

## **WEEK 11 – ISSUES IN IMPLEMENTATION**

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There are a number of issues in implementation. Let's look at sectoral differences first.

The private and public sector serve very different and distinct functions, and have, as such, very different expectations as to implementation, outcomes and measurement. Since each sector has different organizational constraints and policy goals, they often have distinctly different challenges in developing new policies.

Policy change also tends to be slower in the public sector. For example, elected officials who decide policy and appointed staff who carry it out can impede the integration of policy formulation with integration-- implementation. However, even private sector organizations can have difficulty in affecting change through implementation.

Policy, whether public or private sector, or large or small organization, always goes back to politics.

Inconsistency in policy implementation may be one of the more complex issues. There are a number of problems with inconsistency in implementation. These include affecting one's ability to deliver the mandated mission, to operate strategically, and to accurately evaluate the implementation of said policy. Increased costs result because of poor planning and lack of risk assessment in the planning process.

Accountability is reduced because there will always be the excuse of unforeseen factors, as well as the common laments such as a lack of money, resources, people, and/or failed leadership. Transparency is reduced, regulatory risks are increased, services are poorly planned and delivered, and evaluation is affected. Stakeholder outcomes are also reduced.

Hence, inconsistent implementation is the major failure of many programs, because they are seen as too expensive to implement with fidelity and to sustain operationally.

Implementation fidelity is the degree to which a policy or program is implemented as intended or described by its developers. Fidelity can be affected by process, language, and by any number of organizational constraints.

Adherence to fidelity using prescribed interventions and not proscribed interventions is the most critical component of implementation successes and failures. However, there are a number of moderating factors surrounding adherence. The first is the intervention complexity. The larger, more systemic an implementation is, the more problems can emerge that make its implementation with fidelity more difficult.

Facilitation strategies are also problematic. There are numerous ways an implementation can be implemented. Getting people, processes and workflow integrated may be like herding cats. Theoretically probable, however operationally beset with many difficulties.

The quality of delivery is also crucial. Simply put, is the intervention delivered in such a way that the intended outcome is achieved? Here is where quality assurance, ongoing monitoring, and feedback can support quality of delivery and expected outcomes.

Participant responsiveness is key to the success of an implementation. Whether it is patient-oriented or staff-oriented, compliance with the program or service or practice is essential for the implementation to be effective. Whatever the implementation, it must be seen as relevant and important to participants, or the intervention will be a failure.

Measurement needs to capture the good, the bad, and the ugly indicators during and post implementation. Measures are needed to collect the data that certainly indicate where the intervention was effective, as well as where it was not.