



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
CHRONIC DISEASE DIRECTORS**

Promoting Health. Preventing Disease.

**Article/Publication:**

IHI Psychology of Change Framework to Advance and Sustain Improvement

**Source:**

Hilton K, Anderson A. *IHI Psychology of Change Framework to Advance and Sustain Improvement*. IHI White Paper. Boston, Massachusetts: Institute for Healthcare Improvement. 2018.

<http://www.ihl.org/resources/Pages/IHIWhitePapers/IHI-Psychology-of-Change-Framework.aspx>

**Theme(s) and/or STAR Framework Component(s):**

- Leadership
- Management and Administration

**Relevant NACDD Chronic Disease Competencies:**

1. Provide leadership to create key values and shared vision.
2. Support professional and personal development for chronic disease program staff.
3. Motivate individuals and teams to achieve goals.
4. Promote team and organizational learning and collaboration.

**Introduction/Purpose:**

This publication provides information for leaders on the psychology of change (described as “...the science and art of human behavior as it relates to transformation”) and methods to harness its ability to impact improvement efforts. A primary objective of the IHI Psychology of Change Framework is to activate people’s agency, in which an individual or group chooses to act with purpose. The framework also prioritizes authentic involvement of all affected persons in the change process.

**Summary:**

The IHI White Paper is based on an application of improvement science that incorporates evidence-based interventions (the ‘what’) and implementation strategies (the ‘how’). It details a framework and methods that can be used to address the adaptive side of change in order to deliver on the power of people (the ‘who’) and their motivations (the ‘why’) to achieve successful, sustained improvements. The IHI Psychology of Change Framework is informed by the recommendations of renowned improvement thought leaders on the human side of change, such as Everett Rogers and W. Edwards Deming; a cross-disciplinary literature review of adaptive tools for enhancing improvement efforts; and interviews and consultation with subject matter experts. It centers on activating people’s agency, defined as “the ability of an individual or group to choose to act with purpose,” in which the two key components of agency are power and courage. The framework’s domains of practice are organized into five areas: 1) unleash intrinsic motivation; 2) co-design people-driven change; 3) co-produce authentic relationship; 4) distribute power; and 5) adapt in action. The guide provides descriptive details, evidence, supportive strategies and practices, and examples for each component, as well as a list of questions to ask in implementing some components. In addition, there are recommendations for



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
CHRONIC DISEASE DIRECTORS**

Promoting Health. Preventing Disease.

measurement to determine that the use of the IHI Psychology of Change Framework in a specific improvement project is achieving the desired effect.

**Application to Chronic Disease Leadership and Practice:**

The IHI White Paper synthesizes a comprehensive array of research to inspire action, providing leaders with technical actions and approaches they can use in building organizational capacity by focusing on people's value in advancing and sustaining improvement. While most examples are health care-oriented, the guide applies to public health and chronic disease prevention, including its application of continuous quality improvement to programs and services that can be strengthened by activating people's agency within an organization.

**Reflection Questions** (to consider upon reading the full article):

1. What is your reaction to the IHI Psychology of Change Framework, including its priority of "activating people's agency"? What do you see in this publication overall as being most meaningful?
2. Of the five framework domains of practice, which particular component stands out as having greatest importance? What areas of this component are going well within your unit or team, and what are the areas that could be improved?
3. How might your unit or team begin to adopt and test the framework, tools, and measurement in a particular improvement project? What are some initial ideas and/or practical steps you envision?
4. Through use of this framework and guidance, what desired impacts (demonstrating advanced and sustained improvement) would you wish to see in the field of chronic disease prevention?

**Additional Notes:**

This IHI White Paper is free to access and download once readers register with IHI. The document is 32 pages in length.