NTAC
Distance Learning Fact Sheet

Goodness of Fit Model

Outcomes → Instructional Strategies → Technology
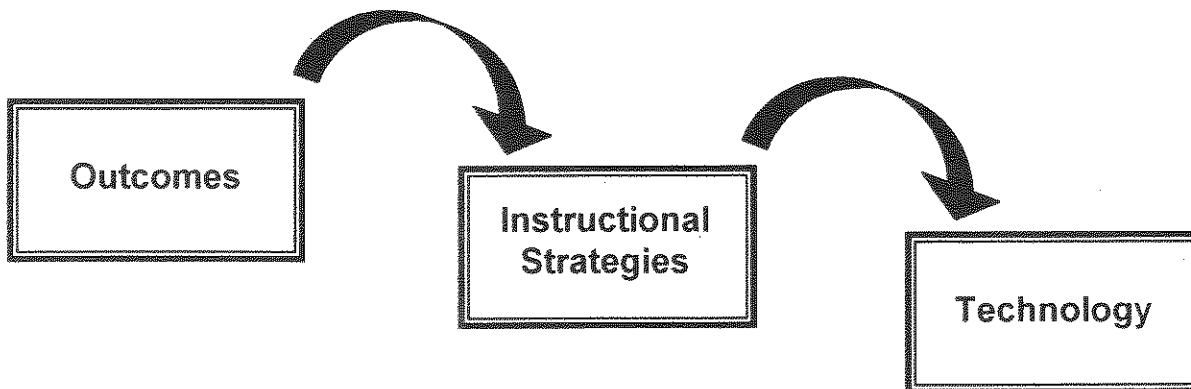
The technology of today is a powerful tool. However, technology does not teach a dad how to communicate with his child; nor does it help a teacher learn how to adapt her curriculum for a teenager who is deaf-blind. It certainly isn't capable on its own of drawing families together to support each other through the good times and the bad. Technology is a vehicle which a "trainer"*, applying effective instructional strategies, can use to help learners reach specific outcomes.

* "Trainer" may include teachers, facilitators, instructors, tutors, etc.

1. Identify your Technical Assistance and Training Outcomes

To be effective, a trainer must begin to plan by identifying outcomes. What will the participants do, know, or think about differently as a result of your technical assistance and training? These outcomes must be measurable in order to determine if they have been reached. Remember – technology doesn't enter the picture yet. The use of a certain type of technology is not your outcome; it is only a means to assist in successfully reaching the outcome.

Step 1. Identify specific outcomes for your technical assistance and training activity. Identify the level of the outcome – awareness, knowledge, skill building or mastery. These levels will impact decisions as you continue your planning. You may have specific learner outcomes, or broader community outcomes.

Examples of Learner outcomes:
- ✓ Build knowledge
- ✓ Increase skills
- ✓ Increase supports

Examples of Community outcomes:
- ✓ Increase awareness through dissemination
- ✓ Change of attitude
- ✓ Coordinate agency services

2. Identify the Pedagogy or Instructional Strategies that will help you to meet your identified outcomes

Think about the experiences you've had with teaching or learning in the past. What made these experiences successful for you? Do some of these descriptors come to mind?

- ✓ Hands on
- ✓ Timely feedback given
- ✓ Demonstrations used

- ✓ Group interaction
- ✓ Case studies
- ✓ Time to practice

These are examples of instructional strategies that support different teaching and learning pedagogy, or philosophies.

Step 1. Think about your philosophy of teaching and learning. Do you feel learners learn best when they're activity engaged and participating? Or do you feel people learn best by listening and following the direction of an expert? The instructional strategies you choose to use in your TA and training will be influenced by your own beliefs about teaching and learning.

Step 2. Based on your TA and training outcomes, list the instructional strategies that you believe will assist participants in reaching these outcomes. Don't think about technology yet! That comes later. What methods would you use to teach this same material in a face-to-face situation? Identify the strategies that have been effective for you in the past.

Step 3. There may be other factors that will impact your decisions with regard to technology. Some of these considerations are: how many participants will be included in the TA or training? Where are they located? What is their level of expertise with the content? Make note of these considerations.

3. Identify potential technology to assist you in implementing the instructional strategies you have identified.

Now you can think about technology! Depending on your technological savvy, you may need some help at this point. There are several resources for you to turn to. Do you have the NTAC "Overview of Technologies" fact sheet? This is a start. Seek out a technology expert in your agency or institution. Visit the Instructional Technology department at a university. Search the Internet for discussion forums related to distance learning and pose a question to others interested in this field.

Step 1. For each instructional strategy you've listed, identify one or more types of technology that will allow you to implement that strategy. Keep your outcomes in mind. If the technology helps implement the instructional strategy, will it help participants reach the identified outcome? For example, if your goal is to increase the skill level of providers and you know you want to include demonstrations of teaching techniques, you couldn't do this by using an electronic chat or threaded discussion. You would be able to do so, however, with videotape, videoconferencing, CD-ROM, or videostreaming.

Step 2. Now your homework begins. Do you have the resources available to take advantage of the technology you've selected? If not, how will you go about securing those resources? Possible resources for information, technology and funding include your agency, your state department of education, universities or community colleges, and private foundations or grants.

Goodness of Fit
Planning Worksheet - Example

Identify outcomes for your technical assistance or training	Identify the instructional strategies that best support the outcomes you've identified	Identify potential technology to implement your instructional strategies to meet your identified outcomes
(e.g., outcomes for service providers or families may be increased knowledge or skills; outcomes for the community may be awareness or actions. Be specific in this task.)	(e.g., if family to family support is an outcome, your strategies must include ways to help families connect or interact with one another; if your outcome is to improve the skills of paraprofessionals, your strategies must include a way for the learner to practice and receive feedback on those skills. Check for correspondence to your outcomes!)	

Example: *Broad goal: "We want to increase the skills of teams to use Personal Futures Planning with children and youth who are deaf-blind"*

Outcome #1:	**Strategies to meet outcome #1:**	*Technology that supports the instructional strategies:*
Participants will be able to accurately describe the process of Personal Futures Planning	1. *Lecture to give basic information* 2. *Probes from participants to check their understanding of content* 3. *Panel to deliver information about current practices* 4. *Case study using material from the team*	*Any of the following could be blended to support the strategies.* • *Print materials with audio conferencing* • *Cassette with workbooks* • *Web-based materials* • *Chat groups with feedback loops* • *Any videoconferencing as long as it had 2 way audio and was at least point to multipoint*
Outcome #2:	**Strategies to meet outcome #2:**	*Technology that supports the instructional strategies:*
Participants will demonstrate collaborative teaming skills and supportive interpersonal interaction skills with one another and in a team setting with families and agency representatives	1. *Lecture to give basic information* 2. *Probes from participants to check their understanding of content* 3. *Models for collaborative and interaction skills (for examples & non-examples)* 4. *Role plays with descriptions and feedback*	*Any of the following could be blended to support the strategies.* • *Any videoconferencing (with at least point to multipoint and 2 way audio)* • *Travel to the sites to conduct face-to-face training.*

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Planning Worksheet

Identify outcomes for your technical assistance or training	Identify the instructional strategies that best support the outcomes you've identified	Identify potential technology to implement your instructional strategies to meet your identified outcomes
Outcome:	*Instructional Strategies:*	*Potential Technology:*
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