***Introduction to Organizational Effectiveness***

Organizational Effectiveness (OE) is a systemic and systematic approach to continuously improving an organization’s performance, performance capacity and client outcomes. “Systemic” refers to taking into account an entire system or in the case of OE an entire organization; “systematic” refers to taking a step-by-step approach. In simple terms, therefore, OE is a step-by-step approach to continuously improving an entire organization.

Organizations operate as systems that are made up of the following interconnected moving parts: the aim of the organization (**strategy**) shared and seen as important by staff within the organization and stakeholders external to the organization; resources put into the organization to achieve the strategy (**inputs**); ability the organization has to advance toward outcomes using available resources (**performance capacity**); activities of the organization towards outcomes (**performance actions**); results of system performance (**outputs**); changes in lives as a result of system performance (**outcomes**); and feedback from clients, staff, partners, key other stakeholders, and the community about how well the organization is achieving its desired outputs and outcomes (**feedback from the environment**). Feedback drives continuous improvement of strategy, which in turn drives continuous improvement of inputs, performance capacity, and performance actions, which in turn drives continuous improvement of outputs and outcomes.

The American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) has developed a systematic approach called the “DAPIMTM” approach to continuous improvement that enables real life work teams to drive continuous improvement. The approach involves **defining** priority improvements in operational terms; **assessing** observable, measurable strengths and gaps and identifying root causes and general remedies for priority gaps; **planning** quick wins, mid-term, and longer-term improvements; **implementing** action plans while managing communication and capacity; and **monitoring** progress, impact, and lessons learned impact for accountability and on-going adjustments.

The seven interconnected parts of the organizational system and five steps of the DAPIMTM continuous improvement approach contain within them many discrete tasks and individual and group areas of work. All organizations have strengths and gaps across this array of systematic and systemic work. This handbook is designed to help organizations leverage their strengths, close their gaps, and continuously improve across all areas of work.

***Purpose of the Organizational Effectiveness Handbook***

The Organizational Effectiveness Handbook (OE Handbook) is a compilation of tools and materials developed by APHSA’s OE team since early 2004. The OE Handbook has multiple purposes and uses based on the individual needs of our clients. The overarching purpose of the handbook is to help an organization make continuous improvement a way of doing business.

The OE Handbook can be used in its entirety by facilitator(s) (either internal or external to the organization) guiding an organization through a continuous improvement effort. The handbook can also be used in smaller pieces, as individual chapters are designed to enable facilitators and/or leadership teams to drive continuous improvement in specific parts of their organization or in areas of particular challenge.

Whichever use the client chooses, it is important to understand that aspiring OE facilitators and/or leadership teams cannot simply read the OE Handbook and be prepared to implement OE. Through years of work with state and local human services agencies, APHSA has found that the best way to learn continuous improvement is through a live learning by doing process in which experienced facilitators help participants draw on their knowledge and background to troubleshoot a real-life situation in a hands-on way. Through this experience, participants become familiar with the models, tools, and methods in the OE Handbook and see how they play out in real life situations. After experiencing the continuous improvement process first-hand, the participant newly proficient in OE can return to the handbook again and again as a now familiar resource when facilitating and/or leading continuous improvement efforts, marking it up, adding to it, commenting upon it, and continuously improving it as they go.

**We encourage you to review the manual and appendices for every chapter, but those items that are required are listed under each chapter.**

***Chapter One: Systemic Continuous Improvement Work*** introduces facilitators and leadership teams to models, tools, templates, and methods to assess strategic readiness through reflective thinking and define the aim and game plan of the organization through strategic planning. It provides more detailed guidance on how to define particularly challenging aspects of strategy – vision/mission/values, organizational roles, and use of strategic support functions. Resulting work products include a high-level organizational assessment and a strategic playbook. The assessment identifies the organization’s strengths, gaps, and priorities for systematic continuous improvement at a high level. The strategic playbook outlines what the organization is, what it intends to do and why, how it will do it, and what it needs to succeed.

**Pre- work requirement**

**- Page 2- Diagram on Defining the Organization System (explanation on page one)**

**-Pages 9-13- Organizational Roles**

**-Page 46- Diagram of Strategic Support Function Capacity and Credibility Model (Explanation on pages 15 and 16**

***Chapter Two: Systematic Continuous Improvement Work***introduces facilitators and leadership teams to the DAPIMTM and learning by doing approaches to systematic continuous improvement. Teams engaged in a facilitated learning by doing project or institute become familiar with models, tools, templates, and methods to continuously improve in priority areas, e.g., those identified using chapter one. Work products include the development and implementation of rapid and long-term continuous improvement plans as well as related communication and capacity plans. Participants also learn and practice monitoring techniques to assess their progress and adjust their continuous improvement work as needed.

**Pre-work requirement**

* **Pages 50-52- Organizing for Continuous Improvement**
* **Page 53- DAPIM**
* **Page 83- Chartering work teams**

***Chapter Three: Facilitating Continuous Improvement***introduces facilitators to the art and science of continuous improvement facilitation. This chapter can benefit organizations seeking to develop in-house facilitation teams, training organizations aiming to become more consultative and facilitative in their practice, and organization leaders seeking to strengthen their own facilitation skills. Participants are introduced to markers of effective facilitation, the flow of continuous improvement projects using the DAPIMTM approach, typical challenges OE facilitators face and ways to overcome them, and tools and techniques to help facilitators be successful.

**Pre-work requirement**

* **Pages 128-130- The DAPIM process- Balancing Safety and Accountability**
* **Pages 182-186- Sample Facilitator Agenda**
* **Pages 195-198- Markers of Effectiveness: Success Factors for Internal Facilitators**

***Chapter Four: Continuously Improving from the Inside Out -*** *Tip Sheets, Templates, Tools and Resources* compiles an array of tools that a facilitator needs to facilitate team activities and drill down continuous improvement efforts in specific areas of challenge. Since each effort using the DAPIMTM approach is unique to the client and its real-life situation, facilitators must be prepared to adapt pre-set agendas and other materials to emerging and evolving needs of participants. Chapter four provides a tool kit of team activities, templates, tools, and resources covering the areas of drill down continuous improvement encountered most frequently by APHSA’s OE facilitators. Any OE facilitator needs to know how to identify and facilitate the right team activities based on the root causes and remedies that emerge from clients’ continuous improvement efforts and the facilitator’s evolving understanding of the client’s strengths and gaps. OE facilitators are encouraged to add to this tool kit based on their own experiences.

**Pre-work requirement**

**-Pages 248-249- Conducting an After-Action Review**

In closing, the materials in this handbook aim to help facilitators and leadership teams guide an organization through a continuous improvement process. In keeping with the APHSA OE Department’s core belief that adults learn best by doing, the OE Handbook is meant to serve as a resource for reinforcement and sustainability after individuals and teams have experienced a learning by doing continuous improvement effort firsthand.

***Chapter Five: Pennsylvania OE Resources***

***Pre-work requirement***

***Refer to accordion Folder of Tools and resources***

***Acronym List***

The following is a list of acronyms in the Organizational Effectiveness Handbook:

**AAR** – After Action Review

**APHSA –**American Public Human Services Association

**CI Team** – Continuous Improvement Team

**DAPIMTM**– Define, Assess, Plan, Implement, Monitor

**HR** – Human Resources

**OE** – Organizational Effectiveness

**OE Handbook** – Organizational Effectiveness Handbook

**PPCWG** – Positioning Public Child Welfare Guidance