LAUNCHING AN INITIATIVE

From Great Ideas to Institutionalized Practices
Think of an initiative you were a part of.
*(either current or past)*.

Use the handout to reflect on your journey.

Share the highlights of your journey with someone sitting next to you.
This research supports the work of my program!

I want to prove that the work of my organization generates similar results...
A Collaborative of 8 organizations and 3 Funders came together to:

1. Pilot an initiative to better connect our work to research.

1. Generate data with proof of our impact.
A Journey Of Learning

Uninformed Optimism

Informed Optimism

Informed Pessimism

Completion
A Journey Of Learning

Uninformed Optimism

Validating Our Work

Building a Research Toolkit

Informed Optimism

Informed Pessimism

Completion
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Validating Our Work

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Identifying Best Practices

Informed Pessimism

Informed Optimism

Completion
IDENTIFYING “BEST” PRACTICES

• Specific curricula was recommended according to a matrix
• Gave us clear strategies to try
• Turned out to be too prescriptive
• We felt on trial to prove our work
What’s more important – our FELT sense of what works, or aligning to academic research?
A Journey Of Learning

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New Initiative Fatigue

Informed Pessimism

Informed Optimism

Completion

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NEW INITIATIVE FATIGUE

• Began to lose motivation
• Staff didn’t see the point, or leaders moved on to other ideas
• We weren’t seeing results, and were out of our comfort zone as practitioners
• The evaluation focus on academic research caused unease.
Is our work important if it doesn’t directly impact kids’ GPAs?
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Moving to a Growth Mindset

Informed Optimism

Completion
CHANGING TRACKS

• Realized something was off, and got honest with each other!

• Shifted the Work
  – Moved to a “learning community model”
  – Focused on the assets of each of our programs, rather than implementing scripted curricula
  – Empowered each agency to build their own initiative
  – Held authentic conversations about what was working/not

• We named our own practices, and mapped them to research
A Journey Of Learning

- Uninformed Optimism
  - Validating Our Work
  - Building a Research Toolkit
  - Identifying Best Practices
  - New Initiative Fatigue

- Informed Optimism
  - Moving to a Growth Mindset
  - Changing Tracks
  - Owning Growth Mindset

- Informed Pessimism

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OWNING GROWTH MINDSET

• Culminated with a “Ted-Talk” style presentation with each agency sharing their learning
• We shifted from “dog and pony show” to an authentic reflection of where we started, where we got stuck, and how we leapt our hurdles
What is one thing you will do differently in the next initiative you launch?
What was the last initiative/project you were a part of?

What was exciting about this idea?

What challenges did you experience?

What was the final outcome?
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