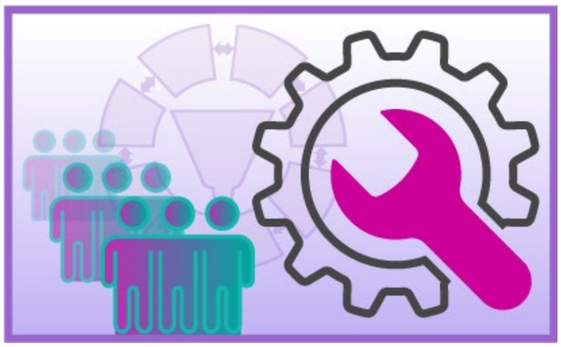
LEADING CHANGE TOOLKIT™

TO HELP CHANGE AGENTS AND CHANGE TEAMS MAKE LASTING IMPROVEMENTS IN HEALTH CARE



Tools to support the Knowledge-to-Action (KTA) Framework's Action Cycle Phases - Considerations for change teams

Using a tool to assess factors, such as knowledge or attitudes of evidence-based practice (EBP) or the sustainability of a program can support change teams engaged in the action cycle phases of the Knowledge-to-Action (KTA) Framework. The strategies described below are meant for change teams who are thinking about using a KTA Tool and include some considerations to use throughout the process – i.e., before, during and after the use of a tool. These strategies support the successful implementation of one or more of the action cycle phases. As with any change process, planning is key and using one of the KTA Tools is no exception.

The *Leading Change Toolkit*™ includes 33 tools that can be used in one or more of the action cycle phases. All of these tools have been evaluated by the KTA Tool Working Group for their pragmatic properties and content validity so that they can be used with confidence.

The KTA tools are listed in the applicable sections of the action cycle phase; for each tool, there is a summary page with the following details:

- purpose,
- description,
- applicable KTA action cycle phase(s),
- available languages,
- contact information for the developer (i.e., the researcher(s) who created the tool), and
- the citation of the development paper that includes, in many cases, the tool itself and the scoring guide.

In addition, each summary page includes a linked document with the details of the tool's pragmatic properties and content validity.

A summary table of the 33 tools is included in the KTA tools section and provides a snapshot of all of the tools included in the *Leading Change Toolkit*™. Use this to get an overview of all of the tools, to facilitate your tool selection and to locate it in the *Leading Change Toolkit*™.

Getting started - Considerations for change teams before using a tool:

1. **Determine if a tool is needed –** Consider your change initiative and ask yourself if a tool can assist you in your implementation of one or more of the action cycle phases of the KTA Framework. Using a tool is not mandatory, but it may help change teams to ascertain the current status of elements, such as attitudes towards EBP or organizational readiness for implementation. If you do decide to use a tool, continue reading to learn more about choosing and using a tool, and determining how it will inform the next steps of your change initiative.
2. **Be strategic in choosing a tool** – Discuss as a change team your rationale for the selection of a tool. Share this decision with colleagues and other stakeholders to gauge their response. Take time to address any questions or concerns to build trust and reduce any stress or negativity that using a tool may cause. It is important to be transparent about how the results will be used to move change forward effectively. Emphasize that participation in completing the tool is welcomed and strongly encouraged as part of engagement in the change initiative.
3. **Contact the developer of the tool if you need additional information or have inquiries –** If you and your change team are uncertain about a tool, one of its components, or the scoring guide, consider reaching out to the developer. Their emails are included in each of the tool's summary sheets. Connecting with the developer can boost your confidence using the tool.
4. **Choose the right tool for the right people** – While many tools can be used as an assessment for all staff, some tools are designed for a specific population or sector. In cases where your context differs from the original study population or sector, consider reaching out to the tool's

developer(s) to determine if the tool is also applicable to your setting. Search to see if the tool has been used in a similar setting to yours and/or reach out to the tool developer.

5. **Contact the developer of the tool for permission to use the tool or if you have questions -** A few of the tools included in the *Leading Change Toolkit*™ require permission from the developer to access and use the tool, as indicated in the tool's summary sheet.
    - **If permission is needed**: Email addresses for the tool developers are included in each of the summaries for the tools. See the final page of this file for a draft email template requesting permission to use a tool from a developer.
    - **If permission is not needed**: Consider reaching out to the developer if you have any questions regarding the tool.

6. **Trial the tool first** – Have one or two members of the change team complete the tool prior to implementing it to determine if there are any concerns or considerations for staff. As part of preparing to use the tool, learn how it is scored and how to interpret the results, if applicable.

7. **Think carefully regarding which identifying information, if any, staff will be asked to include when completing the tool (e.g., their names, roles, or team/units).**
    - Consider omitting any identifiers if, after completing the tool, there is a take-up of the correct answers or staff can self-determine their results. The omission of any identifiers may be perceived as less stressful or threatening for some staff making the overall process more positive and focused on professional development and building capacity.
    - Consider asking for a role and/or team/unit identification (versus a person's name) if total scores for a group (i.e., aggregate data) are needed to determine next steps or to compare results between groups or sites. Data may also be helpful to use before and after an implementation intervention to determine a baseline and to measure effectiveness or impact.
    - Consider including names in cases where individualized interventions are being offered or if completing the tool is mandatory. Be very clear if the results will be used as part of a performance review or if there is a minimum result that must be achieved; in these cases, consider if pre-readings can be offered to help staff prepare for using the tool.

8. **Be intentional about whether and how a tool's results will be scored –** Determine in advance if it is necessary to know each person's numerical score of a tool (e.g., 70 per cent). Be aware that if scores are needed, a scoring scale (e.g., poor, fair, good, excellent) or range (e.g., 0-3, 4-7, 8-10) may be preferable for learners as it places less emphasis on a single data point. Regardless of how the scores are reported, it is most important to provide staff with an opportunity to understand why an answer is not correct, if applicable, and to learn from their results.

9. **Avoid modifying the tool for your purposes –** In the event there are components of the tool that are not applicable to your location, do not modify the tool by removing or adding questions; instead, reach out to the tool developer for advice.

10. **Avoid referring to the tool as a test –** Tests can create feelings of anxiety or stress which could feed an undercurrent of negativity towards the change process.

Considerations for implementing a tool with staff:

1. **Explain how to complete the tool and address any questions -** Explain verbally and/or in writing how the tool should be completed. Reiterate why the tool is being used and how the results will support the change initiative.
   - If the tool is being completed in-person as a group (e.g., during an education session), take time to address any questions or concerns before asking staff to complete the tool.
   - In cases where the tool is not being completed in-person (e.g., it is being completed by staff on their own), provide a change team member's contact information should there be questions or concerns.

2. **Make completing the tool as easy as possible and ensure sufficient time is allocated –** Ensure all of the needed supplies are available and ample time is provided to complete the tool.
   - If the tool is being completed as a group at an in-person event, ensure sufficient time as described in the tool's development paper and/or the scoring guide to avoid a rushed environment.
   - If staff is completing the tool outside of a group session, consider how many days are needed based on variables such as the length of time to complete the tool, staffing schedules (e.g., part-time versus casual, vacation periods) and other current time demands.
   - If print copies of the tool are used, leave them for staff in their mailboxes or elsewhere at the workplace. If an online version is being used instead, provide a link where the tool can be found and any login details.

3. **Emphasize that the tool and its results are most effective only when staff's answers accurately reflect their current state -** Encourage staff to take their time and answer the tool's questions to the best of their ability. For questions pertaining to areas such as attitudes or behaviours, encourage them to be as accurate and truthful as possible so that the results are meaningful and reflect their present-day actions.

4. **Indicate that a continuum of results is anticipated -** By letting staff know that a range of scores is likely, they can be reassured that it is acceptable for everyone to have different results. Emphasize that wherever a staff member is on the continuum, the change team will strive to develop interventions that will address their needs.

5. **Consider incentives for completing the tool, if needed -** A small prize (e.g., a coffee gift card) could be offered occasionally as an incentive to complete the tool; however, be cautious about using incentives too frequently as it can become an expectation or undermine the value and importance of staff engagement in the change initiative.

6. **Reconsider the timing of the tool if there is a growing resistance or opposition –** In situations where there are strong concerns or negativity raised regarding the use of the tool and/or its timing, consider postponing using the tool and moving ahead as it may result in either a low response rate of completed tools or answers that do not accurately reflect the current state. Additionally, it may negatively impact the overall change initiative. Instead, consider strategies such as:
    - have a meeting to listen to and address staff concerns;
    - extend timelines to provide more time to complete the tool;
    - delay or pause the tool until after a busy time period such as summer vacation or orientation of new staff;
    - reconsider which tool has been chosen and select another one; and/or
    - rethink the decision to ask staff to submit their responses to the change team allowing them instead other ways to indicate their results, such as a scoring scale or a show of hands.

Overall, commit as a change team to remain responsive to the needs of staff. Be aware that the way in which change teams navigate situations like these is critically important – if done well it can reaffirm trust in the leadership of the change team and that the change process is a shared one that requires the engagement of both the change team and staff.

Now what? Considerations for next steps for change teams after using a tool:

1. **Have the answers to tool questions, if applicable, available for the respondents –** If a tool measures, for example, knowledge of EBP process steps, have the answers to the tool's questions readily available. This promotes adult learning and allows staff to learn from their incorrect responses and to improve their knowledge. Where possible, allocate time to discuss as a group or individually any questions that were challenging or where the correct response is not clear.

2. **Promote positivity regarding the results of the tool and mitigate negative emotions (e.g., defensiveness, feeling threatened).** Reinforce the rationale for using the tool and the benefits of having the results to inform the next steps. Thank the staff for their participation and for completing the tool as accurately as possible.

3. **Be ready to discuss and take the next steps.** Describe the range of available options to address the needs of staff, as determined by their results (e.g., required or recommended readings, as needed). In cases where a plan has not yet been determined, commit to timelines for when staff can learn more about the next steps.

4. **Acknowledge and celebrate positive results such as favourable attitudes or high levels of knowledge and/or use of EBP –** Position or frame this as a strength and an enabler or facilitator for the change initiative.

5. **Recognize concerning results, such as poor attitudes, or low knowledge and/or use of EBP –** Position or frame this as an opportunity for learning and creating change to address barriers and improve outcomes. In cases where the results are more concerning than anticipated, re-consider the next steps and whether additional interventions (e.g., supplemental education, peer mentoring) are needed.

6. **Consider strategic and targeted next steps based on identified barriers or challenges -** Strategies need to be selective and target the identified areas of concern. For example,
   - If there are concerns of low levels of knowledge on EBP, consider education interventions, such as recommended or required reading or taking a short online course.
   - In situations of poor attitudes, social movement actions like rooting the change in values to foster intrinsic motivation or using framing to position the change and its credibility, urgency and meaning, can be helpful.
   - For more examples of targeted interventions addressing areas such as capability, including knowledge and skills), motivation, or organizational factors, see *A guide to patient safety improvement* (CPSI, 2020) at CPSI-9954-PatientSafetyImprovementGuide_ENGLISH_FA_July29.pdf (patientsafetyinstitute.ca)

SOURCE: Adapted from Training Skills for Health Care Providers Reference Manual (2010). Training Skills for Health Care Providers: Manual (reprolineplus.org)

Additional resources

Name of resource	Description
Evidence-Based Practice (Canadian Nurses Association, 2021)	A summary page of EBP including definitions, barriers to using EBP, types of evidence and a historical overview of EBP in the context of nursing practice.
Introduction to evidence-informed decision making (Canadian Institutes of Health Research, 2012)	A free learning module to understand the components of evidence-informed decision-making.
Knowledge, attitudes, implementation, facilitators, and barriers among community nurses—systematic review (Li et al., 2019)	A systematic review on community nurses' knowledge, attitudes, implementation, barriers and facilitators of evidence-based practice.

Draft email template for permission to use a KTA tool

Hello [insert author],

My name is [insert name]. I am [insert your role – e.g., the BPSO® Lead/member of a change team] working at [insert your location]. The purpose of this email is to ask for your permission to use your measurement tool, [insert name of tool]. Your tool is included in the *Leading Change Toolkit™* produced by the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (2021), in partnership with Healthcare Excellence Canada, and available at www.RNAO.ca/leading-change-toolkit .

Our site is currently in the process of implementing a change initiative and we would like to use your measurement tool to assess [describe outcome]. The results will help to inform the next steps of our initiative. At this time, we [do/do not] anticipate pursuing publication of our findings.

Our team would be grateful if you would grant us permission to use the tool. If you are willing to share your tool with us, please send us a copy including the scoring guide.

Kind Regards,

[insert name]