



Tools for Taking Action:

*Cultivating an Organizational Culture of
Curiosity & Learning*

Tech Forward Conference
September 23, 2019



Agenda

What's our plan for the session?

The Pew Fund Evaluation Capacity Building Initiative

- ▶ *Learn about the initiative where we studied, refined, and implement learning culture strategies*

Overview of Building a Learning Culture

- ▶ *Discuss the value and key aspects of building a learning culture*

Strategies for Building a Learning Culture

- ▶ *Assess your organization on strategies for building a learning culture*

Building a Road Map for Your Organization

- ▶ *Start to think about how to develop a “learning culture” road map for your organization*

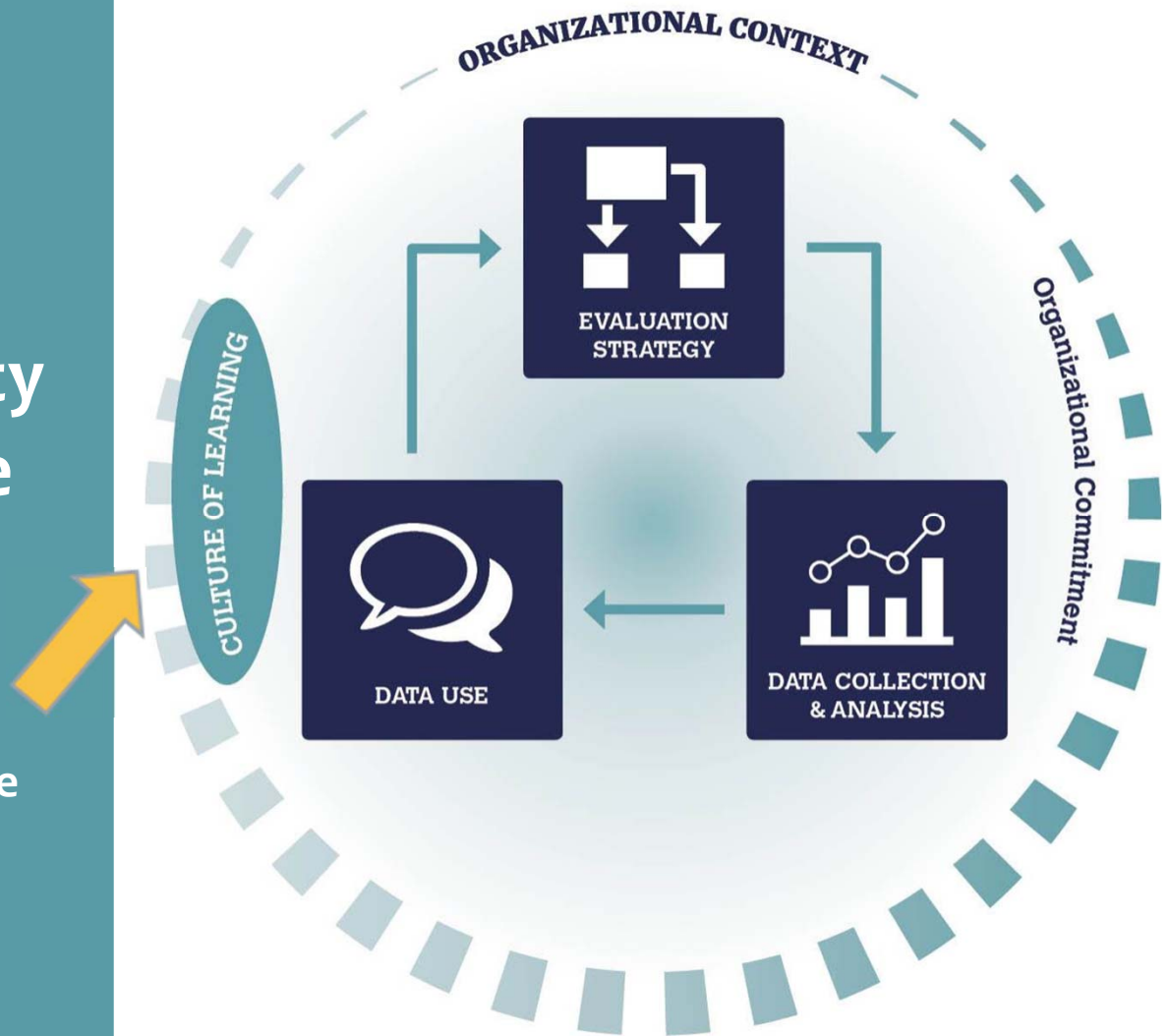
The Pew Fund Evaluation Capacity Building Initiative

Goal: Support Pew Fund grantees to become more effective in developing their monitoring, evaluation, and program improvement skills

- ▶ Group learning and individualized coaching to 25-30 grantees over 18 months
- ▶ Content focused on evaluation strategies, program improvement activities, building a learning culture, harnessing organizational resources, and managing change
- ▶ A subset of grantees eligible to apply for up to \$40,000 for technology infrastructure supports

The Pew Fund Evaluation Capacity Building Initiative Framework

You are here
for this
session!



Lessons Learned from Cohort 1

(so far)

- ▶ Organizations are making positive changes as a result of engagement in the ECBI
- ▶ Coaching is “the” critical aspect of the ECBI
- ▶ Organizations needed (and wanted) more time in the ECBI
- ▶ Change management should have greater emphasis: building a learning culture is hard!



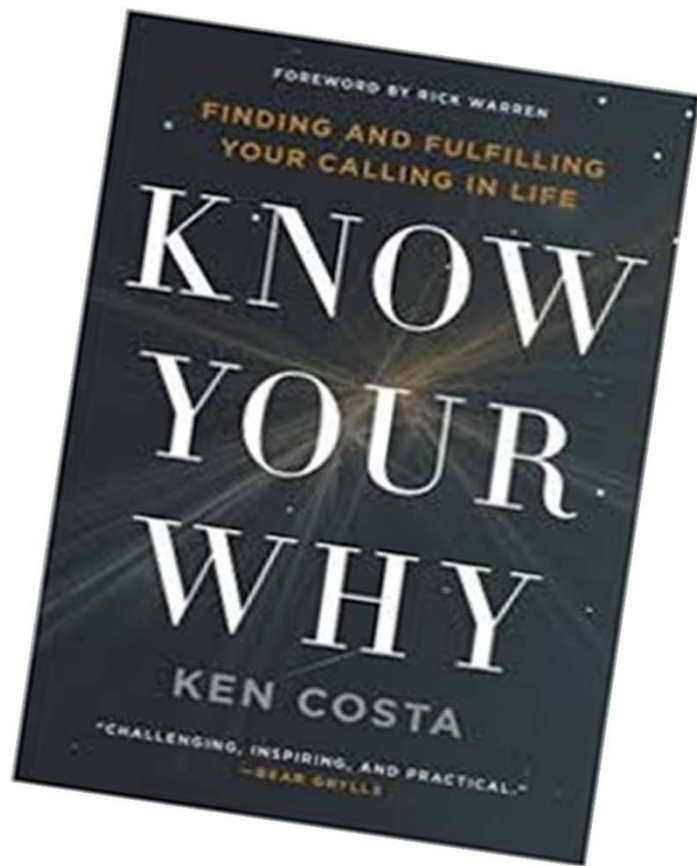
Building a Learning Culture

Why is a learning culture important?

From a Culture of Compliance... *to a Culture of Learning*



Cultivate a sense of purpose for evaluation & monitoring



- ▶ Connect monitoring and evaluation efforts to the mission of the organization
- ▶ Ensure all stakeholders have high expectations and take time to celebrate success
- ▶ Collect data with the primary purpose of learning and improving


Ensure staff feel safe sharing problems & view “failure” as a learning opportunity

~~PLAN A~~
~~PLAN B~~
PLAN C

***Encourage inquiry &
be OK with not having all
the answers.***

- ▶ *Set aside time for reflection & discussion of results*
- ▶ *Encourage people to be curious, ask questions, and push each other's thinking*

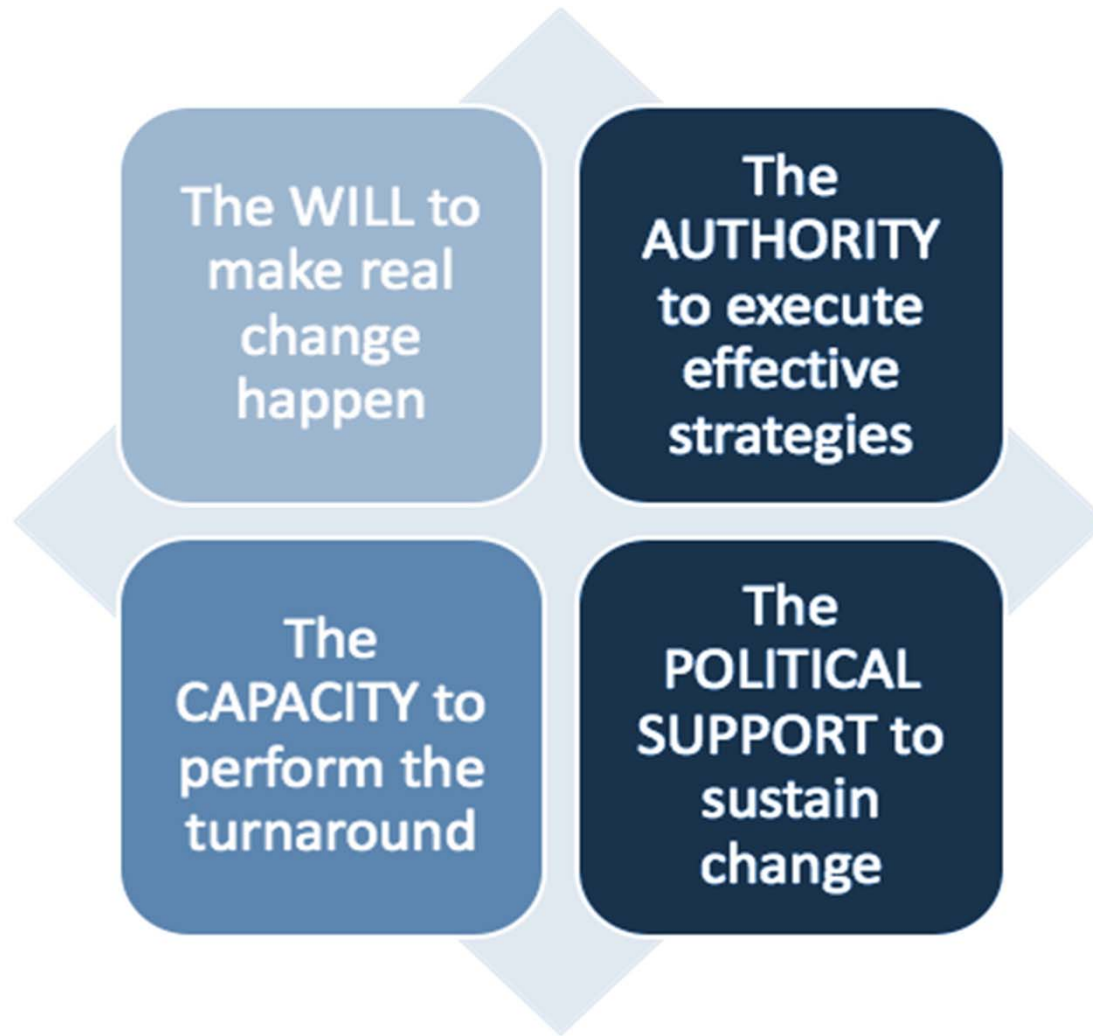




Build & Support A Learning Culture

A framework and strategies

Successful Change Requires:



Adapted from Ashley Joachim, Center on Reinventing Public Education

Will (people are bought in to the work)

Indicators that WILL is in place to support the work

- ▶ Staff at all levels do the “hard work” of reflecting on outcomes and indicators on a routine basis (i.e., cyclically), asking...
 - Are the outcomes appropriate?
 - Are they aligned with our strategies and program design?
 - Do we need to shift program design because of what our outcomes indicate?
- ▶ Leadership provides time, space, and incentives for monitoring, evaluation, and learning practices
- ▶ New meeting structures are instituted. Agendas incorporate time to discuss, reflect, and make meaning of data

Capacity (time, skills, money, tools)

Indicators that the CAPACITY to do the work is being developed and committed

- ▶ Updated recruitment, hiring, and selection practices include both soft and hard skills needed to support a learning culture (e.g., job descriptions; interview questions probe for curiosity, learning mindset)
- ▶ Technology is aligned with the monitoring, evaluation, and learning needs; it is invested in when needed (e.g., upgrades to the system)
- ▶ Updated policies and procedures: Organization has developed and/or invested in data entry manuals, schedules for data entry and management, reporting schedules, confidentiality and consent procedures, etc.
- ▶ Line items for evaluation and monitoring are incorporated into budgets

Authority (decision-makers are in it to win it)

Indicators of leadership being committed to the work

- ▶ Staff are empowered to make recommendations based on data findings and leadership is willing to reflect on/ use findings to inform organizational decisions and strategies
- ▶ When data indicate that strategies aren't having their desired impact, leaders look to understand why and modify accordingly
- ▶ Organizational leaders integrate data into meetings, visuals, dashboards, and other public spaces to model, reinforce, and incentivize desired data-use behaviors, mindsets, and practices

Political Support

Indicators that stakeholders are invested & activated in support of the work

- ▶ Data champions within the organization have been identified. They are the individuals who collect and use data and can bring others along on the data “journey”
- ▶ Board members and staff are trained in the outcomes and indicators of the organization and use them as a framework to inform decision-making
- ▶ The board values data and learning highly as evidenced through actions (e.g., there is a learning committee of the board)



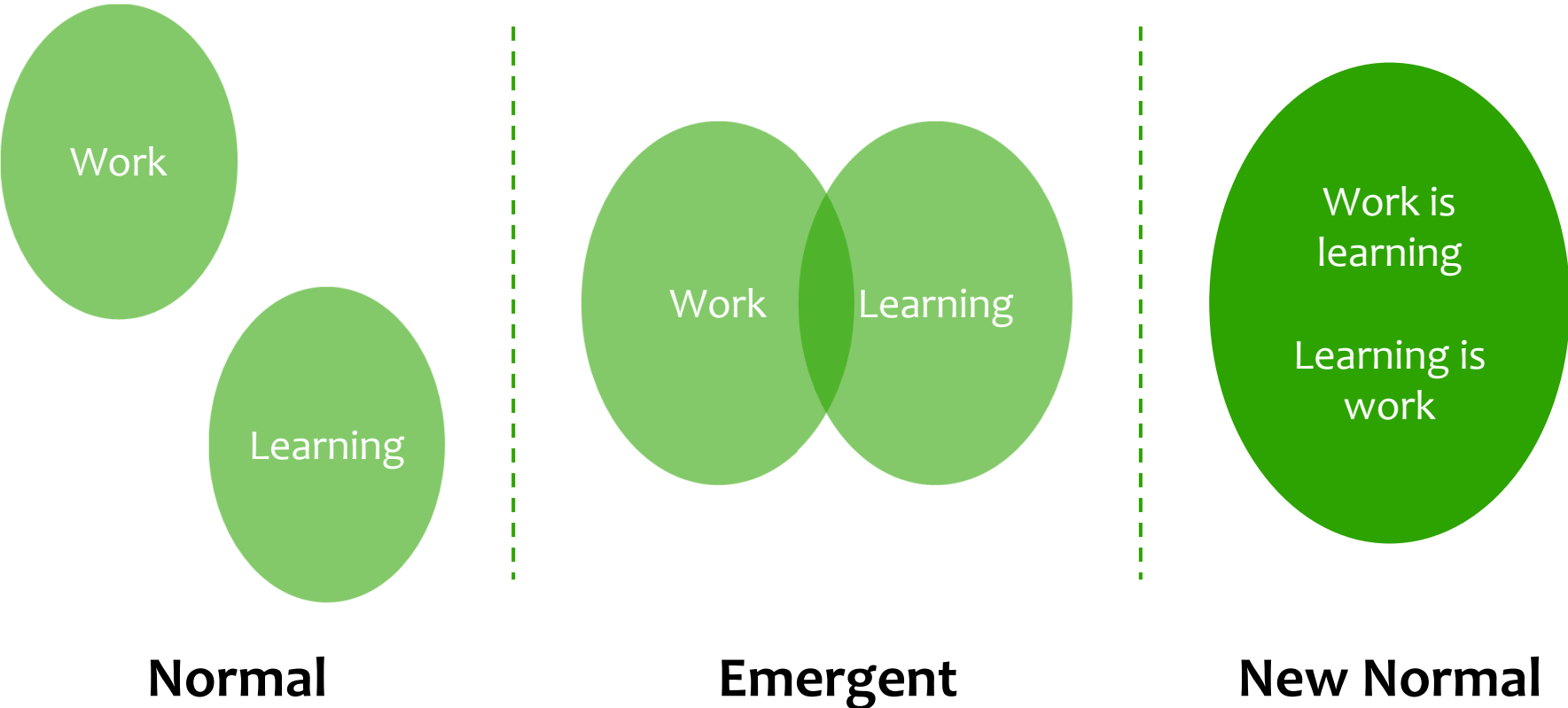
Story from the Field

Center for Employment Opportunities
(CEO)

Center for Employment Opportunities

- ▶ Goal is to reduce recidivism and increase sustainable employment opportunities for people returning from prison
- ▶ Over 25 locations in the US (Pew Fund grantee for their Philadelphia site)
- ▶ “Proven model” based on extensive research, evaluation, and monitoring
- ▶ Recently went through a process to redefine what it means to embrace and use learning

How Can CEO Enhance Learning to Improve Results?



Aligning Work and Learning Accelerates Better Decisions and Improvement

Takeaways from the Road to Greater Learning



Establish Clarity of Purpose (ToC)



Cultivate Supportive Leadership & Environments



Make Time for Analysis, Reflection & Feedback



Monitor Program Quality First, Then Evaluate



Be Patient, Be Curious and Enjoy the Ride!

What Does Supportive Leadership Look Like?



CEO
Newsletters



Senior Team
Engaging Clients



Providing Time
& Resources



Setting a
Vision & Agenda



Eliciting Staff
Feedback



Building a Road Map toward Greater Learning

What will it look like for you?

Implementing a Learning Culture

Reflections

Introduce yourself & discuss:

- ▶ *What are some of the qualities and indicators of a learning culture that resonated with you?*
- ▶ *What do you think your organization's goals are for developing a learning culture?*

Implementing a Learning Culture

Brainstorm

- ▶ *How is your organization already cultivating a culture of learning?*
- ▶ *What is your organization ready to change/update/revise to ensure continuous learning is your norm?*

Implementing a Learning Culture

Strategizing

- ▶ *What strengths does your organization bring to building a learning culture?*
- ▶ *What challenges/barriers does your organization face in building a learning culture?*

Implementing a Learning Culture

Action Steps...

Indicate the first three steps you will bring back to your organization....

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

**TRUST
THE
PROCESS.**

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