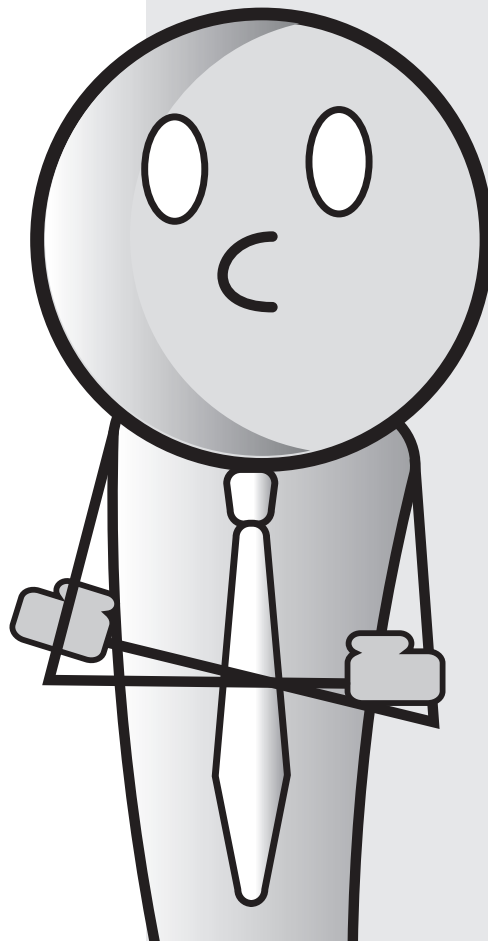


# Planning

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# Six Stages of Research Integration

Often research in practice involves knowledge sharing, reflective practice, and knowledge transfer. Use of research can be as simple as reading and understanding results or can require more in-depth reflection and analysis such as when the research is influencing a specific decision or choice.

The model presented here introduces six stages of research integration.<sup>6</sup> These stages are not hierarchical. Practitioners may opt to stay at one stage or move through all six to full integration. The key is to work effectively at any given stage.

The tools in this section take a close look at each stage and are meant to be self-reflective for practitioners to help identify where they and their agency is when it comes to integrating literacy research into program practice. There is no right or wrong stage and no expectation to move from one stage to the next or an ultimate goal to reach Stage 6.

It is a sliding scale and agencies may decide to stay at a certain stage for a variety of reasons such as capacity, funding or organizational policies.

*The 3Rs of Research Desktop Tool* complements the planning documents in this section. If displayed prominently in your work space, it can serve as a regular reminder of the actions you are undertaking to help you work effectively at whatever stage you are at and to help you move forward to another stage, if you are interested. The planning sheets in the toolkit are colour-coded to match the stages. Each sheet provides strategies and space for recording your individual and agency plans related to integrating research into practice.

The planning sheets are also on the Tools and Template CD included with the toolkit for those who prefer to work directly from a computer screen or to print and copy the sheets on white paper.

Practitioners may also be at different stages of research integration depending on his/her area of interest. For example, a practitioner who is mainly



teaching to adults who have employment goals may be accessing a lot of research related to Essential Skills. He or she may be actually making changes in the way the program is delivered based on research that has been reviewed. In this case the practitioner is likely at Stage 4 (Program Implementation).

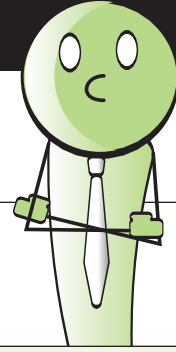
However, that same practitioner may also just be starting to notice that several students are having difficulty with the program due to potential learning disabilities. This may be an area the practitioner doesn't have a lot of knowledge and experience with and so is starting to seek out resources and research related to learning disabilities. In this case, the practitioner is likely at Stage 1 (Awareness) or Stage 2 (Information Gathering).

The key to using the planning documents in the toolkit is to have an area of interest or program goal in mind before starting the exercises, but Stage 1 *Reflective Planning Sheet* can help identify an area of interest if needed.

<sup>6</sup> Adapted from model developed by the Alberta Workforce Essential Skills Society (AWESS) 2004.

## 1

## Awareness

**Practitioners at this stage**

- *have a general awareness of research information and products that are available.*
- *are aware of research information and products their agency has received but haven't spent time reviewing and reflecting upon it.*
- *have started to think about goals and niche areas for their program, but have yet to make a connection with them and research that is available.*

**EXAMPLE** You attend a training session hosted by your regional network. During the lunch two other practitioners are discussing a new manual they are using that helps link Essential Skills to Learning Outcomes. When you return to work you see the manual they were talking about has also been delivered to your program. You have not introduced the concept of Essential Skills to your learners so you aren't sure how to proceed and continue to offer the same curriculum that you did before attending the training.

**Self-Reflection**

- This stage reflects where I am and where I am satisfied staying.
- This stage reflects where I am but I am interested in moving to the next stage.
- I am beyond this stage.

**If you checked the first box,** see the *Reflective Planning Sheet* on the back of this page for strategies to plan and track activities to help you work effectively at this stage.

**If you checked the second box,** see the Stage 2 *Reflective Planning Sheet* for strategies to plan and track activities to help you move to the next stage.

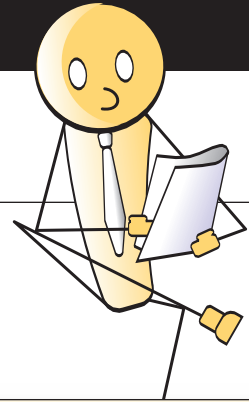
**To help you work effectively at this stage or to help you move towards this stage, try some of these strategies:**

- Develop a list that summarizes some of the main characteristics and goals of the learners in your program.
- Look at the research materials already sitting on the shelves of your agency and try to set aside time to review the titles to see if there are any links to your learners' goals and characteristics.
- Write down names of resources you hear other practitioners talking about that relate to your learners' goals. Use support organizations such as regional networks or NALD (National Adult Literacy Database) to access some of the research resources you have listed that aren't already housed at your agency.
- Review the research titles you have noted and the goals of your learners and try to pick one or two areas of interest that you can become more aware of through research.





## 2

Information  
Gathering**Practitioners at this stage**

- are aware of research and resources that are available and are interested in learning more.
- have done some preliminary networking with people who have used research related to their area of interest.
- have identified a connection between research that is available and their area of interest, but still feel like novices on the subject.

**Self-Reflection**

- This stage reflects where I am and where I am satisfied staying.
- This stage reflects where I am but I am interested in moving to the next stage.
- I am beyond this stage.

**If you checked the first box,** see the *Reflective Planning Sheet* on the back of this page for strategies to plan and track activities to help you work effectively at this stage.

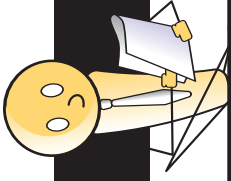
**EXAMPLE** A report detailing ways to identify learning disabilities in adults was received by your agency some time ago, but you didn't have time to review it. Recently, you've heard other practitioners discussing it so you set aside some time to review it yourself. Several learners in your program have identified that they were diagnosed with a learning disability when they were younger but they don't know many details. You aren't sure what the next step is but some of what you read in the report sounds like your students. You decide you are going to look through your agency's resource library for other research on the subject of learning disabilities.

**If you checked the second box,** see the *Stage 3 Reflective Planning Sheet* for strategies to plan and track activities to help you move to the next stage.

**To help you work effectively at this stage or to help you move towards this stage, try some of these strategies:**

- Review and organize the research already received by your agency into mini-collections that relate to some of the main goals and characteristics of your learners. Keep these collections in a workspace that is easily accessible to you and other practitioners.
- Develop a system for earmarking research received by your agency that you have yet to review. Consider using *The 3Rs of Desktop Planning Tool* distributed with the toolkit as a guide for identifying and reviewing key research.
- Keep track and record research you have read that you related to and enjoyed reading so that you can search out other research by the same author or same topic.
- Investigate research that has already been developed and/or integrated into other programs through support organizations like regional and sectoral networks.





STAGE

Reflective Planning Sheet

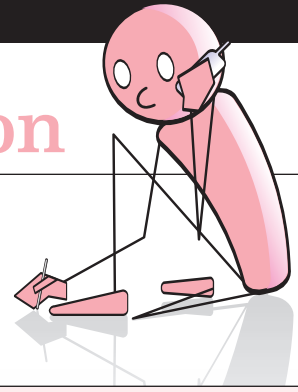
2

Information Gathering

To plan and work effectively at Stage 2, fill in the columns to help you gather information related to your research area of interest. If you are using this sheet for more than one research area of interest, use the different rows for each separate area. This becomes your personal training plan for working at Stage 2 of Research Integration.

Remember to keep copies of the chart in a file to use as evidence of program effectiveness under the Continuous Improvement Performance Management System (CIPMS). Share the information with your manager, Board of Directors, regional network and MTCU Field Consultant.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Write down the research area(s) of interest you have chosen to focus on.</li> <li>If you don't have an area of interest, complete the Stage 1 planning sheet then transfer the information to this column.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Write down any key initiatives that are part of the Ministry's focus for the next year.</li> <li>If you have access to your agency's business plan or strategic plan, write down some top priorities for the next year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review or ask if you can access your community's Literacy Services Plan (LSP).</li> <li>Make note of any trends, opportunities and gaps in adult literacy services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make note of any other resources or research you would like to access.</li> <li>Write down any websites that are related to your area of interest.</li> <li>Make note of any training and other professional development you are aware of in the next year related to your area of interest.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on the information in the first four columns, write down at least one new resource, website and professional development event you are going to try and access in the next year.</li> </ul>



### Practitioners at this stage

- have spent time reading and reviewing research on a topic of relevance to their program.
- have identified specific research they are interested in perhaps integrating into their program.
- are aware of any changes that may need to be made in the program but have yet to move forward because of concerns around anticipated barriers and challenges (i.e. lack of time or organizational support).

**EXAMPLE** You attended a workshop where the facilitator shared materials about keeping learners motivated and attending programs regularly. This has been an ongoing issue in your program. You have read other research about this topic and that's why you decided to attend the workshop. You like the materials the facilitator presented, especially the 'Code of Conduct' for learners. You think this 'code' could work in your program but it would require some policy changes and the support of your program manager. You know if you bring the idea forward you will likely be charged with the job of creating a template for your agency and getting the policies revised. You are already overwhelmed with your workload and decide you need to speak with other practitioners who have implemented this in their program before you move forward on making any changes.

### Self-Reflection

- This stage reflects where I am and where I am satisfied staying.
- This stage reflects where I am but I am interested in moving to the next stage.
- I am beyond this stage.

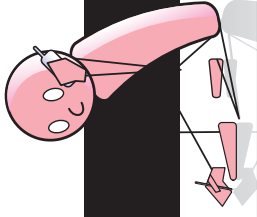
**If you checked the first box,** see the *Reflective Planning Sheet* on the back of this page for strategies to plan and track activities to help you work effectively at this stage.

**If you checked the second box,** see the *Stage 4 Reflective Planning Sheet* for strategies to plan and track activities to help you move to the next stage.

**To help you work effectively at this stage or to help you move towards this stage, try some of these strategies:**

- Consult with key stakeholders in your agency to identify areas in your program that you would like to change and/or enhance. Record these ideas and list any related research titles.
- Start a collection of resources, support materials and research information related to the program ideas you want to integrate. Before seeking out new materials be sure to first review existing materials you already have, especially those received in the last 2-3 years.
- Seek out peers in your literacy community who can be potential partners or support team members should you move forward towards integration. Use your regional and sectoral networks and local planning committees to find people interested in similar research areas.
- Set aside specific time during this reflection period to record details of areas that will be impacted by any changes made, as well as potential barriers. Talk to people who have made similar changes about the barriers and seek recommendations they can share.





# STAGE

# 3 Reflective Planning Sheet

## Impact Reflection

**To plan and work effectively at Stage 2**, fill in the columns to help you think about potential impacts of any changes that you make and any possible challenges and barriers. If you are using this sheet for more than one research area of interest, use the different rows for each separate area. This becomes your personal training plan for working at Stage 3 of Research Integration.

**Remember to keep copies of the chart in a file** to use as evidence of program effectiveness under the Continuous Improvement Performance Management System (CIPMS). Share the information with your manager, Board of Directors, regional network and MTCU Field Consultant.

- Write down the main area of interest you have been collecting information about.
- If you haven't been focusing on one or two main areas of research, complete the Stages 1 & 2 planning sheets.

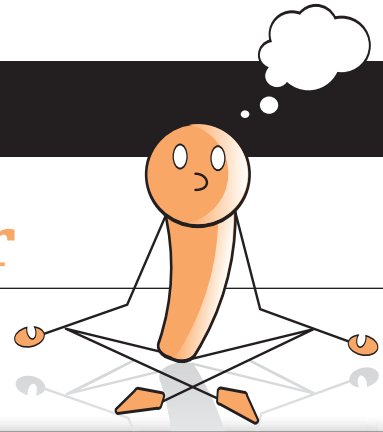
- Write down any specific research you have reviewed that you are interested in.
- Write down any details you particularly related to from the research you have reviewed to date.

- Make note of any new program ideas you have.
- Write down the service delivery function that your ideas relate to (i.e. curriculum, assessment, recruitment).

- Record any barriers or challenges you anticipate as a result of your ideas.

- Based on the information you recorded in the first four columns decide what your next step(s) should be.
- Make note of timelines and key people related to the next steps.


# Preparing for Change



## Practitioners at this stage

- are ready to make changes in their program based on research they have reviewed and reflected upon.
- have identified key outcomes they hope to achieve as a result of the change(s) and the areas within their program that will be impacted (i.e. curriculum, assessment, policies).
- may still have concerns about efficiency, time demands, and managing the changes, but their attention is focused on the processes and tasks involved in implementing the change.

**EXAMPLE** You have spent the last few months reading, reviewing and reflecting on various research reports about the value of involving learners in your organization. You have had discussions with your coordinator about several ways two or three learners in your class could be more involved in helping run the organization. You have drafted some job descriptions for learners who may be interested in volunteering with general office work. You understand it's going to be some extra work on your part training and monitoring the learner volunteers but you have talked to two who are interested and you are ready to get them started.

## Self-Reflection

- This stage reflects where I am and where I am satisfied staying.
- This stage reflects where I am but I am interested in moving to the next stage.
- I am beyond this stage.

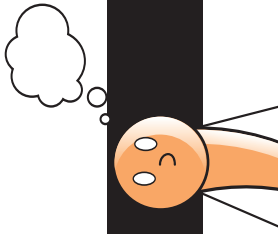
**If you checked the first box,** see the *Reflective Planning Sheet* on the back of this page for strategies to plan and track activities to help you work effectively at this stage.

**If you checked the second box,** see the *Stage 5 Reflective Planning Sheet* for strategies to plan and track activities to help you move to the next stage.

## To help you work effectively at this stage or to help you move towards this stage, try some of these strategies:

- Ensure you have taken the proper steps to have the organizational support needed to make any program changes, including consulting with management and reviewing current policies.
- Develop a team of people within your organization or literacy community who will support your ideas and help carry out changes you want to make.
- Start small by identifying just one or two minor changes that can be implemented. Make note of the outcomes you want to achieve, and attach timelines if possible.
- Consider doing a 'time audit' (see template in Section 4 of this toolkit) or similar exercise to see where there is potential for freeing up time in your existing schedule so that you can adequately continue to review and reflect on related research.





This chart can also be found on the CD distributed as part of this toolkit. ●●●●

**STAGE**

**Reflective Planning Sheet**

**4**

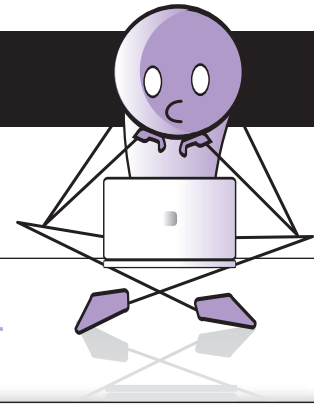
**Preparing for Change**

**To plan and work effectively at Stage 6**, fill in the columns to help you prepare for the changes you are considering or about to make. If you are using this sheet for more than one area of change, use the different rows for each separate area. This becomes your personal training plan for working at Stage 4 of Research Integration.

**Remember to keep copies of the chart in a file** to use as evidence of program effectiveness under the Continuous Improvement Performance Management System (CIPMS). Share the information with your manager, Board of Directors, regional network and MTCU Field Consultant.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Write down the main changes you are considering or are about to make in your program.</li> <li>If you don't know what changes you want to make, complete the Stage 3 planning sheet.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you've been tracking potential partners or support people, make note of those you've connected with.</li> <li>Highlight the people who have committed to provide support over the next year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make note of any further research or resources you still need to access before making any changes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Record how much time you are able to devote to further review and reflection around this particular program area.</li> <li>If you have specific time slots you are setting aside for planning, write them down.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on the information you have recorded in the first four columns, decide when you will start implementing any changes to your program.</li> <li>Write down any speakers, training or other events you have planned in the next year related to this change.</li> </ul>					

# Program Implementation



## Practitioners at this stage

- *have made changes to their program based on research and products they have reviewed.*
- *have a plan in place for monitoring and evaluating the changes.*
- *are continuing to set aside time each week to reflect on the changes and review related research.*

**EXAMPLE** For several months you have been using a new intake tool with learners that provides a skills-based/employment-related assessment for learners. You have reviewed the training plans of these learners and see that the assessment results have helped create the learning activities and demonstrations for these learners. You have conducted follow-up interviews with the learners who have agreed that they are more focused on their employment-related goals based on the learning activities they are completing in the program. You are satisfied with the results of the change, will continue to review the impact, and continue to use the new assessment tool.

## Self-Reflection

- This stage reflects where I am and where I am satisfied staying.
- This stage reflects where I am but I am interested in moving to the next stage.
- I am beyond this stage.

**If you checked the first box,** see the *Reflective Planning Sheet* on the back of this page for strategies to plan and track activities to help you work effectively at this stage.

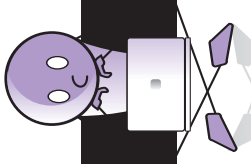
**If you checked the second box,** see the Stage 6 *Reflective Planning Sheet* for strategies to plan and track activities to help you move to the next stage.

## To help you work effectively at this stage or to help you move towards this stage, try some of these strategies:

- Continue to look closely at your weekly schedule and prioritize activities. Look at ways you can streamline or delegate some of your tasks so that you can manage the integration without it being a burden to your workload.
- Keep any documentation that records challenges, successes and upcoming evaluation readily accessible. Ensure you are monitoring the changes you have made regularly and are capturing information in a timely way to include in evaluation.
- Continue to devote a reasonable amount of time on a regular basis (at least monthly) to reflect on the new program practices.
- Check in with members of your support team regularly to share results. If possible, appoint a lead who will continue to collect related research, review existing research already accessible to your agency, and consult with key stakeholders and experts.



This chart can also be found on the CD distributed as part of this toolkit. ●●●●



STAGE

Reflective Planning Sheet

5

Program Implementation

To plan and work effectively at Stage 6, fill in the columns to help you ensure that any changes you have implemented are working. If you are using this sheet for more than one program change, use the different rows for each separate area. This becomes your personal training plan for working at Stage 5 of Research Integration.

Remember to keep copies of the chart in a file to use as evidence of program effectiveness under the Continuous Improvement Performance Management System (CIPMS). Share the information with your manager, Board of Directors, regional network and MTCU Field Consultant.

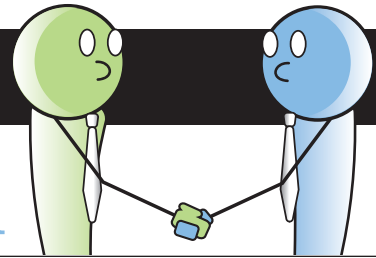
- Write down the specific changes you made to your program based on research ideas you integrated.
- If you have not made any changes complete the Section 4 planning sheet.

- Write down the outcomes you are hoping to achieve as a result of the changes.
- Make note of the first evaluation date planned related to this change. (It should be at least three months from the implementation date.)

- Make note of special highlights and positive impacts as a result of the changes made.

- Make note of any barriers and challenges you have faced to date related to the integration changes.

- Based on the information you have recorded in the first four columns, write down further research and/or activity you are planning related to this program change.
- Write down who you are sharing your evaluation results with and when.

## and Exploration

### Practitioners at this stage

- are continuing to monitor the program change they have made and resulting impact(s).
- are sharing the results of their work with others.
- have started to explore more universal benefits of the research.

### Self-Reflection

- This stage reflects where I am and where I am satisfied staying.
- This stage reflects where I am, but at this time I feel I need to step back to another stage.

**If you checked the first box,** see the *Reflective Planning Sheet* on the back of this page for strategies to plan and track activities to help you work effectively at this stage.

**If you checked the second box,** refer to the appropriate *Reflective Planning Sheet* in this toolkit related to the stage where you would like to work more effectively.

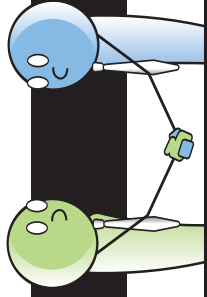
**EXAMPLE** For over a year your agency has successfully integrated research results into program practice through the development of a program designed strictly for women entering or re-entering the workforce. You have used various research reports and products to shape the curriculum and policies of the program with great success. During this time you have noticed there are issues specific to women who are also mothers. You and the management of your agency think there is enough demand and interest to start a program just for mothers in the workforce. You would like to collect more information and partner with a local Ontario Works agency to do your own research before making the change. You plan to apply for special funding to conduct your own research project around this subject. You have discussed the project with members of the LSP committee in the region and have the support of other agencies to move forward with the plan.

**To help you work effectively at this stage or to help you move towards this stage, try some of these strategies:**

- Create summaries of the work you have done and practices you have integrated so that you can quickly share the results with other practitioners, agencies and funders. Consider using the *Information Sharing* template included in Section 4 of this toolkit or something similar. Think about opportunities for you to share this information such as at conferences, networking meetings, and community stakeholder events.
- Communicate regularly with key stakeholders in your agency. Ensure all are aware of the changes and are provided with updates and summaries on how it is working so they, too, can speak in an informed way about the program.
- Start to look at other areas of your program that have been impacted as a result of the new practices you have implemented such as increased attendance, higher enrollment, and more learners reaching their goals. Document these results.
- Continue to reflect on your program practices and identify new or related areas of research you want to read and analyze. Consider further research that you and your agency can participate in that can support and/or enhance the changes you have already made.



USE THE CHART ON THE OTHER SIDE



# STAGE

## Reflective Planning Sheet

# 6 Collaboration and Exploration

**To plan and work effectively at Stage 6**, fill in the columns to help you plan ways you can share your experiences and gain further knowledge. If you are using this sheet for more than one program area you are pursuing further, use the different rows for each separate area. This becomes your personal training plan for working at Stage 6 of Research Integration.

**Remember to keep copies of the chart in a file** to use as evidence of program effectiveness under the Continuous Improvement Performance Management System (CIPMS). Share the information with your manager, Board of Directors, regional network and MTCU Field Consultant.

- Write down the key highlights from the evaluation results of your program change, both positive and negative.
- If you do not have a clear understanding of the results of your changes complete the Section 5 planning sheet.

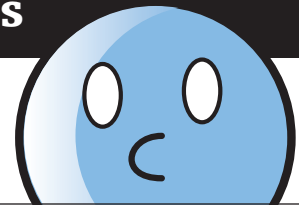
- Record whether you have completed an information sharing sheet (using the template in this toolkit or something similar).
- If you haven't completed a summary, make note of when you anticipate being able to do that.

- Record how you plan to distribute the information you have written.
- Provide details of times, events and key people that will receive the summary.

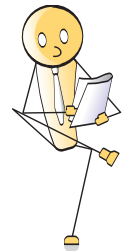
- Write down any expansion or other ideas related to the program change that you want to explore further.

- Based on the information you have recorded in the first four columns decide what your next steps will be related to this program area.
- If you are planning to pursue further research funding make note of the details. Include potential partners and sources of support.


# Research in Practice Guiding Principles

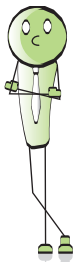


Whatever stage a practitioner is at related to research integration, **it's important to continuously review and reflect upon practices** in an effort to be using research effectively. A practitioner going through all six stages will be incorporating all of the guiding principles listed below. Those working successfully at certain stages will be applying the guiding principles related to that particular stage. The colour-coded numbers beside each principle represent the colour that corresponds to the particular stage the principle is suited to.



## 1

### Make Time for Review and Reflection



- Set aside a reasonable amount of time to review research that interests you and is relevant to the goals of your program.
- Negotiate with your manager an amount of paid time a week or month that can be devoted to review and reflection.
- Look at other tasks you do during the week. Are there areas that can be delegated to others or streamlined to be more efficient?
- Do you have any free personal time that you are willing to put towards review and reflection of research?

## 2

### Identify Area for Change

- What area of your program could benefit from integrating research into practice (curriculum, assessment, program content, policy)?
- What are some of the anticipated challenges and barriers?
- Document proposed changes in a plan of action using the *Reflective Planning Sheets* in this toolkit or something similar.

## 4

### Create a Support Team

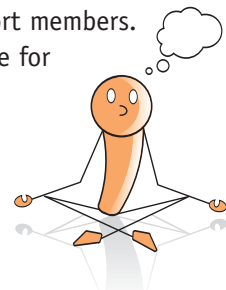
- Identify people in your agency who need to be involved in the change (other staff, learners, board members, etc.).
- Identify others who can lend support or who are working towards the same goal in their program. Use the Literacy Services Plan committee to talk about your plans and to recruit support and partners.
- Create a small research circle or support team who will communicate regularly, even if it's just one other person. Utilize the literacy support network such as regional and sectoral networks to spread the word and recruit support members.
- Appoint a lead or designate for the team.

## 3

### Define the Outcome



- By implementing changes to your program based on the research, what do you hope to achieve? Will the change be attitudinal, skills improvement, policy level?
- Document the outcomes in your plan of action.
- Set reasonable timelines for seeing positive results. Most research states it takes at least 18 months to successfully integrate research into practice.

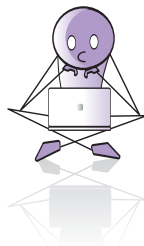


# Research in Practice Guiding Principles



## 5 Call Upon Experts in the Field

- Develop a list of experts and key stakeholders who are familiar with the research area you are interested in and who can provide more insight. Examples can be researchers, advisory committee members attached to research, regional or sectoral network staff, and other people cited in specific research or bibliographies.
- Seek other practitioners who have successfully integrated similar research into their program practice.
- Invite experts to meetings of your support team or have the lead of your team connect with them to bring back more information to the group.
- Consult with the support organizations in the literacy field and use online communication methods such as AlphaCom to seek out experts.

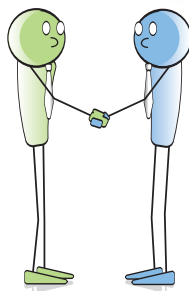


## 7 Design a Program Model

- Based on the analysis, reflection and trial periods, work with your team to design a program model that can be built into your existing model.
- Identify barriers that need to be addressed and come up with strategies.
- Look at the impact of the changes on your time and your job as well as other members of the team who are affected.
- Develop activities, steps and an evaluation plan for the new model.

## 9 Evaluate

- Evaluate the results as per the timelines identified in your plan.
- Make changes based on evaluation results.
- Discuss results with your support team.
- Learn from negative evaluation results as well. You can learn as much from what doesn't work in programs as what does.



## 6 Continue to Review and Reflect

- As ideas and plans are discussed, allow time for further review and reflection.
- Continue to collect and review relevant research and communicate with your team on a weekly or monthly basis.
- Seek out strategies, tips and ideas from experts and stakeholders.
- Set aside an additional block of time for in-depth reading, reflecting and analysis. Ideally, this time of reflection should span several weeks so that, as you are beginning to think about new ways to integrate practices into your program, you can try them within your program and then reflect more.

## 8 Integrate the New Practices

- Document all the changes being made onto the *Reflective Planning Sheets* in this toolkit or a similar action plan template.
- Continue to reflect on the program practices and make adaptations as necessary.
- Check in with your team and review your plan frequently.

## 10 Share Results

- Develop a brief, clear summary that highlights the research you reviewed, the strategies you implemented and the outcomes you achieved using the *Information Sharing Template* included in this toolkit (Section 4) or something similar.
- Share the results of your work with other practitioners.
- Distribute the summary to other practitioners, agency and support organizations.
- Offer your support and expertise to others looking at similar action.
- Use existing communication pathways of regional, sectoral and provincial support organizations to promote and share your work.