Delivering Effective T/TA: Tips for T/TA Providers

From an Evaluation of T/TA in Child Welfare

Supporting Change in Child Welfare
An Evaluation of Training and Technical Assistance

TIP SHEET **2**

Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) providers may be considered experts, facilitators, or consultants, depending on their role and the needs of the T/TA recipient. Findings from the 2015 report *Supporting Change in Child Welfare: An Evaluation of Training and Technical Assistance* suggest the following strategies for delivering effective T/TA:

1. **MAKE IT EASY.** Requesting T/TA should be simple. Don't require child welfare organizations to provide too much paperwork or information up front.
2. **BUILD THE RIGHT TEAM.** Agencies typically seek out T/TA providers because of their knowledge and expertise. Providers may need to engage consultants with national expertise in a particular practice area or knowledge of a jurisdiction's history or local data. It's important to have flexibility in determining who will deliver the T/TA.
3. **SET AND MANAGE CLEAR EXPECTATIONS.** Ask the recipient to identify a point person at the organization to manage its communication with you. Work together to develop timelines and work plans, delegate responsibilities, and set achievable milestones and goals. Check in regularly with recipients to ensure progress and accountability.
4. **KNOW WHEN THE TIME IS RIGHT.** Assess the readiness and capacity of the organization to take on a change effort, especially one that is significant in scope. Find out about other T/TA happening in the jurisdiction so you can work in concert with other providers.
5. **CONSIDER LOCAL NEEDS.** T/TA is better received when the recipients feel that their specific strengths and needs are considered. Have expertise in the latest research on interventions as well as an understanding of local circumstances so you can make necessary adaptations to meet the needs of the recipient.
6. **USE DATA WISELY.** Gather appropriate data from a variety of sources to understand the underlying problems that need to be addressed in an organization. Demonstrate how the agency's data can be used to measure change and make informed decisions.
7. **FACILITATE PEER T/TA.** Leaders want to learn about what is and is not working in other organizations. Track what is happening in other locales and facilitate peer information-sharing.
8. **INVEST TIME IN BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH T/TA RECIPIENTS.** A good provider–recipient relationship contributes to responsive and effective T/TA. Even short-term T/TA efforts with limited scope may lead to opportunities for future requests and larger-scale changes.
9. **USE EXISTING MATERIALS WHEN POSSIBLE.** You don't need to build everything from scratch. Review T/TA systems and frameworks that can support your work and identify existing materials and websites to share with recipients.
10. **PLAN FOR THE FUTURE.** The agency needs a plan for how it will sustain the changes implemented. Consider sustainability from the onset and develop the work plan accordingly.

The report *Supporting Change in Child Welfare: An Evaluation of Training and Technical* Assistance identifies factors associated with delivering effective T/TA. The tips presented here can inform the delivery of T/TA, especially in child welfare and related agencies. For more information, see **http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/capacity/cross-center-evaluation**.

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