

# RNAO's Best Practice Champions' Competencies Self-Assessment Tool

This tool provides competencies, categorized according to foundational performance statements which can be applied to all champions. It is based on Benner's Stages of Competence model.

**Please note:** Champions develop and apply knowledge and skills of the change process – including how to engage internal and external partners – by using implementation frameworks such as the [Social Movement Action](#) (SMA) and [Knowledge-to-Action](#) (KTA) frameworks. These competencies and their respective performance statements are relevant throughout the change process.

**Instructions:** Please rate each performance statement on a scale of 1 (novice), 2 (advanced beginner), 3 (competent), 4 (proficient) and 5 (expert).

**Figure 1.** Visual depiction of RNAO's Best Practice Champions' Competencies Framework.



## Stages of competence (Benner, 1984) adapted for the Best Practice Champions Network

Stage	Description
1 – Novice	The person has the foundational knowledge and skills to perform as a change agent. They benefit from ongoing support and reminders to put their knowledge into practice.
2 – Advanced beginner	The person has previous experience in a change process furthering their foundational knowledge and skills. They are efficient and skillful in parts of the change process, requiring occasional support as their knowledge and skills develop.
3 – Competent	The person has had multiple opportunities to participate in a change process. They are effective change agents and may be part of a change team as their knowledge and skills advance.
4 – Proficient	The person perceives the change process as whole rather than in phases and has a holistic understanding of the change process which improves their critical thinking and ability to recognize and anticipate potential barriers and solutions. Their knowledge and skills of practice change have deepened due to increased experiences and developed capacities.
5 – Expert	The person has an intuitive understanding of the change process and is able to prioritize areas of focus to maximize impact. As a change agent, they are highly adaptable and proficient at creating and sustaining change. They have developed highly skilled analytical abilities to guide and lead a practice change in a variety of roles including as an expert mentor.

**Source:** Adapted from P. Benner (1984). *From novice to expert: Excellence and power in clinical nursing practice*. Menlo Park: Addison-Wesley, p. 13-34.

1. Leader <i>A champion guides and/or leads <b>practice change</b> and influences others informally or formally.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
a. Actively embraces, guides and participates in practice change with enthusiasm to drive transformation forward.					
b. Acts as an influential peer by consistently role-modelling the practice change to reinforce knowledge and skills and inspire others towards attaining shared goals (example: applies new policies to their practice; uses evidence-informed tools; provides feedback and reminders to peers).					
c. Develops leadership knowledge and skills to support and spearhead a practice change (example: “commits to ongoing professional development”).					

2. Advocate <i>A champion is aware of and passionate about best practices, actively promoting and upholding them in their setting.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
a. Promotes bringing a possible practice change forward at the setting based on an identified concern or opportunities for improvement despite possible fears of speaking up.					
b. Speaks out about the benefits and value of the practice change to enhance its meaning (example: aligning the practice change with continuous quality improvement initiatives).					
c. Fosters intrinsic motivation for the practice change (example: speaking out about the personal value and meaning of the practice change and encouraging others to share their “why”).					
d. Supports new ways of thinking or innovations to address identified problems, or opportunities for change (examples: best practices, evidence-based tools and resources).					

3. Collaborator	1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A champion builds and maintains relationships with internal and external partners to facilitate an interactive, co-created and dynamic change process.</li> <li>• A champion creates a sense of belonging within teams to support the active engagement of others in the creation of a practice change.</li> </ul>					
a. Promotes inclusivity and diversity within the team to support the social connection and sense of belonging for all change team members.					
b. Demonstrates a deep enthusiasm in the recognition and celebration of team successes regarding the practice change (example: routinely shares successes on social media; acknowledges collaborative efforts).					
c. Engages in activities to build active partner relationships, and supports shared decision-making and a shared purpose (example: providing updates, shaping the practice change together, reprioritizing plans based on feedback seeking and integrating feedback).					
d. Participates in networks to share resources and ideas (examples, joining and participating in discussions at interdisciplinary committees and/or working groups such as Best Practice Spotlight Organization® (BPSO®) knowledge exchange calls, Best Practice Champions Network®).					
e. Mobilizes internal and external partners to take individual and collective action (example: plan together a “go live” day to kick-off a practice change).					
f. Liaises or collaborates with internal and external partners to set goals and solicit feedback in team meetings on the practice change to support implementation.					
g. Engages in activities to support change teams’ shared leadership and functioning (examples: establishing roles and responsibilities; being accountable to one another).					
h. Demonstrates positive energy for the practice change to support mobilizing and inspiring others to take action by encompassing one or more of the five energy domains).					
i. Establishes and promotes a collective identity with internal and external partners (example: collaborates with the team to create a logo, slogan or name for the change team)					

4. Communicator <i>A champion communicates to foster a shared purpose and inspires and motivates ongoing partner engagements.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
a. Seeks, integrates, and listens to feedback from internal and external partners to foster a shared vision for the practice change.					
b. Applies critical-thinking and problem-solving skills to advance the change process and navigate barriers such as low support from partners (examples: conflict resolution, reaching consensus).					
c. Demonstrates commitment to skillfully use framing strategies to describe the practice change and create meaning and shared purpose (example: crafting the key messages and integrating stories, imagery, visuals, and data).					

5. Content and Context expert <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>A champion applies knowledge of change processes and/or area of focus of practice change (content)</i></li> <li><i>A champion integrates an understanding of local and broader context to practice changes</i></li> </ul>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Content expert</b>					
a. Uses knowledge of implementation to guide and support practice change.					
b. Uses knowledge of best practice guidelines to support practice change (example: RNAO best practice guidelines recommendations).					
c. Applies knowledge and skills in an area of expertise to support the practice change (examples: experienced wound care provider, sector-specific experience, data analysis skills, research skills).					
<b>Context expert</b>					
a. Promotes equity, diversity and inclusion in practice setting (examples: engage in working towards cultural safety, humility and implementing anti-racism policies and practices)					

b. Demonstrates an understanding and appreciation of the local context such as historical, social, political, cultural and organizational values (examples: knowing the processes and people involved to achieve change, navigating the current working environment).					
c. Demonstrates the ability to adapt and tailor the practice change to their local context.					

<b>6. Facilitator</b> <i>A champion applies strategies to operationalize and guide the practice change</i>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
a. Uses strategic approaches (example: brainstorming or concept mapping) to engage a change team to determine what needs to be changed, maintained and/or updated in the practice setting.					
b. Co-creates an action plan to achieve the goals of the practice change (example: using project management tools and strategies, prioritizing goals, determining work processes).					
c. Coordinates and/or facilitates opportunities for active engagement of partners in the practice change (example: following up with interprofessional team members, organizing an event for champions, hosting education sessions).					
d. Supports the evaluation of the practice change to determine its impact (example: data collection, data analysis and data dissemination).					
e. Secures the resources needed for practice change and strategizes how to access them with input from internal and external partners (example: support the creation of a business case).					
f. Leads the scaling (expanding) the practice change, where applicable (example: pilot implementation intervention at one site, and then roll out to other sites post evaluation).					

7. Mentor <i>A champion provides support and/or consultation to change teams and their partners, throughout the process of a practice change based on their knowledge and experience.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
a. Motivates and inspires others through actions and words to actively participate in the practice change (example: show enthusiasm for the practice change, shares compelling narratives and data).					
b. Prepares and coaches change teams and partners throughout the implementation of the practice change (example: supports the completion of a gap analysis, participates in process of selecting implementation interventions).					
c. Provides support to change teams and partners to build their own leadership skills to guide the change process themselves (example: encourages change team members to take ownership of and responsibility for the practice change).					