Sustaining Implementation Team Engagement

This toolkit has highlighted resources for building your implementation team, and many of them apply to sustaining the team as well. Below are some additional suggestions to keep team members engaged and working.

Be flexible and willing to try new things, listen to ideas, and adapt. Stagnant or rigid environments can be stifling and block progress. Don't do things just because 'that's the way it's always been done.'

Communicate regularly and effectively. Keep members updated on progress and accomplishments, ask for feedback, and continue building and maintaining relationships.

Strive to create win-win situations. If engagement is lacking or members are losing connection to the team, think about how to re-engage them. How can you create the best outcome possible for everyone involved? Remember to compromise and meet people where they're at. See step 4 of this toolkit for more information.

Encourage leadership among members and involve them in decision making and planning. Use the team as an opportunity for mentorship and leadership development. Team members will also be more engaged and have more buy-in when they have a hand in making decisions and contributing to the strategic plan.

Create (or revise) a strategic plan that is specific and intentional. If members don't know their roles or what they can do to implement the plan, it can be difficult to stay engaged. Document who is responsible for each task so that duties are clearly outlined. This is another reason it's vital to involve team members in planning! Additionally, include dates/deadlines, consider adding a timeline for certain tasks. This can help keep the team on track. For more information on strategic planning, see step 6 of this toolkit.

Hold regular and actionable team meetings. If members have stopped attending or aren't getting anything out of meetings, assess the meeting structure and ask team members what needs changed. Set meeting agendas, take notes during meetings, and send follow up/reminder emails with any next steps or upcoming tasks that were discussed. See step 7 of this toolkit for additional resources.

Provide (or increase access to) training and professional development opportunities. Team engagement may be lacking if members don't feel equipped or aren't gaining something from membership. Training and professional development can increase readiness and willingness to engage in the implementation team. See step 7 of this toolkit for more information.

Recognize the hard work and efforts of team members. People work better in environments where they feel valued and appreciated, where their hard work is noticed. See step 7 of this toolkit for more information.

Resources

- A Sustainability Planning Guide for Healthy Communities - CDC - stacks.cdc.gov/view/cdc/11700
- Coalition Guide Resource - Society for Public Health Education - sophe.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Full-Resource-Guide.pdf
- Maintaining a Coalition - Community Tool Box - ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/promotion-strategies/maintain-a-coalition/main
- 3 Stages of Evaluating Coalition Progress - Ohio State University - ohioline.osu.edu/factsheet/CDFS-14
- Developing a Plan for Financial Sustainability - Community Tool Box - ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/finances/grants-and-financial-resources/financial-sustainability/main
- Maintaining Coalitions and Partnerships - Community Tool Box - ctb.ku.edu/en/creating-and-maintaining-coalitions-and-partnerships