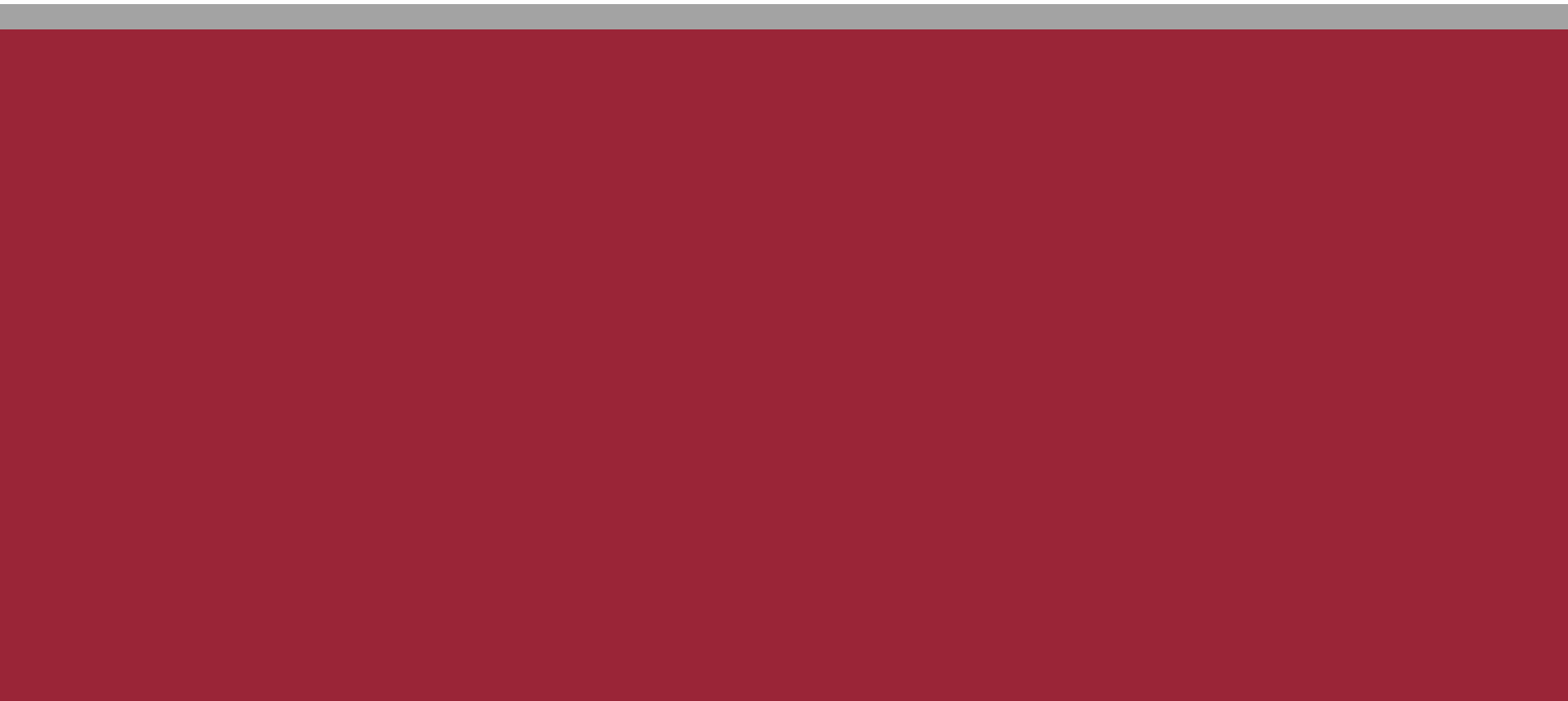




RAMSEY COUNTY

*Working with you to enhance our quality of life*



# Executive Function: A new Frontier for Workforce and Other Programs that aim to Build Adult Capacities

Enhanced Coaching Pilot

## Goodwill/Easter Seals MN

- Co-create
  - Co-present
  - Co-sponsored
  - Co-shared vision, mission and value
  - Co-believe
  - Evaluation/outcome drive
-

- Starting
  - Why it is important
  - Life Long Learning
  - Emerging Service Strategies and Interventions
  - Enhanced Coaching Project
  - Evaluation
-

- FAST Program
- Preparation for the overall RFP
- Evaluation and Research
- Review of current outcomes
- Review and understanding of current Labor Market Conditions in MN
- Creating a vision for the Ramsey County MFIP/DWP system ( share vision hand out)
- Setting import key goals-engagement, education, employment, employment retention
- WIOA
- DHS goals
- Change in MFIP educational policy
- Emerging research
- Cuts in funds
- Ramsey County Board Goal
- WIB Goals and Strategic Planning

Who are these Families

Growing number of FSS Families

Long Reach of Early Childhood  
Poverty

Experience with transitional work and  
FSS

Experience with SSI advocacy service

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No real change in Employment and Engagement outcomes

Focus on process and not outcomes

Focus on case management vs. coaching

Focus on being an expert as staff vs believing that participant is an expert

System that supported disabilities vs seeing abilities

- Ramsey County RFP
- Defining a need for a better outcome based system



- System training and education
  - System change
  - Advocacy for the change
  - Creating of new tools
  - Investing into families
-

Life Long Learning- adults can learn

A Caution

“Executive Functioning Disorder” is a diagnosis used by some medical communities. Please take heed as we are using this a skill development strategy and not as a diagnostic tool!

While everyone can benefit from  
idea of “lifelong learning,” not  
everyone in poverty has “diminished  
EF capacity.”

Approach from a strength-based  
point of view.

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*“Furthermore, when we engage with children who may have heard negative words that instill self-doubt, that then fuel negative or challenging behaviors, it is critical that we arm ourselves with tools and strategies to provide a counter-story. We must give, instill and demonstrate an image of strength in our children; assuring them that we see and believe in their greatness and in their potential.”*

*Gevonee Ford, NdCAD*

- Remember the same philosophy holds true for all of us including the participants and their children.

- Strength based approach to program design and mentoring
- Encourage participant voice and engagement
- Motivate participant and work with motivated participant
- Support each step family takes, reward effort
- Respect the rights and dignity of the family, appreciate diversity and views, opinions and experiences
- Grow social capital through peer networks, coaches and community

- Co Created with staff
- Adopted from CWU and Employability Measure DHS
- Done by the participant
- Counselor is coaching and helping participant to move forward
- Co-investment, intervention match the client's level of investment with similar program investments
- Creating networks
- Setting SMART GOAL
- Teaching how to set a SMAT GOAL


- Strength-based approach to program design and mentoring
- Encourage participant voice and engagement in program design and evolution
- Support private steps families take to strengthen or improve family of independence
- Respect the rights and dignity and appreciate the diversity and range of view, opinions and experiences
- Utilize defined selection proves in program, eligibility criteria and distribution of rewards
- Seek to grow social capital through peer networks, mentors, and community leadership skills.

- Blend a strength-based approach with an assessment to clarify participant's goals and construct participant plans
- Participant-centered, strength-based, coaching tool that supports participant's life long learning
- Help participant and counselor to learn ways in which the participant increased their role in choosing one's goal while working within MFIP requirements
- Use of Motivational Interview and Coaching to solicit information

**Ramsey County Workforce Solution's My Bridge of Strength**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



Family Stability			Well-Being			Education	Financial and Legal		Employment
Housing	Dependent Care	Transportation	Health	Children's Behavior	Social Support	Education	Financial	Legal	Workplace Skills
I have stable and safe unsubsidized housing	I have reliable child care and back-up	I have reliable transportation and backup	No health concerns affect my employment	Behavior does not limit my employment	I have consistent and effective social support and/or a leadership role in the community	I have at least an AA degree or higher	My income is stable, I am current on my bills, I have money for saving or spending	I have no current legal issues	My strong workplace skills enhance my employability and support career advancement
I have stable and safe housing that is subsidized	I have reliable child care but no backup	I have reliable transportation but no backup	Health concerns sometimes affect my employment	Behavior sometimes affects my employment	I have generally reliable social support that is growing	I have a high school diploma, GED, or entry-level certificate or a post secondary certificate	My income is stable, I am current on my bills but I don't have money for saving or spending	My legal issues are not work related and do not take work time	My workplace skills support my employability
I am living in temporary housing, unsafe housing, or am at risk of losing housing	I have child care but it is not reliable	I have transportation options but they are not reliable	Health concerns often affect my employment	Behavior often affects my employment	I have a limited social support network with few positive influences	I am attending high school, GED, entry-level certificate classes, or other training	My income is sometimes enough to cover my basic living expenses	My legal issues take me away from work some times	My workplace skills often interfere with my employability
My family has no housing	I have no child care		Health concerns prevent my employment	Behavior prevents my employment	I have no social support; my network is draining or destructive	I have no high school diploma, GED, or entry-level certificate	My income is not enough to cover my basic living expenses	I lack certain jobs, or I have lost jobs because of my legal issues.	I need to work on my workplace skills in order to obtain employment

Strengths: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Workplace skills include, but are not limited to, decision making, communication, conflict resolution, problem solving, anger management, time management, crisis management, planning, relationship skills, prioritizing, grooming, and other capabilities that facilitate job performance.



Specific  
Measurable  
Attainable  
Relevant  
Time-limited

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RAMSEY COUNTY/WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS

## GOAL ACTION PLAN

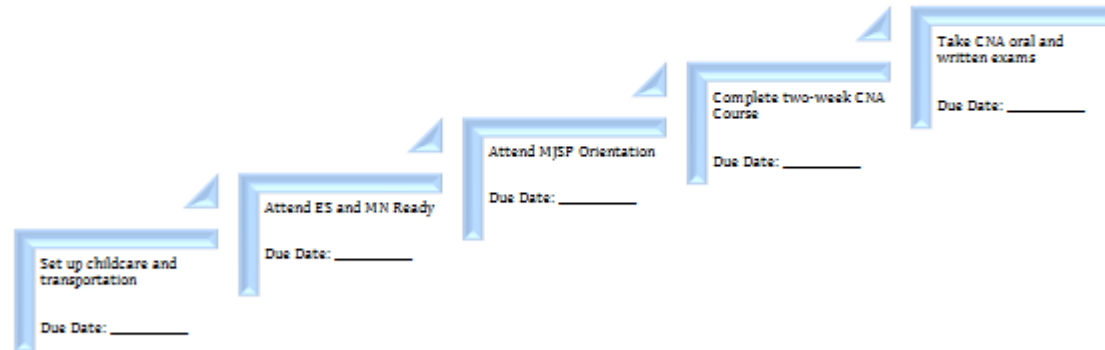
Participant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Case Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

My Goal is: \_\_\_\_\_ Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

What strengths will I use to accomplish my goal: \_\_\_\_\_

Check the goal and action steps against SMART criteria:  Specific  Measurable  Attainable  Relevant  Time-based

Instructions: Once you develop your goal, identify the action steps that you will need to achieve along the way. Your action steps should also meet the SMART criteria.



Date of next appointment: \_\_\_\_\_ Was this goal obtained or discontinued?:  YES  NO If yes, date: \_\_\_\_\_

If no, what stopped you? \_\_\_\_\_

## Staff Focus Group

- One September 2014, One March 2015

## Participant Focus Groups

- Two September 2014, Two March 2015

## Staff Evaluations

## Participant Evaluations

## Administrative Data – Descriptive Analysis

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Since staff started using the Bridge, what has been your most positive experience?

1. **Goals:** Participants that previously didn't come in, now show up for appointments because they have goals and they are meeting them.
2. **Attitude changes:** Noticeable improvement and it shows in results.
3. **Home visits:** "What is best able to do with Bridge is going and doing home visits, getting to know their situations and their families."
4. **Additional Quotes:**
  - A. "Since implementing the Bridge...very positive...is the collaboration between staff and myself. We work as a team because the best way to success is through team work."
  - B. "Using Motivational Interviewing to go through the Bridge completion work."
  - C. "I just developed three action plans with a client who has usually been hard to work with...she is really taking advantage of the opportunities coming to her."
  - D. "I use the Bridge with housing clients and with a housing advocate present so we can blend the dual expectations into one plan...all tied together."

From staff perspective, how have participants received the Bridge concept?

1. **Doorway** - “They are receiving it...they have a lot of barriers...Bridge is a doorway to address them...”
2. **Choices** - “Happy getting to make more and broader choices.”  
“...people see how all difficult aspects of life are tied together...leads the client to identify and make choices.”
3. **Empowering** - “When we tell them it is empowering them, they open their eyes.”
4. **Barriers to Potential** - “Be sure to explain to not only see barriers but through explanation they can see how it can open...”
5. **Counselor skills** - “Is also a learning process for counselors...”
6. **2-way learning** - “Helpful for clients to do the Bridge with the counselor...gets more information and interaction.”
7. **A discussion about when to discuss the Bridge with participants is incorporated into ongoing training.**

## Participant Focus Group (4)

Was the Bridge of Strength your first attempt to set goals with your employment guidance counselor?

1. Yes (4) Previous counselor told them what to do, but weren't very interested in their personal goals.
2. All completed goals and one already received a job offer, another expects an offer, and the other two have enrolled in education.
3. Deadlines are very helpful, they already know they need to get a job, but the goals along the way are necessary and they appreciated being pushed to achieve the goals they set for themselves. They felt involved in the process for the first time.

How easy or difficult was it to focus on your strengths as you completed the Bridge of Strength?

- A lot at first, but encouragement of ES counselor really helped
- Motivation was noted by many, needed to feel motivated and focusing on their own goals made that easier than focusing on someone else's goals.
- Another participant thought the process was easy and one even thought it was too easy, until it came to achieving the goals, but the pressure was a good thing.
- What did you like the most about the Bridge of Strength?
  - Deadlines and variation in short, medium, and long-term goals (not just “get a job”)
- What did you like the least about the Bridge of Strength?
  - It didn't come soon enough (4)
- Who do you think the Bridge of Strength could help?
  - The Bridge motivates, everyone could benefit.

- 36 (nearly 1/3) counselors using Bridge and Goal Action Plan since November, 2014.
- Range from general caseload to targeted on new enrollees, teen parents, extended cases, racially and culturally specific and IPS service recipients.
- Total number of participants engaging in the Bridge and/or Goal Action Plan is expected to be more than 100 by the time we conduct the March focus groups.



## Evaluation: Moving Forward

- Rapid Cycle Evaluation
  - Evaluate outcomes from agency level.
  - Additional staff and participant focus groups.
  - Wrap into over plan and integrate into national evaluation.

Don't be pushed by your problems; be led by your dreams.

If you imagine persistence as the engine of success, then courage is its fuel.

All dreams have an inherent risk to them. Part of the power of finding courage is in being able to recognize your fears and do what you need to do any way.

As you move toward a dream, the dream moves toward you. Julie Cameron

Obstacles are what you see when you take your eyes off your goals.

Become a possibilitarian. No matter how dark things seem to be or actually are, raise your sights and see the possibilities – always see them, for they're always there. Norman Vincent Peale

Goals determine what you are going to be. Julius Irving

Individuals may be faced with problem situations and/or goals that others have set for them that they do not see as important. Hence, there is no internally generated motivation to activate and sustain goal-directed behavior. For this reason, and in the absence of internal motivation, it is important to externalize motivation. This means utilizing some artificial means to create an extrinsic source of motivation.

When an individual has a goal that is important to her, behavior in the service of obtaining that goal can increase the likelihood of learning and practicing goal-relevant skills. Achieving that goal may well involve what we consider to be executive functions, such as working memory, flexibility, and response inhibition, among others. To the extent that they are important to the individual, goals offer a vehicle for the acquisition and practice of executive functions.

Goals serve four primary functions:

First, they direct behavior toward goal-relevant activities and away from goal-irrelevant activities

Second, they energize – high goals lead to greater effort than do low goals

Third, they encourage persistence

Finally, they motivate individuals to discover or use task-relevant knowledge or strategies

“The EP must include the participant’s overall employment goal; activities and steps necessary to reach that goal.”

“The function of the EP is to identify the participant’s self-support and employment goals, breaking those goals into smaller objectives, and listing the steps the participant must take to achieve the goals in the shortest time reasonably possible.”

Always go back to Employment Manual

Activities that count are the same as activities that matter

Motivation and outcome based program maintain WPR level

Engaged participant- employment- leaving assistance with employment

Always tie your change to DHS/Ramsey County Board Goals

Lifelong Learning skill development techniques strive for more simplified and participant goal-driven content delivery, case management, and engagement strategies.

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**Reduce noise**- (literally) and other distractions in the environment such as messy desks or walls.

- Help children stay occupied with toys/crayons so parents can concentrate.
  
- ▶ **Be consistent**- plan ahead, return voicemails in a timely manner.
  
- ▶ **Remember Details** – helps to build rapport, ask about their children, work, school, etc.



## **Serve and return content delivery:**

like tennis or volley ball, the interaction between participant and counselor must be responsive, interactive and Non-Authoritarian.

- Prepare for participant meeting – do not firmly follow your agenda, be flexible and listen to participant.

## **Make program materials easy to read, relatable to the participant and limit jargon.**

- After writing EP, go through each activity section (use highlighters).
- Assist clients with job logs (especially first time) and other forms.
- Accept FSS verbal documentation of activities if more convenient for participant.
- If referred to MN Ready or other workshops- may be helpful to print calendar so they know their schedule (make add wake time, time to feed children, etc).

**Bundle services** so that it's easier for participants to gain all that they need for success. Help them with calendar and logistics planning, etc.

- Continuous Support – Help them along (CC application process, HRF), help to be their liaison between their FW and CCW.
- Communicate and Collaborate with other professionals they are working with (ARMHS worker, Mental health provider, Case Managers).

**Flexible readmission to programs-** if a participant is engaged at ANY LEVEL, then work with them to help them reach their success- don't always go to sanction as your first tool.

**Staff training-** do you recognize the impacts of stress on your life and others? Consider ways in which your own EF Skills are compromised.

- Major intervention, co-design based on RC System need
- Support Motivational Interview
- Issue RFP
- Training for they full system for sustainability
- PCG is our partner
- Co- hort model (beginners, intermediate, train the trainer)
- Special co-hort for admin and front line supervisor
- Coaching from Top to the Bottom and Across
- Partnered with My Bridge Of Strength and Goal Action Plan
- Evaluation build in into delivery
- Importance of consistency
- Can be achieve in short term relationships

- Lobby Redesign, family space
  - Resource center Redesign
  - Service delivery change –greeter station, information desk hubs, everyone engaged, goal plan
- (Share Resource Center Vision)
-

- Asking powerful questions
  - Assist individual in establishing and attaining personal, long term multi-faceted goals for life improvement
  - Coaching for life change and complex individual goals' attainment, including referrals and developing of networks
  - Tracking individual program towards long term goal, individual outcomes that lead towards program outcomes ( share report card, talk about data specialists)
  - Goal includes personal growth and sustained change in behavior that leads towards economic independence
-

- Create family centered system that helps families to get education , find and sustain employment, reduce isolation and create prosperous communities
- Service delivery at home, community sites and in the offices
- Have 2-4 major evidence based interventions that work for multiple families
- Invest funds based on a need of families and level of intervention



- Increase opportunities for improved employment and family stability, support and impact economic prosperity
  - Help participant develop executive skills, strengthen their personal agency and self-determination, as well as choose and pursue the activities that matter in achieving goals for self –sufficiency
-

Bridge and Goal Action Plan (GAP) Pilot –  
Ended October 2014

GAP and Bridge System-Wide  
Implementation-April 2015

Coaching Training System Wide  
Implementation - 2015

Enhanced Coaching Pilot – September 2015

Young Adult and Teen Families Expansion -  
late 2016

System-Wide Implementation -2017

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- Test comprehensive model that incorporates coaching with executive skills informed interventions, strategies & tools
- Closely examine what interventions, strategies & tools work and what doesn't work
- Measure engagement, employment, retention and educational outcomes to determine effectiveness

### Culture and Systems Change

- ES Informed Practice Principles
- Executive Skills Sustainability Model
- Job Roles and Expectations, Hiring Practices

### ES Methodology Created

- 11 Key Executive Skills: Behaviors and Interventions
- Enhanced Coaching: Goal Focused, Short time horizon, small steps, intervention-based
- Goal-directed behavior incentives
- Groups Redesigned: organize, streamline information delivered and customize learning
- Environmental and Paperwork modifications: minimize distractions, streamline information
- Stress Reduction
- Peer Support

### Concrete Tools and Strategies

- Goal Action Plan
- Bridge of Strength
- ES Questionnaire
- Self accountability check lists for staff and participants

All people have strengths and weaknesses with executive functioning skills.

Building executive functioning skills starts with the reduction or elimination of immediate stressors.

“Goodness of fit” between a person’s goals and her/his current (EFS) skill level is important for success.

Goal-setting is a critically important, active and client-owned process.

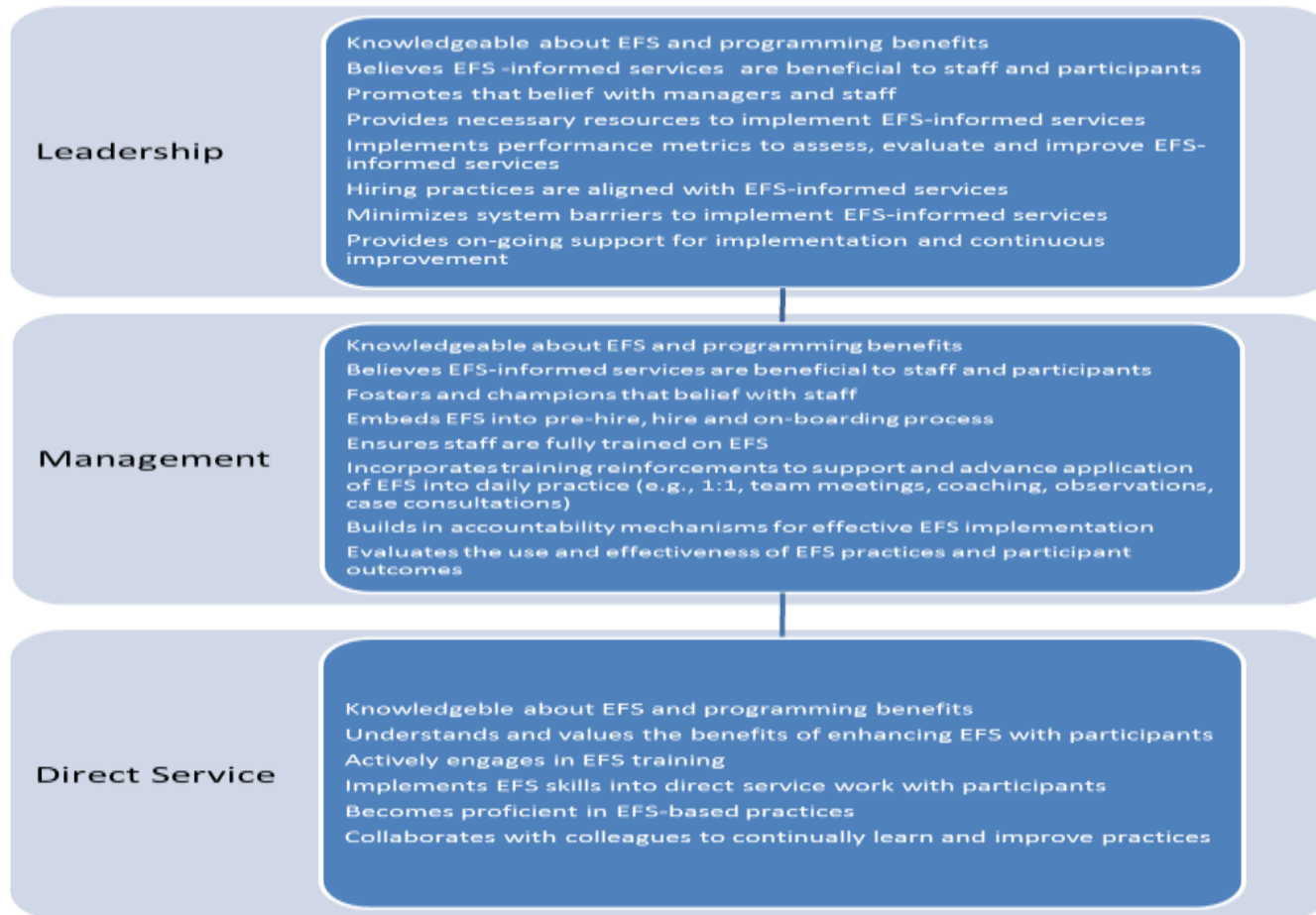
Small action steps over a short amount of time are critical for goal attainment.

Goal development and progress must be a concrete and an explicit process.

Teaching skills, modifying the environment and changing incentives are primary interventions for addressing executive functioning deficits.

Success is determined by the degree to which individuals confidently make their own decisions and are self-regulating and self-determining.

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Thank you

Questions, Feedback

Please contact

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