regarding offender change and outcomes shared with officers?  With offenders?
❖  With whom do we share information regarding outcome measures?
❖  How is staff performance data used in the performance evaluation process?

**Summary**
Aligning these evidence-based principles with the operations of an agency is difficult, but will largely determine the impact the agency has on sustained reductions in recidivism.  In order to accomplish this shift to an outcome orientation, practitioners must be prepared to dedicate themselves to a mission that focuses on achieving sustained reductions in recidivism.  The scientific principles presented in this document are unlikely to produce a mandate for redirecting and rebuilding an agency's mission by themselves.  Leadership in organizational change and collaboration for systemic change are also necessary.

## *Organizational Development*
The organizational development concepts and strategies highlighted in the integrated model mirror the evidence-based principles of effective offender supervision.  Focusing on assessment, intervention, and monitoring / measurement, the same principles used to manage offender cases and change offender behavior can be used to manage organizations and change organizational behavior.

Shifting to an evidence-based agency management approach may require significant changes in the way business is conducted.  Some changes may include how staff are recruited and hired; conduct their job duties; receive performance feedback; and interact with each other, offenders, and system stakeholders.  While the strategies that follow help guide leaders toward the goal of implementing evidence-based practices both in offender supervision and organizational management, leaders must be prepared for the inherent challenges of conducting such a transition process.
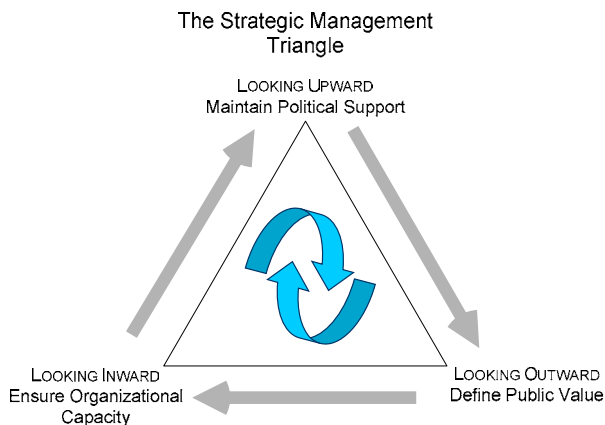
**Organizational Development Strategies**
1) Assess and Develop Leadership Capacity
2) Create and Communicate Vision
    a) Creating the Vision
    b) Communicating the Vision
    c) Identifying Internal and External Stakeholders
    d) Developing Strategies for Achieving the Vision
    e) Overcoming Resistance
3) Manage Change

    a) Recognize History
    b) Assess Current Conditions
    c) Describe the Desired Future
    d) Develop Strategies to Achieve the Desired Future
    e) Implement, Monitor, and Provide Feedback
4) Develop Infrastructure

## 1) Assess and Develop Leadership Capacity

Strong and flexible organizational leadership is key to the success of any change effort. It is especially true when implementing evidence-based practices in corrections due to the complexity of the public safety system. The complex nature of the system requires that leadership identify, create, and show value to internal and external stakeholders. In Mark Moore's *Creating Public Value,* he emphasizes a key assumption for any service provided by the public sector: the service or product must provide value for a variety of constituents. As illustrated in the Strategic Management Triangle below, public sector leaders must focus on providing value outward, upward, and inward: outward by defining the value their organization provides to the public; upward by building political support for the organization and its services as they align with that value; and inward by ensuring the necessary organizational capacity exists to achieve that value.

**Figure 3**



The Strategic Management Triangle

LOOKING UPWARD
Maintain Political Support

LOOKING INWARD
Ensure Organizational Capacity

LOOKING OUTWARD
Define Public Value

Adapted from Moore, Mark. *Creating Public Value: Strategic Management in Government.* Harvard University Press. October 1995.

Implementing evidence-based practices in corrections and building the corresponding value for constituents requires strong leadership along with the capacity and willingness to practice outcome-oriented, collaborative leadership styles, not the authoritarian and controlling leadership styles more traditionally associated with corrections. Taking the time to assess leadership capacity and styles prior to beginning the implementation process will provide critical information on the strengths and weaknesses that must be addressed to support a successful change effort. The artistry of leadership exists in the ability to access leadership

skills that are appropriate to the situation, recognizing that different situations require different leadership strategies. The ability to clearly articulate a vision for organizational change, while employing multiple leadership strategies, will help further the organizational change process, creating a shared desire for change among a variety of people in a variety of settings.

## 2) Create and Communicate Vision

### 2a) Creating the Vision

Before the change process begins, there must be a clear vision of what the changed organization will look like. This vision should be articulated in a concise statement describing the changed organization and how it interacts with others, including service recipients, system partners, and employees.

Strong, visionary leadership is a must. The vision for change can be formed in numerous ways by various groups, including the leadership of the organization, policymakers, or a diagonal slice of organizational representatives. No matter how the vision is formed, leadership must embrace it and take responsibility for charting the direction and change process for the organization.

**Figure 4**

**The Diagonal Slice Group**

MANAGERS

SUPERVISORS

LINE STAFF
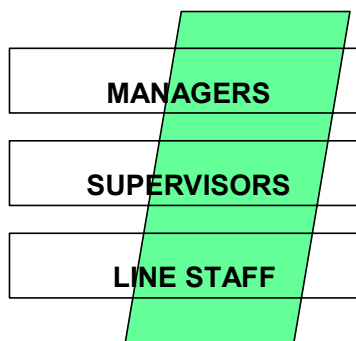
Once the leadership has crystallized the direction of change, it needs to look broadly throughout the organization and consider the many layers of change that will occur as a result of the process. The most progressive public policy direction for an organization is meaningless at the line staff and client level without leadership and strategic action to cultivate the change at all levels. True change happens at the top, at the bottom, and in between, it is up to the leadership to consider how change will occur within each of those layers.

**Questions to Ask**

❖ Is there a story or metaphor for what the organization is trying to become?
❖ Can you draw a picture of your vision for the organization?
❖ If the organization achieves its goals for change—
  ➢ what will a client say about their experience of this organization?
  ➢ what will a member of the public say?
  ➢ what will staff say?
❖ What facets of the organization will be affected by the change?

**2b) Communicating the vision**

Once leadership clarifies the organizational goals for change, the next step is communication of the vision. Involving staff in the development of the vision leads to greater commitment from and more effective communication with those staff. Effective communication is a critical ingredient to achieving successful and long-lasting change, and is dependant upon the ability of leadership to model openness and support ongoing dialogue. ***Communication is key.*** The clearer a leader communicates the goals of organizational change, the more helpful staff, community, clients, and policy makers can be. Once they understand what leadership seeks to accomplish, they can begin striving for those same goals.

How an idea or goal is communicated can be as important as the goal or idea itself. Leaders attend to both process and outcomes. People will draw conclusions from how the message is communicated as well as from the content of the message. For example, if a leader directly and personally communicates an idea to the organization, the message has more impact and meaning than if it comes down to line staff through channels. If a leader convenes a focus group of staff to discuss an issue, the importance of the issue is heightened, simply by the fact that the leader cared enough to gather a group to address it.

Leadership must also tailor communication strategies to the groups they seek to reach. Leaders need to think about their audience in advance, consider how they receive information, and strategize about how to best reach them. Communication must occur continually throughout the organization, both horizontally and vertically.

Leaders also need to pay close attention to the collective impact of seemingly minor decisions during the change process. For example, if leadership determines that those employees who actively participate and cooperate with the change process will be rewarded, that strategy must be consistent throughout the organization, even in seemingly minor decisions. One act, in one part of the organization, such as the promotion of a line staff person who is still doing business the old way might not seem like it could affect the change process. However, these seemingly independent, unrelated decisions can collectively send a message that undermines the change process.

Trust and confidence in the organization's vision and leadership is built through understanding and awareness of how decisions are made. Decisions and the process by which they are reached should be transparent to the members of the organization. Good leaders seek broad input into decision-making and encourage consideration of different

perspectives.  Diverse perspectives build strength.  Good leaders also ensure that decisions support the state vision, values, and direction of the organization.  This requires the leader to stay in touch with decision-making at many levels in the organization in order to ensure that the organization walks its talk.

**Questions to ask**
❖  What is your personal communication style?
❖  What are your strengths and weaknesses in this arena?
❖  How is information communicated in your organization?  Formally and informally?
❖  Are there more effective communication strategies for reaching multiple audiences?
❖  What are the greatest communication challenges for the organization?
❖  What leadership, management, and staff behavior supports the vision?  What behavior does not support the vision?

**2c) Identifying Internal and External Stakeholders**
Leaders seeking change must work closely with many stakeholders, and collaboration with those partners is critical and powerful.  The partners, both internal and external, can be identified using various methods:  Leadership can identify partners in consultation with others; Staff can conduct system mapping to identify unusual partners; The organization can convene planning circles where partners come together and identify more partners; who then identify more partners, etc.  All of these strategies can be effective ways to identify important stakeholders in the change process.

**Internal stakeholders:**  Internal stakeholder groups will be affected by organizational change, some more than others.  It is important that those groups most affected have a voice in the process.  Broad participation creates commitment.  Leaders should consider the multiple levels of authority in the formal chain of command and classifications of employees, and then ensure that all of these groups understand the vision of change, and have a voice and a means with which to communicate their opinions.  Diagonal slice work groups can help to achieve this goal by providing representation from throughout the organization.

Leaders should also consider more informal networks as they identify internal partners.  While the organizational chart of an agency may show a vertical hierarchy, organizations are rarely so cleanly defined.  Instead, organizations are webs, with information leaders and power brokers throughout the organization.  Leadership should think beyond the formal hierarchy to ensure they reach out to all key partners.

Diagonal slice work groups can serve a variety of roles—as sounding boards, transition monitoring teams, steering committees with decision-making power, and implementation teams.  Leadership must clearly define the roles and authority of each group, and charters should be developed upon convening work groups.

Chartering will help guide the group's efforts, provide structure, describe outcomes, clarify decision-making authority, and codify organizational and leadership support for the group's work.  Communication is a key function of these workgroups and should be highlighted in

their charter. A large part of their responsibility is ongoing communication with the larger organization about the change process. To enhance productivity and efficiency, all groups should be provided with a trained facilitator or be trained in the basics of group process and facilitation prior to beginning work.

**Questions to ask**
❖ What diverse groups are represented in your organization?
❖ Who are the natural leaders in the organization?
❖ What groups are forgotten or feel excluded?
❖ Who can help create a buzz about the change process in your organization?

**External stakeholders:** The changes your organization undergoes will also affect external partners. Community corrections agencies are intertwined with a host of other criminal justice, social service, and community organizations and systems. This means that any significant, long-lasting change in your organization requires the participation of and acceptance by external entities. These organizations will need to be collaborative participants in this process every step of the way.

Partner organizations need to understand the value that participation in this change process has for them. Their leaders should know how supporting your change aids them in accomplishing their organizational mission. The impact that specific changes will have on their service delivery must be completely clear. Leaders need to consider these issues and craft specific plans for engaging their partners.

**Questions to ask**
❖ What partnerships currently exist in your system?
❖ Where do new partnerships need to be forged?
❖ How does participation in this change process assist partners in accomplishing their mission and / or vision?

**2d) Developing Strategies for Achieving the Vision**
The development of strategies moves the vision from concept into action. While strategies must be broad enough to encompass the work of many parts of the organization, they must also be specific enough that objectives, outcomes, and work plans can be developed to achieve the strategies. Leaders can use many different processes to develop strategies. Tools for developing strategies must balance broad participation in decision-making with the creation of the most innovative strategies infused with best practice knowledge. The relative importance of these two issues in an organization's change process will drive the selection of the tool for strategy development.

Engaging the broadest number of internal and external partners in the development of the strategy is essential, and a system- or organization-wide development conference can be a helpful tool. This type of conference is a day- or more-long meeting where the participants gain understanding of the vision and then, in smaller groups, develop the strategies to accomplish this vision. Conference techniques often result in maximum participation and

buy-in, and allow participants opportunities to understand best practices and expand their thinking in order to create an innovative new direction for the organization.

The diagonal slice group from your organization can also be charged with creating strategies. This method provides opportunities for input from a variety of levels and perspectives in a more controlled process. It also provides an opportunity for alternative perspectives to weigh more heavily in the process. In the conference model, minority voices may not be heard.

In another method, the management team can use stakeholder groups to review and refine strategies—including the diagonal slice group. This method does not allow for as much diverse input into the strategies. However, if the management team has been intensively schooled in innovative new practices, they can still create effective strategies that are informed by the literature. The strategies must be approved and supported by the policy makers in your jurisdiction, regardless of the method chosen.

**Questions to ask**
❖ How much participation is required to build maximum trust in the organization?
❖ How much do various stakeholders know about evidence-based practices in order to incorporate them into strategies?
❖ How can you best incorporate diverse perspectives into strategies?
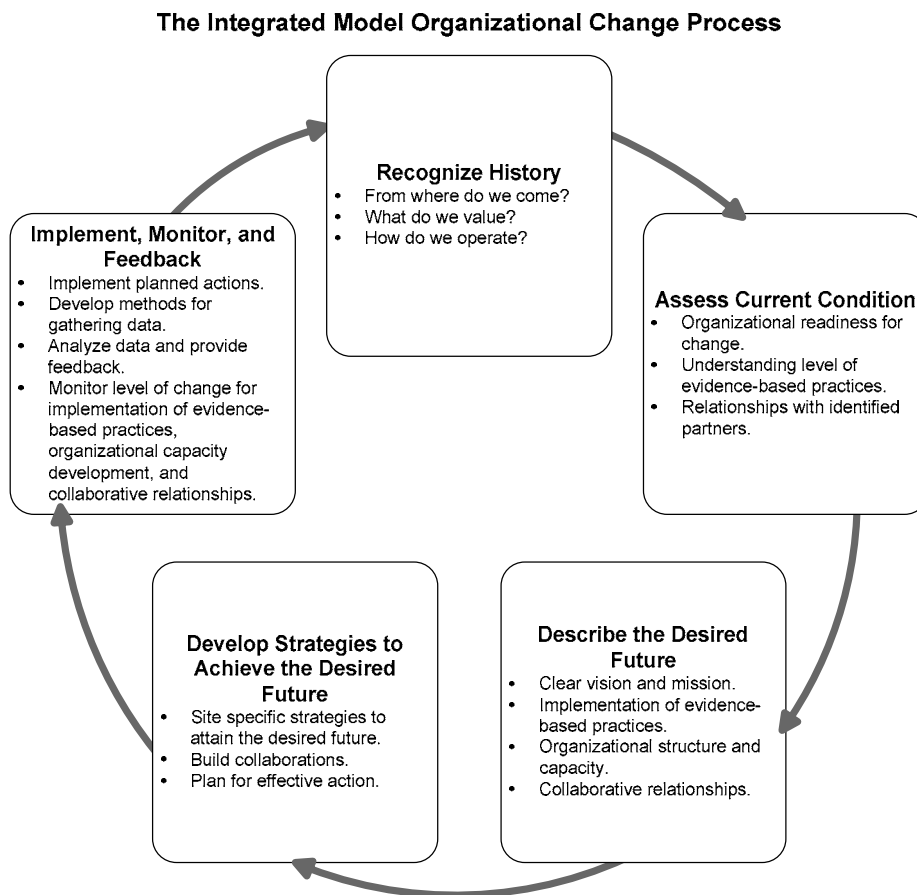❖ How involved do policy makers wish to be in the strategy development process?

**2e) Overcoming resistance**
Leadership and work teams need to plan strategies for overcoming resistance to change. Employee resistance may stem from the organization's failure to consider and eliminate barriers with changing work conditions, a lack of tools to do the new job, or an inadequate understanding of the need for change. Leadership must assess worker needs in relation to the strategic implementation of change, structure the work, and provide the tools and the information required for success. For example, if leadership asks officers to spend more time out in the field and less time in the office, providing tools such as laptops, personal data assistants, and cell phones will facilitate that transition. Leadership must be empathetic and create a climate for success for works to do their job. Culture changes are difficult for workers to accommodate but can be made easier with responsive, responsible leadership.

**3) Manage Change**
The strategies and methods of implementing change in complex organizations have been used in the private sector for years are just as valid in the corrections field. The following illustration of the change process highlights each of the change process phases.

**Figure 5**

### The Integrated Model Organizational Change Process



**Recognize History**
- From where do we come?
- What do we value?
- How do we operate?

**Assess Current Condition**
- Organizational readiness for change.
- Understanding level of evidence-based practices.
- Relationships with identified partners.

**Implement, Monitor, and Feedback**
- Implement planned actions.
- Develop methods for gathering data.
- Analyze data and provide feedback.
- Monitor level of change for implementation of evidence-based practices, organizational capacity development, and collaborative relationships.

**Develop Strategies to Achieve the Desired Future**
- Site specific strategies to attain the desired future.
- Build collaborations.
- Plan for effective action.

**Describe the Desired Future**
- Clear vision and mission.
- Implementation of evidence-based practices.
- Organizational structure and capacity.
- Collaborative relationships.

### 3a) Recognize History:

Organizational members must reflect on *where they come from as an organization, where they have been, and what they have experienced during that journey*. This reflection enables organizations to clarify and articulate a collective narrative and shared vision of history. This shared history can then become a launching pad for change rather than a warehouse for an uninterpretable array of artifacts and anecdotes.

**Questions to ask**
- ❖ How did we, as an organization, arrive at our current structure, technologies, and culture?
- ❖ What do we value?
- ❖ How do we operate?

### 3b) Assess Current Conditions:

Assessment and documentation of the present condition assists the organizational members in determining *where they are at the current time and what gaps remain.* Participants must assess the degree to which the organization's beliefs, operational systems, technologies,

policies, and practices are consistent with, and supportive of, evidence-based practices. Participants must pay attention to the organizational culture, as well as the quality and types of existing collaborations and partnerships with internal and external stakeholders.

**Questions to Ask:**
❖ What is our organization's level of change readiness?
❖ How well are evidence-based practices understood and implemented in our system?
❖ Who are our partners?
❖ How well are we working with our partners?

**3c) Describe the Desired Future:**
In expressing a vision for the future, the organizational members describe their ideal picture of the changed organization. The participants, along with leadership, articulate a vision for organizational change at all levels. By creating a vision of a learning organization, members become committed to the journey of change that provides value to employees, clients, and stakeholders.

**Questions to Ask:**
❖ What do we want our organizational future to look like?
❖ What is our organizational vision and mission?
❖ At what level do we envision the implementation of evidence-based practices?
❖ What type of organizational structure is needed to best support evidence-based practices?
❖ What collaborative relationships need to be developed to strengthen implementation?

**3d) Develop Strategies to Achieve the Desired Future:**
Build collaborations of mutual interest. Correctional organizations relate to and are dependent on many partners throughout the public, private, and community-based sectors who share a commitment to achieving the outcomes of reduced recidivism and increased public safety.

Plan for effective action to reach the desired future. Develop a detailed, concrete plan of action that is time phased, measurable, politically and culturally competent, and includes effective, sustainable accountability and feedback loops. Clearly define the multiple roles of participants.

**Questions to Ask:**
❖ With whom does the organization partner and collaborate?
❖ How do partnerships and collaborations help members successfully achieve their goals and further their unique corporate mission?
❖ What steps does the organization need to attain its goals?
❖ What are the specific activities needed to ensure an equal focus on evidence-based practices, organizational development and capacity building, and collaborative relationships?

**3e) Implement, Monitor, and Provide Feedback:**

Carry out the implementation: Planning without action often leads to desperation and hopelessness for staff and stakeholders.  Successful implementation results from a broad and deep commitment throughout the organization, relentless attention to the vision, support for the change process, removal of barriers, and careful monitoring and   adjustment of the change process.

Feedback:  Gathering, sharing, assessing, and constructing a valid and shared interpretation of the information.  Successful implementation results from the availability and management of information that is meaningful, timely, and accurately represents the progress made on the change plan within the unique cultural and political context of the participating site.

**Questions to Ask:**
- ❖ How will we gather data?
- ❖ What types of feedback are needed by which groups?
- ❖ How will we monitor progress and make adjustments when necessary?

**4) Develop Infrastructure**
While leadership is moving the organization forward through the process of implementing evidence-based practices, there are contemporaneous changes in an organization's infrastructure that must occur.  These infrastructure changes are designed to align the organization's human resource management systems (HRMS), policies and procedures, and operational standards with evidence-based practices.  Aligning an organization's HRMS with evidence-based practices involves revising policies and practices for recruitment, hiring, job descriptions, training, performance measurement, promotional decisions, and reward systems.  All policies and procedures must be consistent with and supportive of the new way of doing business.  They must also be put into practice--clearly articulated and shared throughout the organization, and used as the new standard to which staff are held accountable.  Aligning the organization's infrastructure clarifies the commitment to organizational change and facilitates implementation of evidence-based practices.  Maintaining focus on these changes will, over time, produce a critical mass of employees well-versed in the tenets of a new philosophy, further limiting the possibility of slipping back into the old ways of doing business.

The subsequent transformation of organizational culture relies upon this alignment of tasks, mission, and goals and a clear nexus throughout the organization's practices (Baron and Kreps, 1999).  Combining the fundamental changes in these structural areas with the philosophical and policy shift of evidence-based practices enhances the opportunity to more effectively institutionalize changes.

**Summary**
Leading organizational change requires that corrections leaders evaluate their own strengths and weaknesses as well as those of their organizations.  Prepared with this knowledge, leaders will be better equipped to engage in the challenges of changing organizational practice, infrastructure, and culture.  Corrections leaders who want to implement evidence-based practices, must be

willing and able to focus on all three components of the integrated model. They must have the content knowledge of evidence-based practices, the leadership skills required to lead such extensive organizational change, and the collaborative expertise necessary to engage stakeholders in the change process.

## *Collaboration*

Collaboration is an equally important component of implementing systemic change within the complex web of public safety agencies, service providers, and other stakeholders. Defined as *a mutually beneficial and well-defined relationship entered into by two or more organizations to achieve common goals* (Griffith, 2000), the collaborative process is intended to move participants away from the traditional definition of power as control or domination, towards a definition that allows for shared authority. This results in greater achievements than would be attained by one organization working alone. Since no public safety agency operates in a vacuum, engaging system stakeholders in change efforts helps eliminate barriers, increases opportunities for success, enriches the change process, educates stakeholders about the agency's work, and creates a shared vision that supports the systemic change efforts.

Public safety system stakeholders include a wide range of entities, from prisons and police agencies to victim advocates and faith-based community organizations. Working collaboratively with all stakeholders in the planning and implementation of systemic change in corrections can result in a more coherent continuum of care, one that uses evidence-based principles to reduce recidivism. By collaborating with each other, public agencies and community-based providers can jointly provide a comprehensive and integrated array of services that could not be provided by a single agency or sector working alone. Access to a well-organized network of services and pro-social community connections can greatly enhance an offender's ability to succeed. The following strategies help make collaborative efforts more constructive and useful tools of social action and recidivism reduction.

**Collaboration Strategies**
1) Include the Right People / Agencies
2) Develop Sufficient Structure
3) Invest the Right Amount of Resources and Effort to Sustain Collaboration

**1) Include the Right People / Agencies**
As previously mentioned, a key concept in organizational development and the collaborative process is to ensure that those individuals and organizations most affected have a voice in the process of change. While organizational development focuses on the internal stakeholders, our collaboration work focuses on external entities. For collaboration to work, all relevant stakeholders must have a presence at the table. Since the actual number of participants must be somewhat limited to ensure efficiency, formal communication methods must be established to ensure that those unable to be at the table still have their views heard.

Leaders must assist stakeholders in understanding and appreciating the value that participation in the change process has for them. Involving external stakeholders not only increase their

understanding of the system, but can also help to identify overlapping client populations and shared goals. For example, as corrections agencies implement evidence-based principles, they will shift their resources focus onto higher-risk offenders. This shift in focus often results in decreased access to treatment resources for low-risk / high-need offenders. Involving human services agencies in the change planning process can help identify other treatment resources for these offenders.

The development of a policy-level committee that includes leaders from key stakeholder groups and helps to guide change is an essential component of implementing change in the public safety system. Members of the policy committee should include policy makers from key stakeholder organizations and community groups, including those supportive of the change and those who may pose potential barriers to implementation. Involving those who may not be entirely supportive of all planned changes ensures a richer policy development, educates those policy makers more fully about the system complexity, and may help to alleviate future barriers. The policy committee should be charged with guiding relative system-wide policy related to implementing evidence-based practices, implementing corresponding changes in their own organizations that support the system changes, and communicating with their own organization about the impact of system changes.

**Questions to ask:**
❖ What partnerships currently exist in your system?
❖ Where do new partnerships need to be forged?
❖ How does participation in the change process assist partners in accomplishing their missions?

**2) Develop Sufficient Structure**
Every collaboration needs some structure, but the degree of structure required for a collaboration to attain its goals may vary. Collaboration participants should choose a structure that supports their endeavors and fits their desired level of joint activity and risk. Methods of developing structure, such as charters, memoranda of understanding, and partnering agreements fulfill multiple purposes. For example, they can help clarify the authority and expectations of the group, roles / functions of all participants, focus parties on their responsibilities, and eliminate miscommunication and backtracking when inevitable staff changes occur. These tools should clarify decision-making responsibilities and emphasize the concept that no single agency or individual is *in charge* in the familiar sense. Instead, collaboration participants are empowered to do work in their own *center of expertise* to the enhancement of the collective goal.

**3) Invest the Right Amount of Resources and Effort to Sustain Collaboration**
Collaboration and system change are very time consuming and resource intensive processes. They require constant attention and nurturing to maintain momentum. *Acknowledging the inevitability of obstacles, admitting them when they reappear, developing collective strategies to overcome them, and having a sense of humor are all important in surviving the process* (Feely, 2000).

Working collaboratively with system partners provides a greater opportunity for successful implementation of true system change. With a united and common vision, the combined efforts

of stakeholders can achieve more than any one organization could achieve on its own.  No organization exists in a vacuum; therefore, recognizing the inherent interdependence and including it in the development of change implementation strategies, greatly enhances the chance of success.

**Questions to ask**
- ❖ What are the goals of the collaboration?
- ❖ Why are we collaborating?
- ❖ How are we going to collaborate?
- ❖ Who is going to do what?
- ❖ What are the communication pathways within our collaboration?
- ❖ Who has authority to make what decisions?
- ❖ How do we consciously develop mutual respect within our collaboration?

**A collaborative model for implementing change**
Collaborative endeavors must develop a balance between broad participation and the need to make decisions and take action.  *The collaborative process has to be perceived as fair, not dominated by one interest group, and accessible to all stakeholders* (Carter, Ley Steketee, Gavin, Stroker, Woodward, 2002).  It should ensure that the number of participants is small enough to allow for productivity, but broad enough to achieve widespread support.  The collaboration model that follows can be used to implement systemic change in criminal justice systems.  It identifies multiple levels of systemic involvement, both internal and external to the targeted organization.  The collaborative work takes place at all levels, including policy and implementation.  Although each level may share an overriding vision of system change as reduced recidivism, each has different work to do.  While the policy level team focuses on policy development that supports the systemic change, implementation teams are responsible for the practicalities of making that change happen.

Mutual respect and understanding are key to sustaining shared authority in collaborative relationships.  Borrowing from a concept developed by Michael Hammer in *Beyond Reengineering*, all partners are seen as *centers of excellence,* defined as *a collective of processionals, led by a coach, who join together to learn and enhance their skills and abilities to contribute best to whatever processes are being developed.  Each agency is an expert at performing its piece of the work of public safety* (Carter et al., 2002).

In the following model, teams include representation from these *centers of expertise*, such as the court, prosecution, defense, corrections, law enforcement, probation, and parole.  Each center may be a self-contained organization, but all are linked with the other centers through the public safety system.  The collaboration participants work together towards the shared vision of enhanced service provision and reduced recidivism.

**Figure 6**
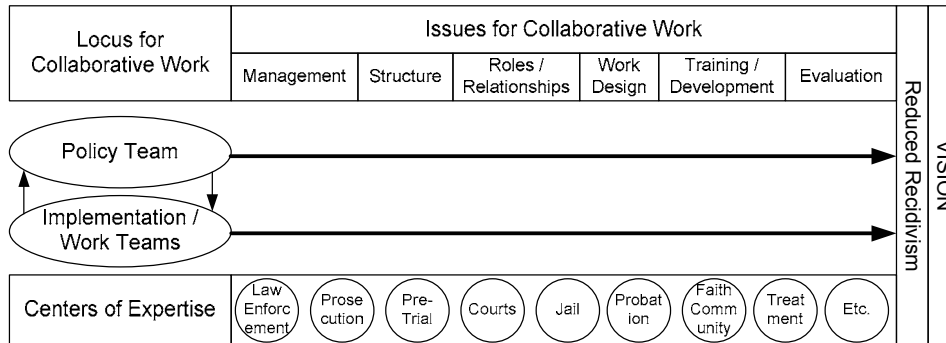


**Questions to ask**

❖ Are key stakeholders / centers of expertise involved within each locus of collaborative work?

❖ Do participants at all levels understand and buy in to the vision?

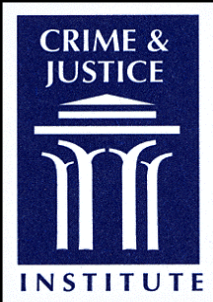❖ Do participants understand how collaboration works?

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**Essential elements of collaboration**
- Including the Right People
- Developing Structure
- Shared vision
- Unique purpose
- Clear roles and responsibilities
- Healthy communication pathways
- The right membership
- Respect and integrity
- Accountability to the collaboration and to the participating organizations
- Data-driven process
- Effective problem solving
- Sufficient resources, including staffing and facilitation
- An environment of trust and collaborative leadership

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## *Conclusion*

The research on evidence-based practices continues to emerge, and organizations around the world continue to work to translate this research into practice. The unique feature of this integrated model is its insistence that the systemic change required to do this cannot be fully implemented or sustained without equal and integrated focus on evidence-based principles, organizational development, and collaboration. The model builds heavily on work already being done by corrections systems. While it may not require heavy investment of new resources, it may require a change in the way existing resources are allocated, which can be just as challenging. Implementing this model requires strong leaders who are willing to challenge the status quo, advocate for better service provision, and strive for better outcomes.

The financial crisis facing criminal justice systems is forcing policy makers and administrators to rethink the old way of doing business and re-examine policies that favor institutional growth. The research is clear about which interventions result in reduced recidivism. Criminal justice leaders must be clear about whether or not they are willing to accept the status quo or take the steps necessary to make more effective use of the public resources allocated to corrections. If they opt for more effective use of resources and increased public safety, this model will guide corrections systems through the three components of successful implementation: evidence-based practices, organizational development, and collaboration.

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