The Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM): A Model for Change in Individuals

Another framework that has implications for the *practices* of professional development acknowledges that learning brings change, and supporting people in change is critical for learning to "take hold." One model for change in individuals, the Concerns-Based Adoption Model, applies to anyone experiencing change, that is, policy makers, teachers, parents, students (Hall & Hord, 1987; Hord, Rutherford, Huling-Austin, & Hall, 1987; Loucks-Horsley & Stiegelbauer, 1991). The model (and other developmental models of its type) holds that people considering and experiencing change evolve in the kinds of questions they ask and in their use of whatever the change is. In general, early questions are more self-oriented: What is it? and How will it affect me? When these questions are resolved, questions emerge that are more task-oriented: How do I do it? How can I use these materials efficiently? How can I organize myself? and Why is it taking so much time? Finally, when self- and task concerns are largely resolved, the individual can focus on impact. Educators ask: Is this change working for students? and Is there something that will work even better?

The concerns model identifies and provides ways to assess seven stages of concern, which are displayed in Table 3. These stages have major implications for professional development. First, they point out the importance of attending to where people are and addressing the questions they are asking when they are asking them. Often, we get to the how-to-do-it before addressing self-concerns. We want to focus on student learning before teachers are comfortable with the materials and strategies. The kinds and content of professional- development opportunities can be informed by ongoing monitoring of the concerns of teachers. Second, this model suggests the importance of paying attention to implementation for several years, because it takes at least three years for early concerns to be resolved and later ones to emerge. We know that teachers need to have their self-concerns addressed before they are ready to attend hands-on workshops. We know that management concerns can last at least a year, especially when teachers are implementing a school year's worth of new curricula and also when new approaches to teaching require practice and each topic brings new surprises. We also know that help over time is necessary to work the kinks out and then to reinforce good teaching once use of the new practice smoothes out. Finally, with all the demands on teachers, it is often the case that once their practice becomes routine, they never have the time and space to focus on whether and in what ways students are learning. This often requires some organizational priority setting, as well as stimulating interest and concern about specific student learning outcomes. We also know that everyone has concerns-for example, administrators, parents, policy makers,

professional developers-and that acknowledging these concerns and addressing them are critical to progress in a reform effort.

Professional developers who know and use the concerns model design experiences for educators that are sensitive to the questions they are asking when they are asking them. Learning experiences evolve over time, take place in different settings, rely on varying degrees of external expertise, and change with participant needs. Learning experiences for different role groups vary in who provides them, what information they share, and how they are asked to engage. For instance, addressing parents' and policy makers' question "How will it affect me?" obviously will look different. The strength of the concerns model is in its reminder to pay attention to individuals and their various needs for information, assistance, and moral support.

Traditionally, those who provided professional development to teachers were considered to be trainers. Now, their roles have broadened immensely. Like teachers in science classrooms, they have to be facilitators, assessors, resource brokers, mediators of learning, designers, and coaches, in addition to being trainers when appropriate. Practitioners of professional development, often teachers themselves, have a new and wider variety of *practices* to choose from in meeting the challenging learning needs of educators in today's science reform efforts.

Typical Expressions of Concern about an Innovation/ Table 3.

Stage of Concern	Expression of Concern
6. Refocusing	I have some ideas about something that would work even better.
5. Collaboration	How can I relate what I am doing to what others are doing?
4. Consequence	How is my use affecting learners? How can I refine it to have more impact?
3. Management	I seem to be spending all my time getting materials ready.
2. Personal	How will using it affect me?
1. Informational	I would like to know more about it.
0. Awareness	I am not concerned about it.

Levels of Use of the Innovation: Typical Behaviors

Levels of Use	Behavioral Indicators of Level

VI. Renewal	The user is seeking more effective alternatives to the established use of the innovation.
V. Integration	The user is making deliberate efforts to coordinate with others in using the innovation.
IVB. Refinement	The user is making changes to increase outcomes.
IVA. Routine	The user is making few or no changes and has an established pattern of use.
III. Mechanical	The user is making changes to better organize use of the innovation.
II. Preparation	The user has definite plans to begin using the innovation.
0I. Orientation	The user is taking the initiative to learn more about the innovation.
0 . Non-Use	The user has no interest, is taking no action.

JSD

CBAM brings order to the tornado of change

By Donald L. Horsley and Susan Loucks-Horsley

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The Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) is a framework and set of tools for understanding and managing change in people. Created through a decade of research and development (Hall & Hord, 1987), CBAM has been in use for more than 25 years now.

We believe CBAM has proven itself an indispensable tool for developing and continually evaluating reform efforts, one that ought to be in every professional developer's toolkit.

Mind you, our biases here are strong. One of us (Susan Loucks-Horsley) was a co-developer of CBAM, and both of us do a great deal of training and consulting with the model. But our faith is rooted in solid research and nurtured by confirming experiences. Both of us are reminded of CBAM's key messages on a daily basis.

When most people think of "change," they have in mind a new program or practice: cooperative learning, standards-based science and math, or restructuring schools, for example. No doubt about it, these represent significant examples of change. But to be more precise, these are examples of the content of change. CBAM is about the parallel process of change, the natural and developmental process that each of us goes through whenever we engage in something new or different.

CBAM examines this process in three distinct ways:

1. Stages of Concern.
2. Levels of Use.
3. Innovation Components.

Stages of Concern

These describe the affective dimension of change: how people feel about doing something new or different, and their concerns as they engage with a new program or practice. This is the part of CBAM that many people think is the most helpful for professional development purposes. There are four general categories of concern — Awareness, Self, Task, and Impact — which encompass seven distinct stages.

Awareness (Stage 0) describes a person who either isn't aware of the change being proposed or doesn't want to learn about it.

Self concerns refers to the questions we ask when we hear about something new (Stage 1, Informational), and how it might affect us (Stage 2, Personal).

Task concerns emerge as we engage with new skills, time demands, materials, etc. (Stage 3, Management).

Impact concerns describe our thoughts on how we can make a program work better for learners (typically students) (Stage 4, Consequence), how to make it work better by actively working on it with colleagues (Stage 5, Collaboration), and, ultimately, being successful with the program and seeking out a new and better change to implement (Stage 6, Refocusing).

Levels of Use

These describe the behavioral dimension of change — what teachers, for example, actually do in the classroom when making the transition from teaching one way to teaching differently.

There are three Levels of Use that define nonusers of a program:

Level 0, Nonuse — A person is taking no action with regard to the program or practice;

Level I, Orientation — A person seeks information about the program or practice;

Level II, Preparation — A decision has been made to adopt the new practice, and the person is actively preparing to implement it.

Before the CBAM research, the literature on change implied that once people had decided to use a new practice and were trained in its use, they established a suitable routine fairly quickly. However, the CBAM research revealed that there are significantly different levels of mastery. They identified five distinct Levels of Use among users:

Level III, Mechanical — This reflects early attempts to use new strategies, techniques and materials. It's the point in our use of something new at which we often feel inadequate and awkward. At best, we feel as though we're preparing a new recipe for the first time, constantly referring to the cookbook for guidance and reassurance.

Level IVa, Routine — We've established a satisfactory pattern of behaviors.

Level IVb, Refinement — People go beyond the routine by assessing the impact of their efforts and making changes to increase that impact.

Level V, Integration — People are actively coordinating with others to use the innovation.

Level VI, Renewal — People seek more effective alternatives to the established use of the innovation. (This is essentially the beginning of a new cycle of Stages of Concern and Levels of Use.)

Innovation components

The CBAM dimension we label Innovation Components (also called Configurations) recognizes the importance of identifying the specific parts of a change, and providing staff developers with hands-on tools for making those identifications. We call these tools Practice Profiles.

The Practice Profile calls on leaders of an innovation to formally define how it should look when it's used in the classroom or building. The profile first includes a precise description of the resources and conditions necessary to implement the program. Then perhaps six to eight critical components of a program are identified, along with sets of descriptive examples of what each component looks like when used appropriately. Examples of a classroom practice can include definitions and descriptions of teacher and student behavior, often arrayed in terms of "Ideal," "Acceptable," and "Unacceptable" behaviors. (See the Practice Profile at right. Also see related article on page 21 for an example of how this process helps staff developers bring new programs into different schools.)

CBAM developers have created manuals that include detailed examples of instruments for assessing the major components of the model. Available tools include several instruments for assessing Stages of Concern, such as guides for analyzing written responses to open-ended statements, and questionnaires that can yield a profile of participants' concerns. There is also an interview protocol for assessing Levels of Use, and procedures for developing a Practice Profile tailored to any given change.

Putting CBAM to good use

These assessment instruments can provide baseline and follow-up data for monitoring implementation and determining content of follow-up support. There are means for aggregating data from individual practitioners so implementation of a new practice can be monitored in a variety of ways — by grade level, subject, building, and district, for example. CBAM data also can help key decision makers stay informed of progress in the crucial phases of early implementation, before impact on student achievement can be shown.

CBAM data also can — and should — be shared with change participants themselves. This can help them understand that what they're experiencing is a natural outcome of having to do something new, and that they're by no means alone in their frustration over once again being rookies in their profession. CBAM's framework can provide a common language for discussions among the implementers of a reform (such as teachers) and the facilitators of the reform (such as administrators and staff developers). This can make it easier for these different groups to work together at evaluating staff development efforts and deciding how to make them more effective.

One of the greatest strengths of the Concerns-Based Adoption Model is that it gives credence to, and supplies a precise language for, the feelings each of us has when we are expected to embark on yet another new program or practice. It's comforting to know that there are discernable patterns in the many different and powerful emotions we feel when adapting to new circumstances. CBAM helps us make sense of this change process, and provides those in the midst of that process with concrete tools for moving that process along and continually evaluating their progress.

Key messages

Before CBAM, most research on change took a structural approach,

identifying markers along the path to implementation: the announcement of a change effort, then the decision to adopt, and then preparation and training. The assumption was that once a new practice was introduced to the workplace through initial publicity and training, its implementation was a fait accompli.

The CBAM research (complemented by other research of the same time period) changed our understanding of change in significant ways. Some of the more significant learnings:

Change is a process, not an event. This simply can't be emphasized enough. Subsequent research on school change has confirmed that changes in classroom practice can take anywhere from three to five years to be fully implemented. More comprehensive, systemic change initiatives only begin to take hold in that period of time, because the phenomenon of change goes far beyond the individual.

Change is a highly personal experience, involving developmental growth in feelings (the Stages of Concern) and skills (the Levels of Use). More to the point, people need sustained help along the way if they're going to fully implement a new idea, and they'll require different kinds of help as their needs change.

An example: Several years ago, we watched two of our friends run in the Boston Marathon. One friend, John, was using the race to qualify for the U.S. Olympic trials. When he passed us, he was maintaining a world-class pace. We held out orange slices for him but it was clear there was little real help we could offer. We couldn't possibly have offered the kind of elite-level advice or coaching that a runner of his caliber might have found useful at that point — if, in fact, he needed any help at all.

About 90 minutes later, our late friend (and a friend and heroine to all staff developers) Judy-Arin Krupp came by. Delighted to see friendly faces on a miserably cold and wet day, she urged us to walk along with her for several hundred yards. We passed along warm hugs and a dry sweatshirt before she set off to finish the course.

Clearly these two, while running the same race, had different paces, different reasons for being there, and vastly different needs for support and encouragement along the way.

Personal concerns are legitimate. Too often, personal concerns are dismissed as irrelevant or, at worst, the response of the dreaded Resister. But the fact is that resistance to change — whether demonstrated by asking hard questions, dragging of heels, or outright belligerence — is a natural phenomenon. It's normal to want to know how something new will affect you, and to feel a threat to your competence, comfort, control, and confidence.

How long someone's personal concerns remain, however, is another matter. A staff developer can help diminish resistance by applying knowledge of Stages of Concern. The critical point here is that decision makers who are convinced that something is good have already gone through the four general phases of concerns, from Awareness to Impact. They often need to be reminded that others must be afforded the same process, because:

"Every attempt to preempt conflict, argument, protest by rational planning can only be abortive...When those who have the power to manipulate changes...shrug off opposition as ignorance and prejudice, they express a profound contempt for the meaning of lives other than their own....(They) have already assimilated these changes to their purposes, and worked out a reformulation which makes sense to them.... If they deny others the chance to do the same, they treat them as puppets dangling by the threads of their own conceptions." (Marris, 1975, p. 166).

References

Hall, G.E. & Hord, S.M., (1987). Change in schools: Facilitating the process. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Marris, P. (1975). Loss and change. New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday

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Several, short related articles or charts follow.

Practice Profile: HOW CLOSE IS THIS TEACHER TO HAVING A CLASSROOM THAT TREATS RACES, CULTURES, AND SEXES EQUALLY?

These definitions are an example of a system of evaluation to determine if a classroom is equitable toward races, cultures, and genders. Using tools such as these, classroom behaviors and values can be plotted and charted to show progress toward change.

ideal:

The teacher visually portrays males and females in both traditional and non-traditional roles, and includes representatives of various races and cultures in pictorial displays.

Acceptable:

The teacher provides neutral visual images in pictorial displays.

Unacceptable:

- The teacher visually portrays people only in roles traditional for their race, sex, or culture.
- The teacher portrays only one sex, race , or culture in visual displays.
- The teacher's visual displays portray sex, race, or ethnic stereotypes.

(Excerpted from Profile of an Equitable Classroom by Leslie F. Hergert and Raymond R. Rose, Andover, MA: The NETWORK, Inc., 1994.)

For Further Reading

Readers interested in learning more about CBAM can begin by examining two comprehensive books.

Change in schools (see the references for details.) is the most comprehensive book on the research.

Taking charge of change (Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1987) by S. Hord, et al is very useful for school and district practitioners.

In addition, we recommend:

Measuring stages of concern about the innovation: A manual for use of the SoC questionnaire by Hall, G.E., George, A.A., & Rutherford, W.L. (Austin, TX: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 1977.)

The practice profile: An all purpose tool for program communication, staff development, evaluation, and improvement. by S.F. Loucks, S.F. and D.P. Crandall. (Andover, Mass.: The NETWORK, Inc., 1981.)

Measuring levels of use of the innovation: A manual for trainers, interviewers, and raters by S. F. Loucks, B.W. Newlove, and G.E. Hall. (Austin, TX: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 1976.)

"Using knowledge of change to guide staff development,'' by S. Loucks-Horsley and S. Stiegelbauer in A. Lieberman, & L. Miller.(Eds.),

Staff development for education in the 90's: New demands, new realities, new perspectives . (New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 1991.)

A manual for assessing open-ended statements of concern about an innovation by B.W. Newlove and G.E. Hall. (Austin, TX: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 1976.)

Stages of concern

Stage Characteristic Expression

6 Refocusing I have ideas about something new that would work even better.

5 Collaboration How can I relate what I'm doing to what others are doing?

4 Consequence How is my use affecting kids (clients)? How can I refine it to have more impact?

3 Management I seem to be spending all my time getting materials ready.

2 Personal How will using it affect me?

1 Informational I'd like to know more about it.

0 Awareness I'm not concerned about it.

Levels of use

Level Characteristic Behavior

VI Renewal Seeks more effective alternatives to the established use of the innovation.

V Integration Makes deliberate efforts to coordinate with others in using the innovation.

IVB Refinement Assesses impact and makes changes to increase it.

IVA Routine Has established a pattern of use and is making few, if any, changes.

III Mechanical Is poorly coordinated, making changes to better organize use of the innovation.

II Preparation Prepares to use the innovation.

I Orientation Seeks information about the innovation.

0 Nonuse Takes no action with respect to the innovation.