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Readiness for Change and Why it Matters (Blog Post)

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Organizations seeking to implement and evaluate a workforce intervention must be prepared for change. Change management experts suggest that when readiness in an organization is high, the organization is better able to initiate and sustain a major change. Staff in organizations that are ready for change are more likely to exert greater effort, persist in the face of obstacles, and display cooperative behavior. In organizations where staff are not ready for change, implementation and evaluation of a new intervention can be very difficult. Staff may not be ready for change if they don't see the need for an intervention, are overwhelmed by the volume of work, or are experiencing high levels of initiative fatigue. Similarly, when staff are suspicious of evaluation activities or see research and evaluation as irrelevant, they are less likely to participate fully in data collection activities, making it difficult to determine the effectiveness of the change effort.

Organizational readiness has multiple facets and can look different for individuals, teams, and programs. Because of this complexity, there are multiple approaches to assessing readiness. Tools may include slightly different content and be geared toward either individuals or the larger organization. For example, [Weiner and colleagues \(2009\)](#) suggest that two key dimensions of readiness at the organizational level are:

1. **Commitment**: defined as how much staff value and share a resolve to implement a change.
2. **Efficacy**: defined as staffs' confidence in their own, and their organizations', ability to do what is required to implement a change.

Knowing where an organization falls on these dimensions can help to determine what type of supports are needed to increase readiness. For example, if commitment is low, strategies to build buy-in and communicate leadership support might be important. If staff are not confident of their abilities, or lack the resources needed to participate fully in the intervention or research activities, additional supports might be needed. Regardless of what strategies are chosen, assessing organizational readiness before implementing and evaluating a new initiative is a valuable way to uncover issues that need to be addressed to make the project a success.