

Wednesday, April 1, 2026

On or Off Track:  
**Understanding How Your Leadership  
Practice is Helping Your Network Reach  
its Aims**

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# COMMUNITY COMMITMENTS

Which do  
you want  
to focus  
on?

## **All Teach. All Learn.**

We all have something to offer. We all have something to learn. Be brave. Stay open. Celebrate & push each other.

## **Center your WHY & bring your JOY.**

Keep the students and families we serve at the center of your mind and your conversations.

## **Curiosity over Certainty.**

Ask questions, seek to understand, and embrace discomfort as an opportunity to grow.

## **Share the Air.**

Step up, step back, invite others in.

## FACILITATORS



KELLY MCMAHON, PHD

Center for Public Research and  
Leadership, Columbia Law School



ANGEL LI, PHD

The Carnegie Foundation for the  
Advancement of Teaching



**Carnegie Foundation**  
for the Advancement of Teaching



JEN SHERER, PHD

Partners for Network Improvement,  
The University of Pittsburgh



**Partners for Network Improvement**

Research, Strategy, & Evaluation

# THE NETWORK HEALTH PROJECT TEAM



**Partners for Network Improvement**

Research, Strategy, & Evaluation

Jennifer Russell



Jennifer Sherer

Christopher Matthis



University of  
**Pittsburgh**

Learning Research and  
Development Center

Megan Duff



Angel Li

Anthony Bryk

Kelly McMahon (alum)



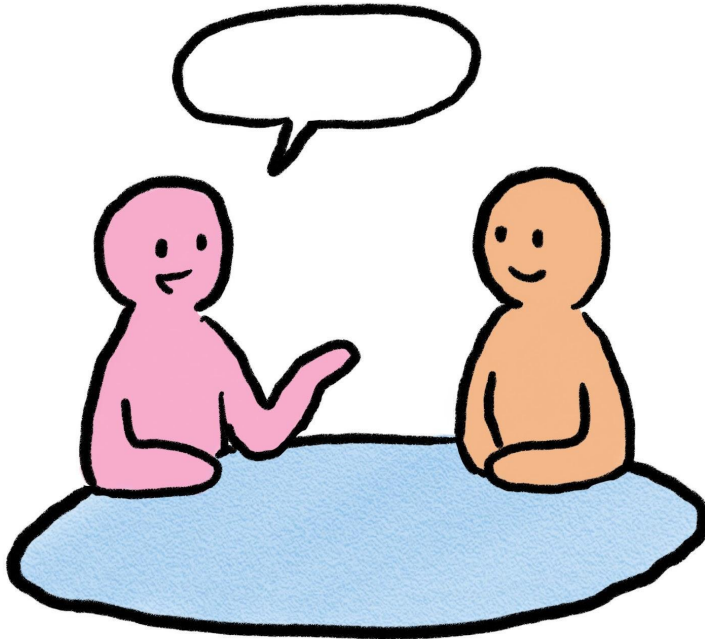
**Carnegie Foundation**  
for the Advancement of Teaching



Donald Peurach

Elizabeth Jones

## TURN & TALK



### SAY HELLO

Introduce yourself!

### SAY A LITTLE ABOUT YOU

Why did you select this session?  
What's a piece advice you've given or received that has helped you lead?

# Learn

Explore hub leadership practice

# Reflect

Reflect on your practice

# Share

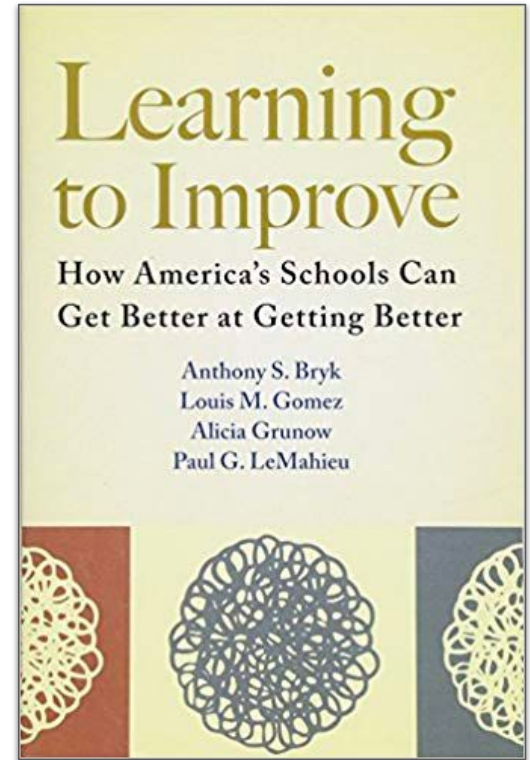
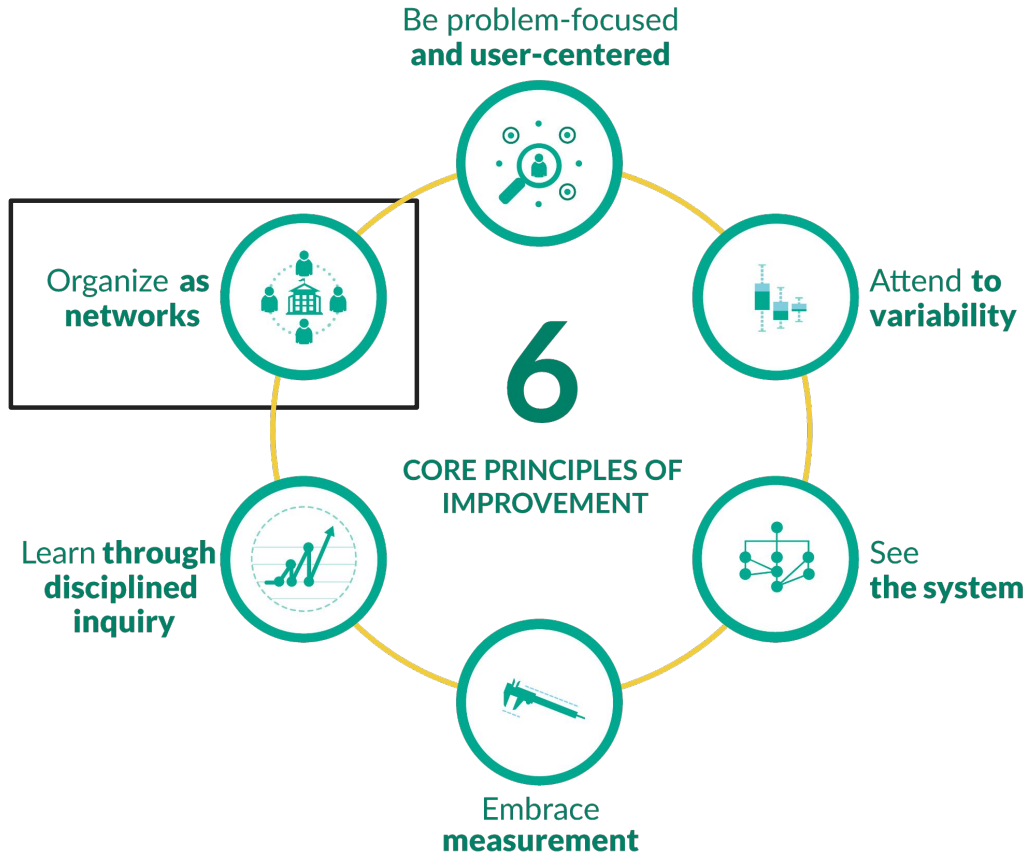
Share reflections on practice

# Plan

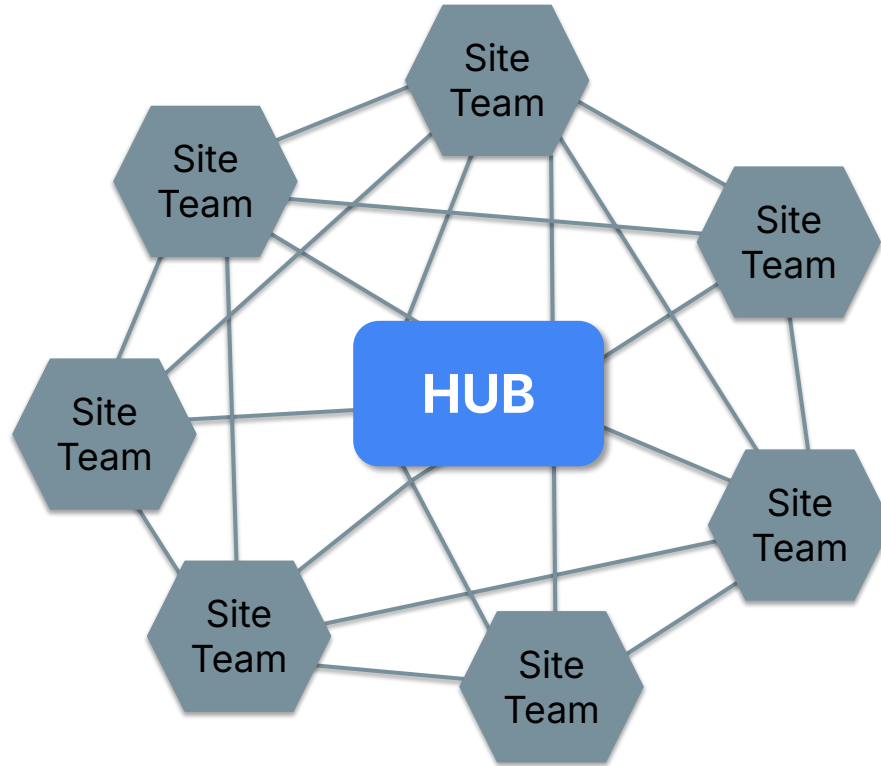
Plan next steps

# Learn

Explore hub leadership practice



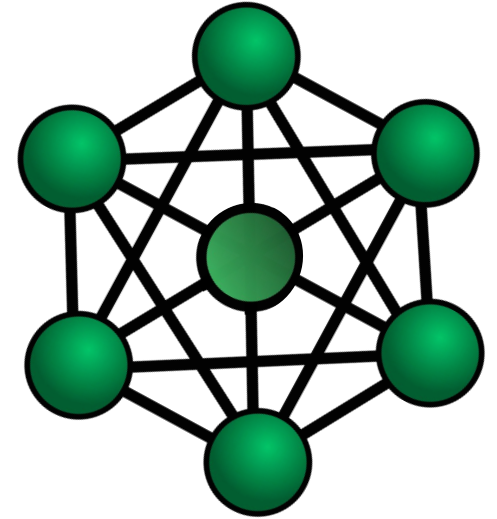
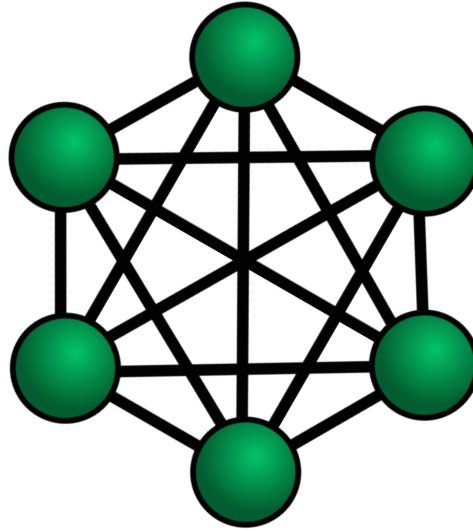
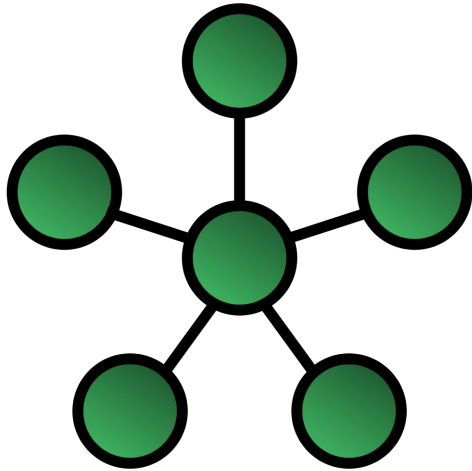
# THE ROLE OF THE IMPROVEMENT NETWORK LEADERSHIP TEAM



"A core group...that carries out **critical functions** necessary for the support and effective operation of a Networked Improvement Community."

*Learning to Improve, p. 196*

# WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN A HUB AND THE NETWORK?



# LIFE CYCLE OF A NETWORK

## Initiate

**Support for early phases of planning for an improvement network**

- Build the vision
- Create a charter
- Build the foundation

## Develop

**Structures, tools, and routines to support network launch and development**

- Develop network roles and engagement
- Develop member connections
- Structure continuous improvement processes
- Develop network culture
- Develop a knowledge management system

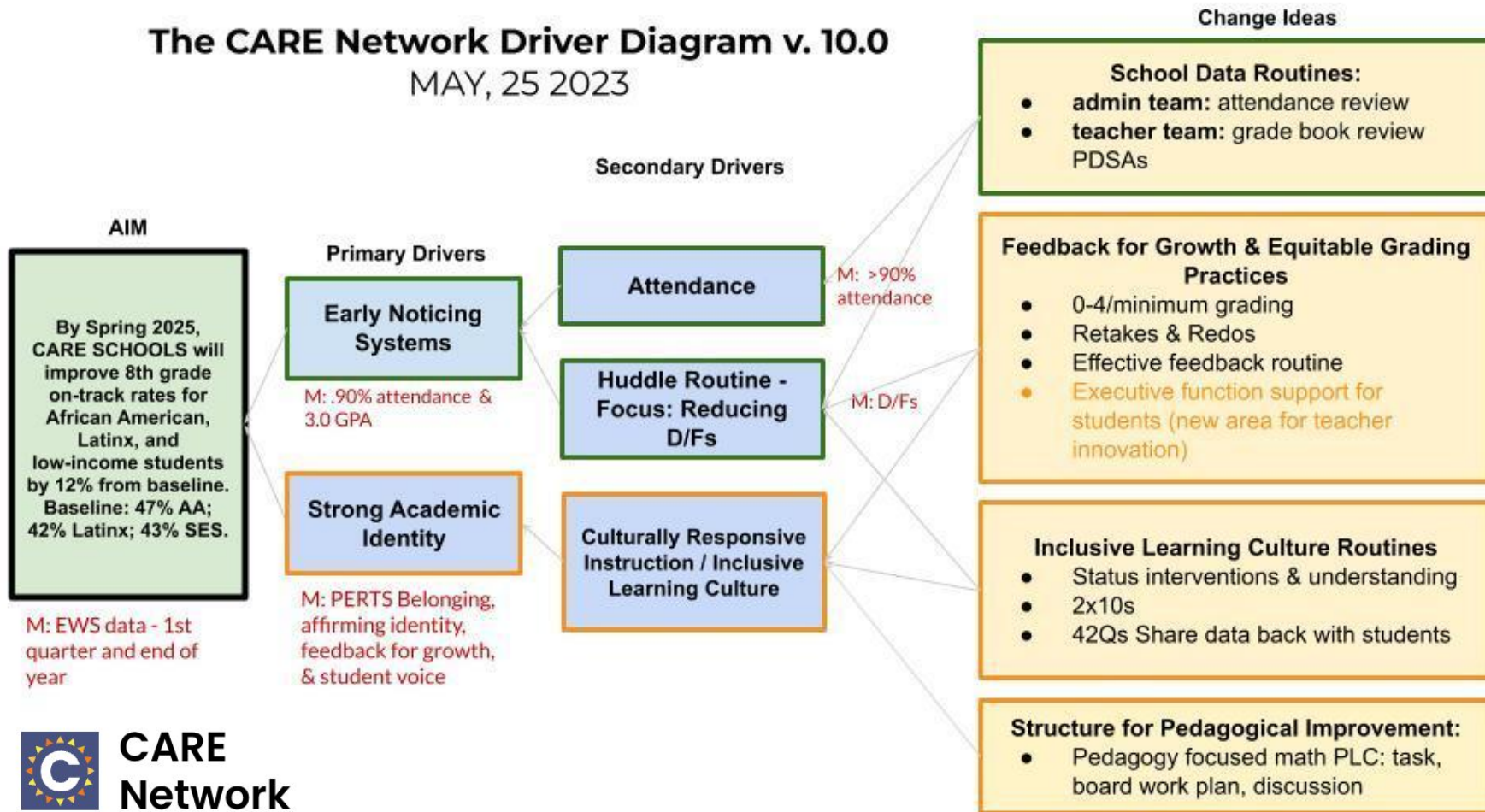
## Sustain, Spread, Scale

**Considerations for sustaining/ spreading/ scaling network learning and impact**

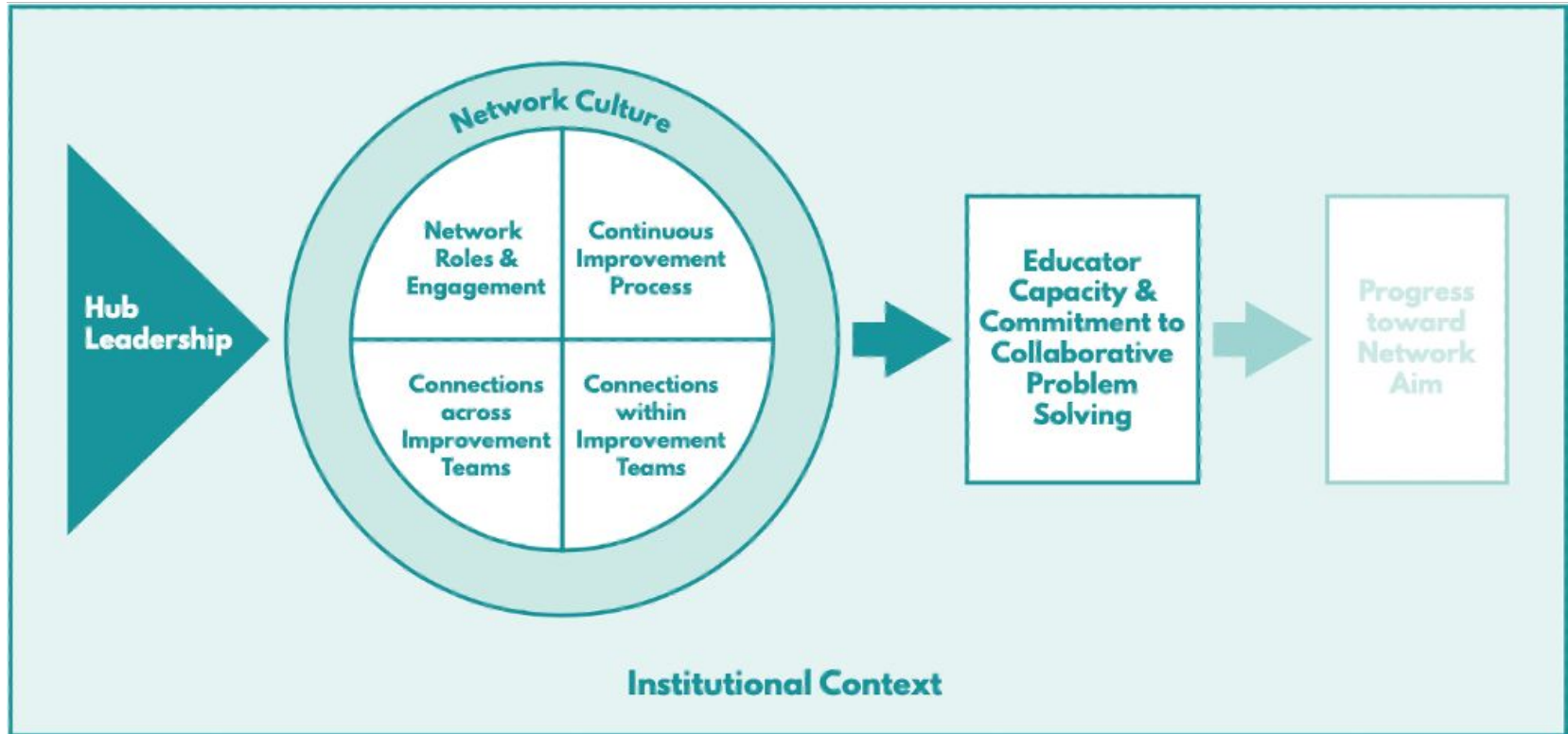
- Spread
- Scale
- Sustained impact

# The CARE Network Driver Diagram v. 10.0

MAY, 25 2023



# THE IMPROVEMENT NETWORK HEALTH & DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK



## UNDERSTANDING HUB LEADERSHIP: THE BACKSTORY

**Our focus** | Understanding and supporting the work of hub leadership in improvement networks.

**Our goal** | Developing a framework detailing core domains of leadership practice.

**Our purpose** | Supporting professional development, collegial learning, and continuing research.

**Our approach** | “Talking shop” with 28 experienced hub leaders from 14 high-functioning improvement networks; hub leader survey data from the Gates Foundation’s NSI Initiative (7 years/~38 networks).

**Our analysis** | Constructing and litmus testing the framework.

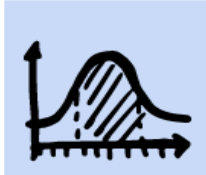
# Hub leadership requires...



Developing and  
Sustaining the Hub  
Organization



Developing and  
Managing the  
Network as an  
Organization



Supporting  
Improvement Activity



Managing  
Environmental  
Relationships



Analyzing and  
Improving the  
Network as a  
Learning System



Ad Hoc Problem Solving



## REFLECTING ON THE FIVE DOMAINS OF LEADERSHIP PRACTICE

What is one domain of hub leadership practice you know a lot about?

What is one domain you would like to learn more about?

# Learn

Explore hub leadership practice

# Reflect

Reflect on your practice



## Why reflection?

When we fall behind even though we're working hard, our response is to often just work harder. But in terms of **working smarter**, our research suggests that **we should take time for reflection.**

- Francesca Gino & Gary Pisano (2014)



Developing and  
Managing the  
Network as an  
Organization

Let's look closely at one domain:  
**Developing and Managing  
the Network as an Organization**



Developing and  
Managing the  
Network as an  
Organization

## Let's look closely at one domain: **Developing and Managing the Network as an Organization**

- Build membership and engagement
- Build network connections
- Build network culture
- Support logistics



**Self-Reflection Tool for Hub Leadership Practice Domain:  
Developing and Managing the Improvement Network as an Organization**

Goal: Develop structures, tools, and routines to support the launch and development of a learning organization, cultivating a strong network community.

- Consider how well your hub team is building and managing the improvement network as an organization.
- Put your initials in the box that best fits where you think your team is at this moment in time.
- If you are pretty good or great, name a strategy that you use.
- This domain has four sub-sections. Feel free to focus on one or two, or reflect on all four.
  - Build membership and engagement
  - Build network connections
  - Build network culture
  - Support logistics

<b>Build Membership and Engagement</b>					
<b>Leadership Skill</b>	<b>Methods for building the skills of Developing and Managing the Improvement Network as an Organization: Build Membership and Engagement</b>	<b>We really need to do this</b>	<b>We could probably get better at this</b>	<b>We're pretty good at this</b>	<b>We're great at this</b>
<b>Build and monitor network membership</b>	Build a network membership framework to guide ongoing recruitment and selection of network members. The membership framework identifies: (1) important characteristics of network members (e.g., commitment to aim, diverse knowledge, skills, and expertise); and (2) criteria for network participation.				
	Develop and enact procedures for recruiting new members.				
	Adapt the network membership framework as necessary to support the network's changing needs.				
	Include individuals/organizations in the network who represent diverse contexts in which to engage in testing and improvement research (e.g., opportunities to learn from variation).				

# HOW TO USE THIS RUBRIC



Network Health Project

improvementnetworks.org

## Self-Reflection Tool for Hub Leadership Practice Domain:

### Developing and Managing the Improvement Network as an Organization

Goal: Develop structures, tools, and routines to support the launch and development of a learning organization, cultivating a strong network community.

- Consider how well your hub team is building and managing the improvement network as an organization.
- Put your initials in the box that best fits where you think your team is at this moment in time.
- If you are pretty good or great, name a strategy that you use.
- This domain has four sub-sections. Feel free to focus on one or two, or reflect on all four.
  - Build membership and engagement
  - Build network connections
  - Build network culture
  - Support logistics

Build Membership and Engagement					
Leadership Skill	Methods for building the skills of Developing and Managing the Improvement Network as an Organization: Build Membership and Engagement	We really need to do this	We could probably get better at this	We're pretty good at this	We're great at this
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	Adapt the network membership framework as necessary to support the network's changing needs.				
	Include individuals/organizations in the network who represent diverse contexts in which to engage in testing and improvement research (e.g., opportunities to learn from variation).				

For each sub-category of a domain, the rubric sets up a series of “Methods for building the skills” to help you understand what is involved in that domain.

Consider how well your hub team is developing and managing the improvement network as an organization by exploring the four sections of this rubric:

- Build membership and engagement
- Build network connections
- Build network culture
- Support logistics

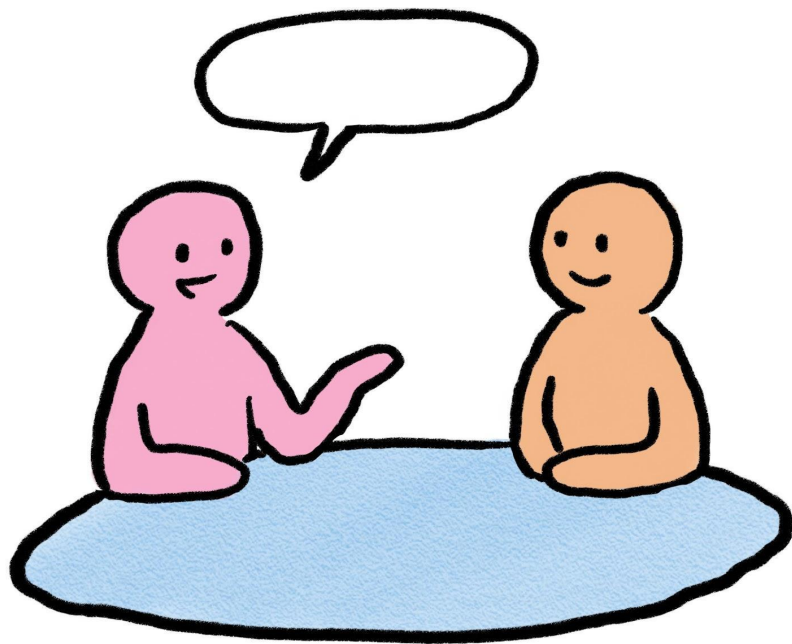
You can reflect on all or just focus on 1 or 2.

Put your initials in the box that best fits where you think your team is at this moment in time for each look for. If you are “pretty good” or “great”, name a strategy you use.

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**Try it!**

A woman with short, styled grey hair and black-rimmed glasses is seated at a wooden desk. She is wearing a light-colored, long-sleeved sweater. In her right hand, she holds a blue pen, poised over an open notebook. To her right, a laptop is open on the desk. The background is a softly lit, blurred interior space, possibly a home office or kitchen, with shelves and various items visible. The overall atmosphere is warm and focused.



TURN & TALK

## SHARE YOUR REFLECTION

How did it go to think about about leadership in this way?

Did it spark any ideas?

# Learn

Explore hub leadership practice

# Reflect

Reflect on your practice

# Share

Share reflections on practice

# KEY CHALLENGES IN DEVELOPING & MANAGING THE NETWORK AS AN ORGANIZATION

<b>Sub-category</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
Build membership & engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Establishing clear recruitment processes and criteria for membership</li><li>-Managing turnover</li></ul>
Build network connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Finding time to connect</li><li>-Identifying who is on the team</li><li>-Running an effective team</li><li>-Cross-team learning</li></ul>
Build network culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Building trust</li><li>-Building a culture of evidence use</li><li>-Shifting mindsets</li></ul>
Support logistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Establishing and maintaining communication routines</li><li>-Identifying tools to connect members</li><li>-Planning convenings/ action periods</li></ul>

# LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER

STEP 1: Strengths

**Capture strengths  
and evidence**

Where are you  
strong and how do  
you know?

STEP 2: Growth edge

**Identify a growth  
edge and learn from  
others in the room**

What strategies did  
others share that can  
help you?

STEP 3: Discuss

**Whole group:  
Discuss and probe**

## STEP 1: SHARE YOUR STRENGTHS

1. Find the poster where you/your team is strong.
2. On the poster write:
  - a. At least one strategy that has worked for you/your team
  - b. The evidence you have for how you know it has been effective
3. Share strengths with the folks who are at your poster.

# WHAT DO WE MEAN BY EVIDENCE?

## CHALLENGE

Improvement team connections dropped

(Network health survey data)

## STRATEGY

Focused work on building **Internal Team Connections** for sustainability

Supported teams to submit weekly reports on CI work.

## EVIDENCE

Process measure:  
X/10 teams submitted 100% of weekly reports

Annual measure:  
Network health survey data on internal team connections improved

# WHAT DO WE MEAN BY EVIDENCE?

## Challenge

Weak onboarding:  
Improvement  
capabilities slow to  
develop in Cohort 1

## Strategy

Two day, in-person  
convening onboard Cohort  
2. Included our why, our  
aim, improvement science  
methods sessions,  
strategies Cohort 1 tested,  
lessons learned from  
Cohort 1's testing

## Evidence

Improvement groups ran  
smoothly with more  
engagement and more  
data collection than in the  
first year.

Cohort 2 is more engaged  
in the improvement work  
than any other cohort.

## WHICH POSTER WILL YOU GO TO FOR STEP 1: STRENGTHS?

<b>1</b>	<b>Build membership &amp; engagement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Build &amp; monitor network membership</li><li>-Develop network roles &amp; engagement</li></ul>
<b>2</b>	<b>Build network connections</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Build connections between the hub &amp; network members</li><li>-Launch strong improvement teams</li><li>-Build internal team learning</li><li>-Build cross-team learning</li></ul>
<b>3</b>	<b>Build network culture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Support a norm shift</li><li>-Build an evidence-based culture</li><li>-Build a collective identity</li><li>-Build trust</li></ul>
<b>4</b>	<b>Support logistics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Establish communication tools &amp; routines</li><li>-Plan logistics</li></ul>

## STEP 1: SHARE YOUR STRENGTHS

1. Find the poster where you/your team is strong.
2. On the poster write:
  - a. At least one strategy that has worked for you/your team
  - b. The evidence you have for how you know it has been effective
3. Share strengths with the folks who are at your poster.

**GOAL: To write down as many effective strategies as you can.  
(This will be our “learning from each other” tool.)**

## WHICH POSTER WILL YOU GO TO FOR STEP 2: GROWTH EDGES?

<b>1</b>	<b>Build membership &amp; engagement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Build &amp; monitor network membership</li><li>-Develop network roles &amp; engagement</li></ul>
<b>2</b>	<b>Build network connections</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Build connections between the hub &amp; network members</li><li>-Launch strong improvement teams</li><li>-Build internal team learning</li><li>-Build cross-team learning</li></ul>
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<b>4</b>	<b>Support logistics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Establish communication tools &amp; routines</li><li>-Plan logistics</li></ul>

## STEP 2: GROWTH EDGES: LEARN FROM OTHERS

1. Find the poster where you/your team would like to grow.
2. Read the strategies your colleagues have shared.
3. Discuss what is challenging for you and how these ideas might help you.

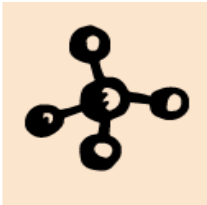
**Let's hear from you!**




# KEY CHALLENGES IN DEVELOPING & MANAGING THE NETWORK AS AN ORGANIZATION

<b>Sub-category</b>	<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Solutions</b>
Build membership and engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Establishing clear recruitment processes and criteria for membership</li><li>-Managing turnover</li></ul>	
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Support logistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Establishing and maintaining communication routines</li><li>-Identifying tools to connect members</li><li>-Planning convenings/ action periods</li></ul>	


# How do you know when your network is on/off track?




Developing and Sustaining the Hub Organization



Developing and Managing the Network as an Organization



Supporting Improvement Activity



Managing Environmental Relationships



Analyzing and Improving the Network as a Learning System



Ad Hoc Problem Solving

# Learn

Explore hub leadership practice

# Reflect

Reflect on your practice

# Share

Share reflections on practice

# Plan

Plan next steps

## WHAT WILL YOU DO NEXT?

Based on your experience in today's session, what is the next step for you/your hub team?



## WHAT WILL WE DO NEXT?

Continue to build tools to support network leaders  
(rubrics for each domain, playbook)



[improvementnetworks.org](http://improvementnetworks.org)

## GIVE US FEEDBACK

1. What was most helpful about this tool?
2. What would have better supported your reflection?
3. What would you like to have in a toolkit to support your leadership practice?
4. Share your name and email if you want to help us test future rubrics.

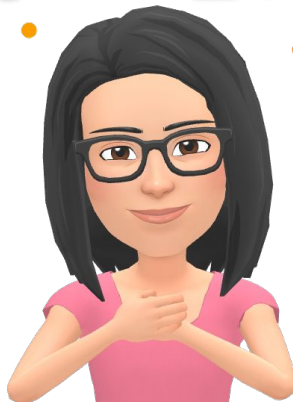


STAY CONNECTED



KELLY MCMAHON, PHD  
kam2191@columbia.edu

GRATEFUL



ANGEL LI, PHD  
angli@carnegiefoundation.org

Thank you for  
improving our work.



JEN SHERER, PHD  
jzsherer@pitt.edu

# Thank You

## On or Off Track: Understanding How Your Leadership Practice is Helping Your Network Reach its Aims



National Coalition for  
**IMPROVEMENT  
IN EDUCATION**

### ✓ AI Transformation: Shaping the Future of Business Operations

[Click here to remove from My Schedule.](#)

Tuesday July 22, 2025 1:00am - 1:15am GMT+08

The Conference Villa @ San Francisco, CA, USA 🌍

#### Limited Capacity seats available

In today's rapidly evolving business landscape, artificial intelligence (AI) tools have emerged as game-changing assets that are reshaping the way companies operate across a wide array of sectors. These advanced AI tools are designed to mimic human cognitive capabilities, such as learning, problem-solving, and decision-making, resulting in enhanced efficiency, accuracy, and automation. Businesses that integrate AI tools into their operations can streamline processes, enhance customer experiences, and derive valuable insights from vast datasets in real-time. By leveraging machine learning algorithms, natural language processing, and predictive analytics, organizations can optimize their workflows, drive innovation, and stay ahead of the competition in today's dynamic market environment.

AI tools enable companies to make data-informed decisions, automate routine tasks, and tailor interactions with customers at an unprecedented scale. Through the deployment of AI-driven solutions, businesses can uncover new revenue streams, improve operational efficiency, and enhance overall performance in a rapidly changing digital landscape. In summary, the incorporation of AI tools into business strategies has become a crucial cornerstone of success in the modern age, presenting unparalleled opportunities for expansion, creativity, and sustainability.

As companies embrace AI technologies with enthusiasm, they are poised to achieve heightened levels of success and impact in an increasingly competitive, data-centric business world.

Provide Feedback



Please provide your feedback for this session on Sched.

- Click the session you're in.
- A **Provide Feedback button** appears when you click the session title, on the session's detail page, and when you hover over a session title.