Writing an Innovation Configuration Map

Innovation configuration maps serve to guide the implementation of new practices and self-assess progress in the implementation.

PURPOSE To define and measure implementation of a new program or practice to ensure student success

PRODUCT Innovation configuration map

PARTICIPANTS Representative teacher team to complete the map for the full faculty (Getting input from the team is valuable to the process.)

MATERIALS Innovation Configuration Map Template (page 143), sample innovation configuration map from chapter 5 (page 93) and other examples from recommended resources listed in step 1 (page 141)

TIME One to multiple hours, depending on the complexity of the innovation

PREPARATION Choose an approach to describe levels of practice. Some begin with three levels and describe the levels (level 1: ideal or expert; level 2: acceptable or developing; and level 3: unacceptable or novice). Others may opt to begin with four, five, or six levels of performance rather than just three. In other words, they identify ideal, near ideal, acceptable, approaching acceptable, and unacceptable (or eliminate the unacceptable level). The decision depends on the complexity of the practice and how many components it involves. Write the best or highest level in the left column, and the lowest level in the right column of the chart (see page 143).

Choose *looks like*s and look-fors visible to an observer or implementer to use as the descriptors of the implementation levels.

PROCESS

Step 1

Study the examples of an innovation configuration map in chapter 6, page 119. Next, review the following resources to develop a foundational understanding of the purpose and design of an innovation configuration map: *Implementing Change Through Learning: Concerns-Based Concepts, Tools, and Strategies for Guiding Change* (Hord & Roussin, 2013), and *Innovation Configurations | Concerns-Based Adoption Model* (American Institutes for Research, 2010).

Step 2

Determine the key components of the professional learning. Those key components may include the use of particular practices, frequency of use, accuracy of use, or some combination.

For example, if a new mathematics curriculum is the focus of the professional learning, implementing the ideal number of units is a core component. Additional core components of the new curriculum could be adhering to instructional practices that align with mathematical practices in the units, reteaching students (when necessary) in flexible groupings, and providing enrichment options. List core components in a chart (see page 143) in the left-hand column.

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PROCESS (cont.)

Step 3

Determine if there is a priority among the identified core components or if there is a natural sequence in the occurrence of the behaviors in practice. For example, teams consider adhering to the instructional practices aligned with mathematical practices more important than the number of units they implement. Position the components in the table according to priority or natural sequence order.

Step 4

Describe in specific terms the actual behaviors associated with the ideal or accomplished level of practice for each core component. List the ideal behaviors in the second column of the table under the agreed-on label. Some innovation configuration maps use a numerical designation for the variations; others may use terms such as *accomplished* or *ideal* practice to identify the first variation.

Step 5

Describe the variations from ideal practice. A *variation* is what teams consider a step down from the ideal. The number of variations for each core component varies depending on the potential variations.

For example, the number of units taught might include five variations, while the accuracy of using instructional practices aligned with mathematical practices may have just three variations. Each progressive variation from the ideal includes what is likely evident in practice as educators are extending, refining, and strengthening their practice over time. Furthermore, each progressive variation helps identify the current state of those teachers in various stages of practice before they reach the ideal stage. Place the subsequent variations in order in the same row as the ideal practice.

Step 6

Determine where acceptable behavior falls on the continuum of variations. For example, teachers may find it acceptable to implement 85 percent of the units of the new mathematics curriculum, even though that particular variation rests in the third variation. Use a dotted line to indicate the division between acceptable and unacceptable behavior.

Step 7

Introduce, explain, and discuss the map with participants to build their understanding and capacity to use the map for self-assessment. Innovation configuration maps encourage learners to determine their current state among the variations and identify what they need to do differently to move increasingly closer to the ideal or accomplished state. A well written map makes these changes explicit, so the tool becomes educative for learners.

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Innovation Configuration Map Template

Innovation configuration maps come in a variety of forms. This template explicitly identifies the core components to facilitate the development of a new map. When fully developed, it may be unnecessary to label each core component and use different terms to describe levels of practice, yet this is helpful in the development phase.

Variations	Ideal or Accomplished Practice	Near Ideal or Accomplished Practice	Acceptable Practice	Early Stage or Emerging Practice	Unacceptable or Nonexistent Practice (Optional)
Core Component 1					
Core Component 2					
Core Component 3					
Core Component 4					
Core Component 5					

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