Foundations for good implementation

1. Treat implementation as a process, not an event; plan and execute it in stages.
   - Allow enough time for effective implementation, particularly in the preparation stage; prioritise appropriately.

2. Create a leadership environment and school climate that is conducive to good implementation.
   - Set the stage for implementation through school policies, routines, and practices.
   - Identify and cultivate leaders of implementation throughout the school.
   - Build leadership capacity through implementation teams.

3. Explore
   - Define the problem you want to solve and identify appropriate programs or practices to implement.
   - Specify a tight area of focus for improvement that is amenable to change.
   - Determine a program of activity based on existing evidence of what has – and hasn’t – worked before.
   - Examine the fit and feasibility of possible interventions to the school context.
   - Make an adoption decision.

4. Prepare
   - Create a clear implementation plan, judge the readiness of the school to deliver that plan, then prepare staff and resources.
   - Develop a clear, logical, and well-specified implementation plan:
     a) Specify the active ingredients of the intervention clearly: know where to be ‘tight’ and where to be ‘loose’.
     b) Develop a targeted, yet multi-stranded, package of implementation strategies.
     c) Define clear implementation outcomes and monitor them using robust and pragmatic measures.
   - Thoroughly assess the degree to which the school is ready to implement the innovation.
   - Once ready to implement an intervention, practically prepare for its use:
     a) Create a shared understanding of the implementation process and provide appropriate support and incentives.
     b) Introduce new skills, knowledge, and strategies with explicit up-front training.
     c) Prepare the implementation infrastructure.

5. Deliver
   - Support staff, monitor progress, solve problems, and adapt strategies as the approach is used for the first time.
   - Adopt a flexible and motivating leadership approach during the initial attempts at implementation.
   - Reinforce initial training with follow-on coaching within the school.
   - Use highly skilled coaches.
   - Complement expert coaching and mentoring with structured peer-to-peer collaboration.
   - Use implementation data to actively tailor and improve the approach.
   - Make thoughtful adaptations only when the active ingredients are securely understood and implemented.

6. Sustain
   - Plan for sustaining and scaling an intervention from the outset and continuously acknowledge and nurture its use.
   - Plan for sustaining and scaling an innovation from the outset.
   - Treat scale-up as a new implementation process.
   - Ensure the implementation data remains fit for purpose.
   - Continuously acknowledge, support, and reward good implementation practices.

Summary of recommendations

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