

Channeling Change With Data-Informed Decision Making: Considering Options for Program Accountability

NRS 2024 REGIONAL TRAINING

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June 25–27, Phoenix, AZ

July 9–11, Crystal City, VA

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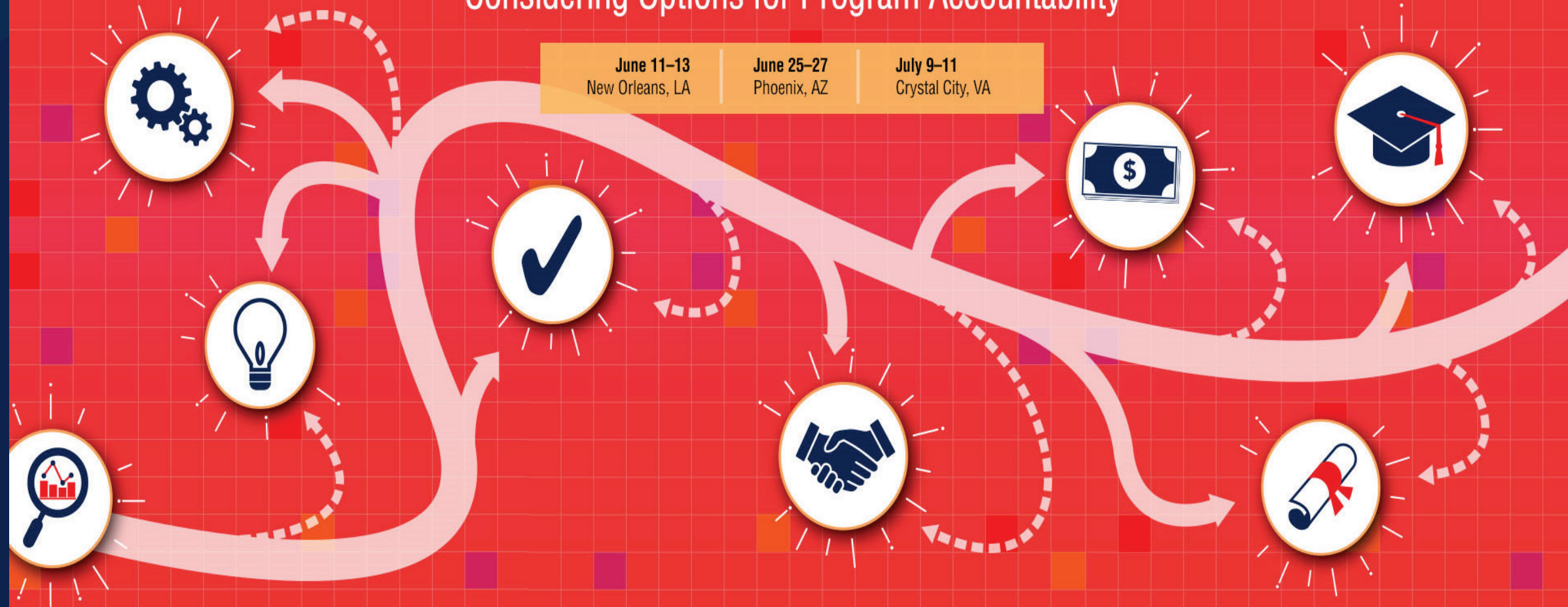
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Channeling Change With Data-Informed Decision Making

Considering Options for Program Accountability



Training Objectives

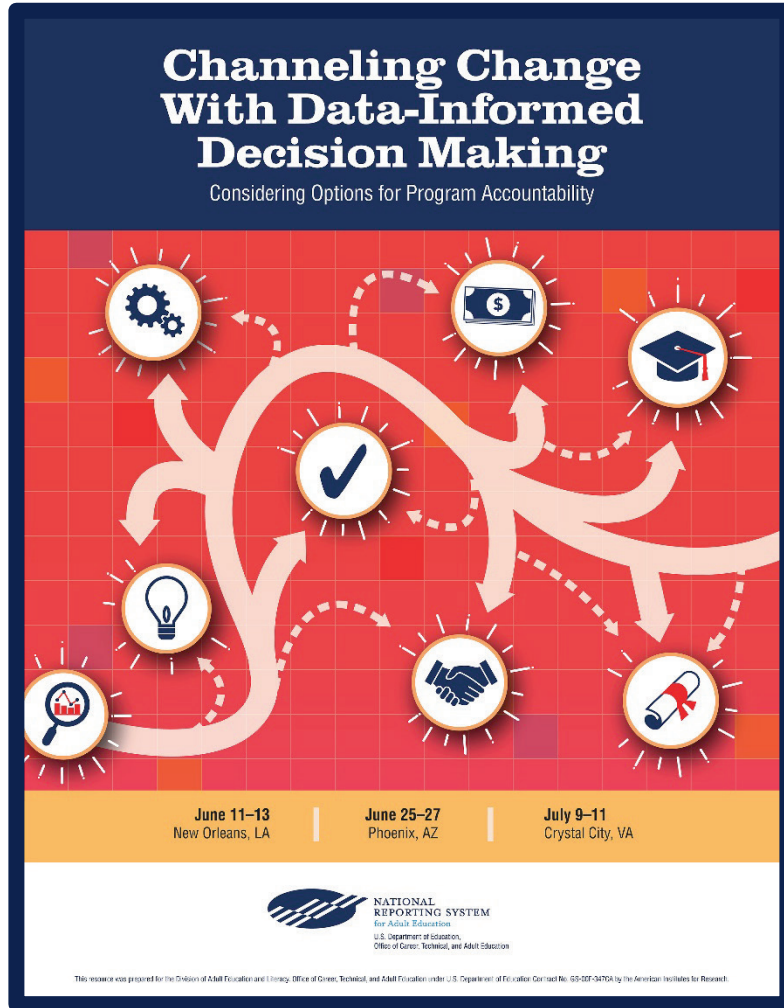
- Analyze** **Data** to evaluate options for implementing alternative placement in programs designed to result in measurable skill gains (MSGs) other than pre-posttest gain
-
- Review** Steps for **decision making** that may help inform approaches to alternative placement and performance accountability
-
- Explore** **Considerations, potential significance, and challenges** to inform comprehensive strategies for program implementation



Agenda



Training Workbook



Workbook Icon



Channeling Change and the Three “Ps”

- **Programs:** Local providers, program structures and content, and desired program outcomes
- **People:** Learners/students, teachers, partners, and others who are directly affected
- **Policy:** Mandates, legislation, partner agreements, and other elements that affect the governance of adult education



Difficult But Decisive

Part 1:

- Think about and write down a decision you made in the last 3 years that was difficult *and* that had a happy or positive ending. This decision can be professional or personal and should be something you are comfortable sharing.
 - What were the key factors in your decision and decision-making process?

Part 2:

Find *at least* three other participants from three different states and share your responses to Part 1.



Flexibility and Change

- Performance accountability system and resulting flexibility in program design and delivery
- Integration of adult education with other workforce development services
- Development of customized adult education services that are tailored to meet the unique needs of individual learners



The Data Landscape



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Broad-Level Decisions

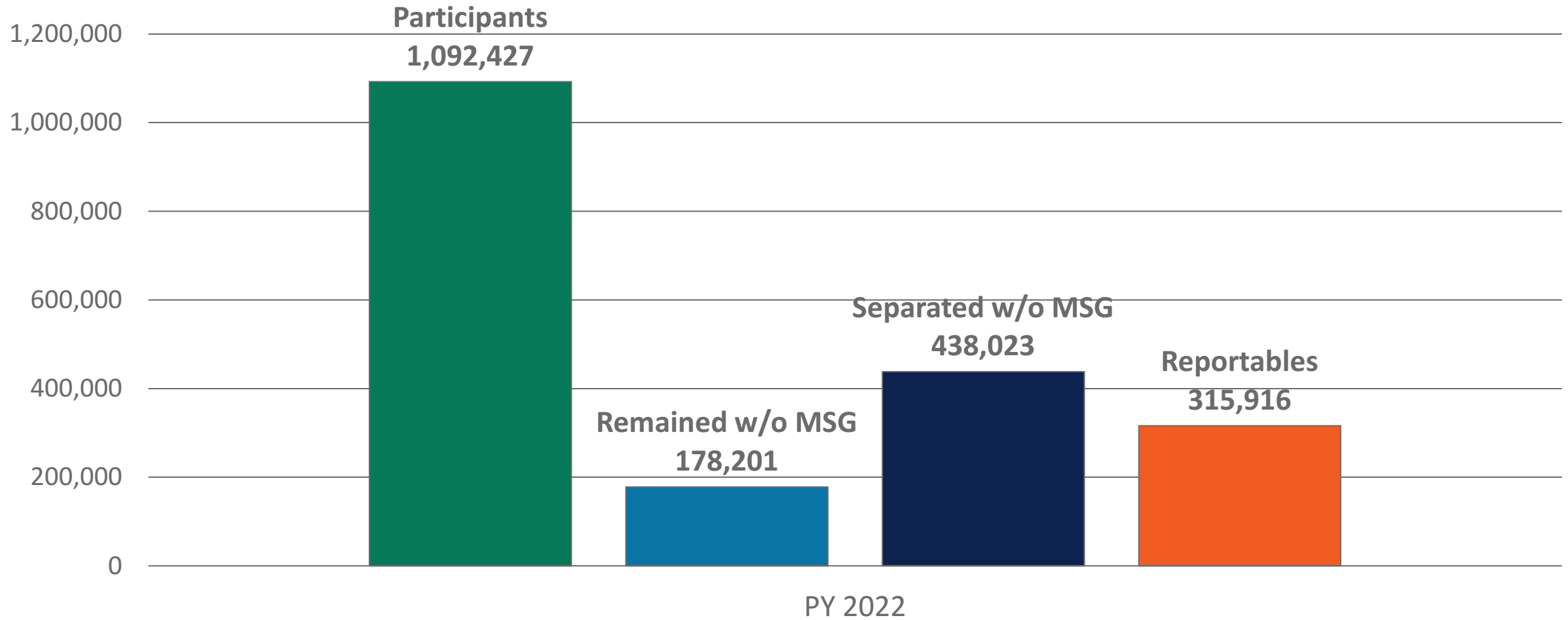
With that flexibility, whether the answer is “Do” or “Do Not Do”, there are other decisions to be made:

- Which programs are appropriate for alternative placement?
- Which alternative placement assessments will be used?
- How will participants be selected for alternative placement?
- How could performance change?
- What professional development will be needed to prepare local providers?



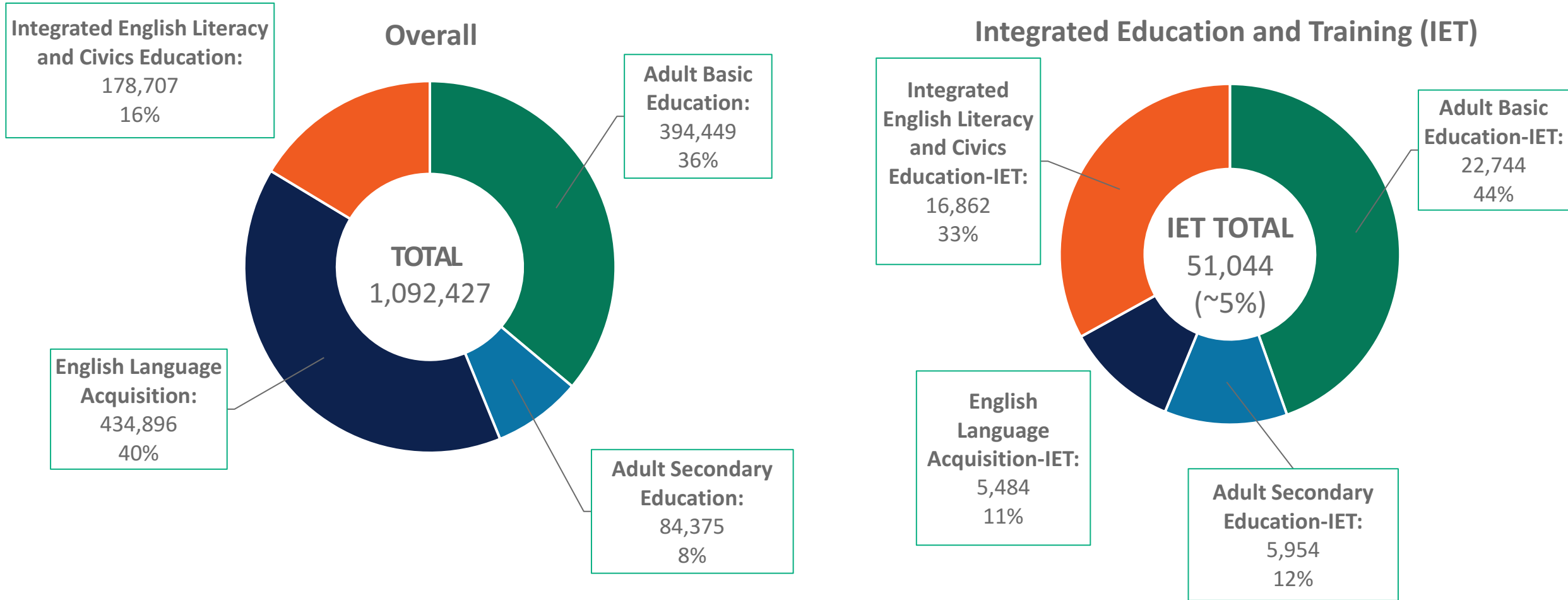
PY 2022 Participants and Reportables

Source: NRS Tables 4 and 2A

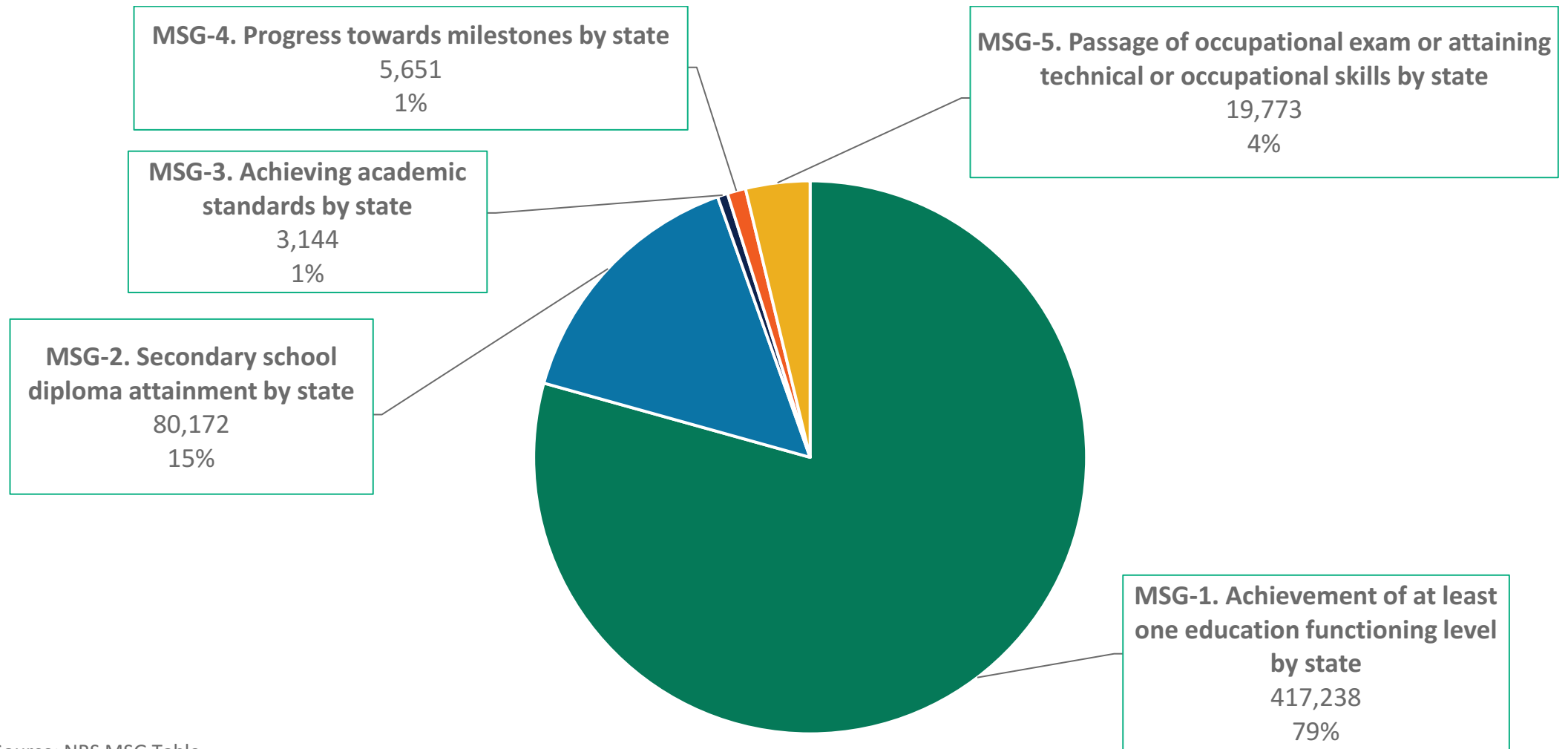


PY 2022 Enrollment by Program Type

Source: NRS Table 3



PY 2022 Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) Table



Source: NRS MSG Table

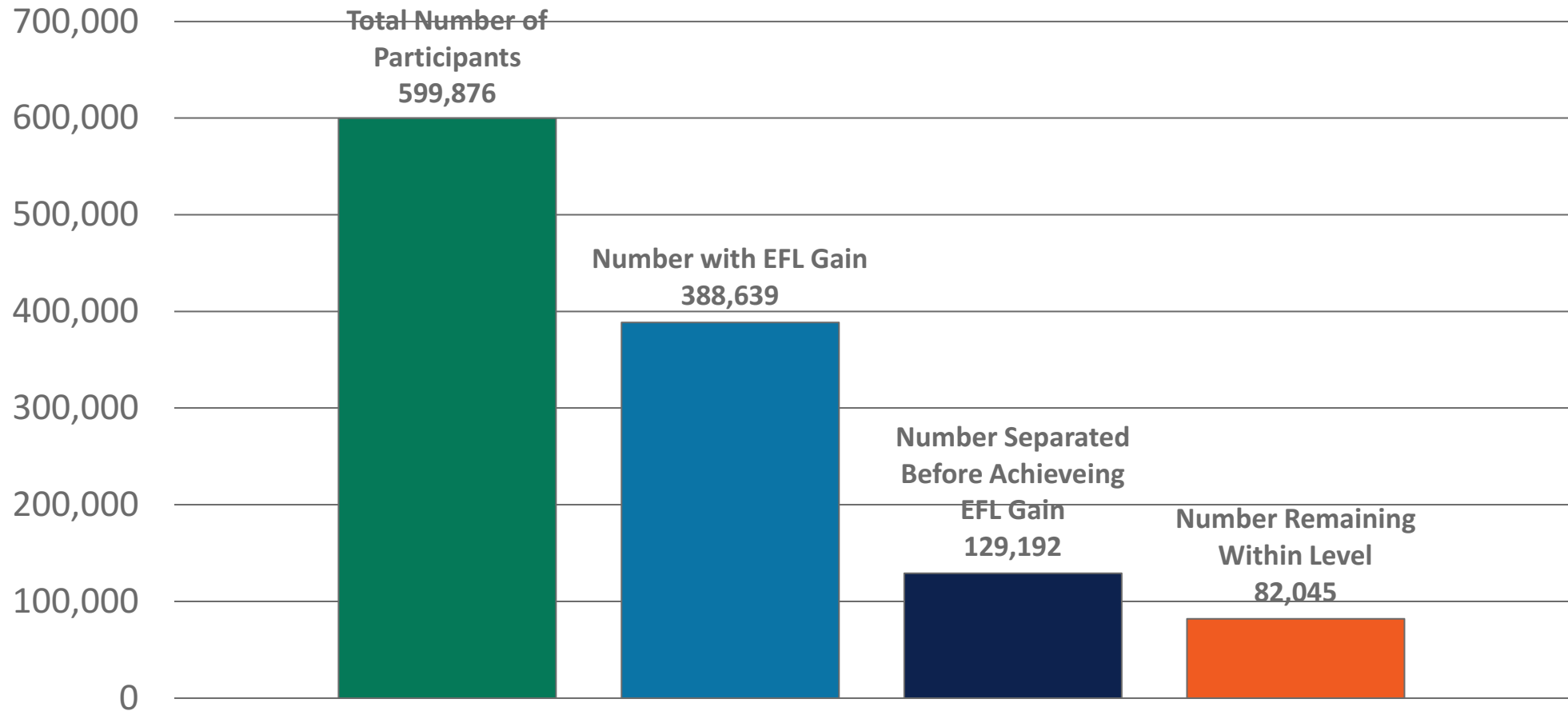


PY 2022 EFL Gains for MSG 1

- Total participants with an EFL gain—471,164 (from Table 4A)
 - Increased 31% from PY 21
- MSG type 1a: EFL gain by pre-posttesting—400,709
 - Increased by 36% in ELA/literacy or ELP from PY 21
 - Increased by 19% in math from PY 21
- MSG type 1b: EFL gain by Carnegie units—8,213
 - Increased by 53% from PY 21
- MSG type 1c: EFL gain by transition to PSE—17,582
 - Decreased by less than 1% from PY 21



Participants Pre- and Posttested in PY 2022



Source: NRS Table 4B



Impact on Posttesting: Upcoming Resource MSG Gain Impact Tool

PY 22 MSG Break Down (Table 4 and 4A)										
Entering EFL	# Unique Participants Not Excluded	Change Post-Test Gains to see the impact ↓		EFL Type 1C (Entry into Postsecondary ed)	Secondary Credentials	Gain Types 3, 4, or 5	PY 22 MSG Rate (Static)	Estimated MSG Rate	Change	MSG Gain Change
		EFL Type 1A (Post-Test)	EFL Type 1B (Carnegie Unites)							
ABE Level 1	209	83	0	0	1	5	42.58%	42.58%	0.00%	0
ABE Level 2	2120	541	0	5	62	78	32.36%	32.36%	0.00%	0
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Grand Total	13,355	4,320	0	16	582	514	40.67%	40.67%	0.00%	0



Types of Data to Evaluate Impact on Participants

What do you see as an area needing investigating in your state to support your decision(s) related to alternative placement?

Measurable skill gains:

- Compare MSG 1a over the years to see if it's gone up/down and does it vary by EFLs.
- Explore whether alternative placement options correlate with educational gains and align with WIOA performance indicators related to educational attainment.

Employment outcomes and stakeholder input/feedback:

- Examine employment rates, job retention rates, and wage gains of participants.

Programmatic changes:

- Consider funding, capacity, timing



Reflection Questions

- Is there anything about the national data that surprised you?
- Do the data align with or differ from what you see in your states? How?



Channeling Change: A Guiding Framework



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Scenario – State Level

The state of Newland provides a variety of adult education programs and services. Three years ago, Newland’s team conducted focus groups across the state with various stakeholders including students.

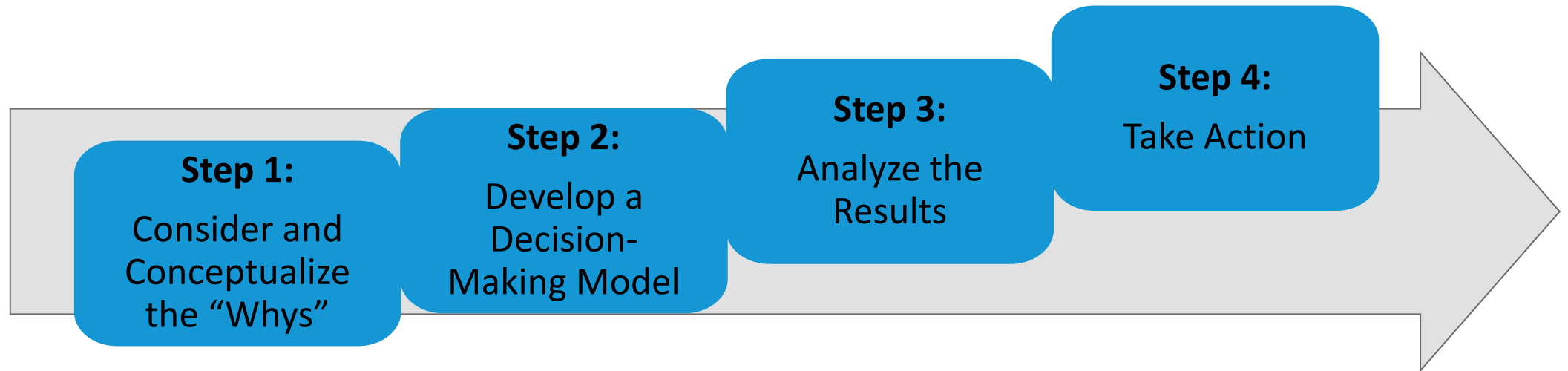
As a result of the focus groups, other data, and an influx of new industry to the state, Newland decided to implement IET programs across the state.

After two years, the data indicates low MSG rates among their IET participants. They currently use pre and post testing for their IET programs but are considering alternative placement in the hopes that it will support higher MSG rates.

Newland would also have to decide which alternative placement assessment would best meet the needs of their IET programs and would like to better understand the potential impact this change might have for IET participants.



Channeling Change: A Guiding Framework



Channeling Change: A Guiding Framework

Step 1: Consider and Conceptualize the “Whys”

- Review stage (e.g., consideration, issue or topic)
- Identify the reasons for a review, and from the state level, consider:
 - Reasons for making changes or not
 - Current data for the state
 - Current and projected population
 - Current or projected programs
 - Existing or potential mandates (e.g., agency, partners, legislation)
 - Existing or potential processes and resources



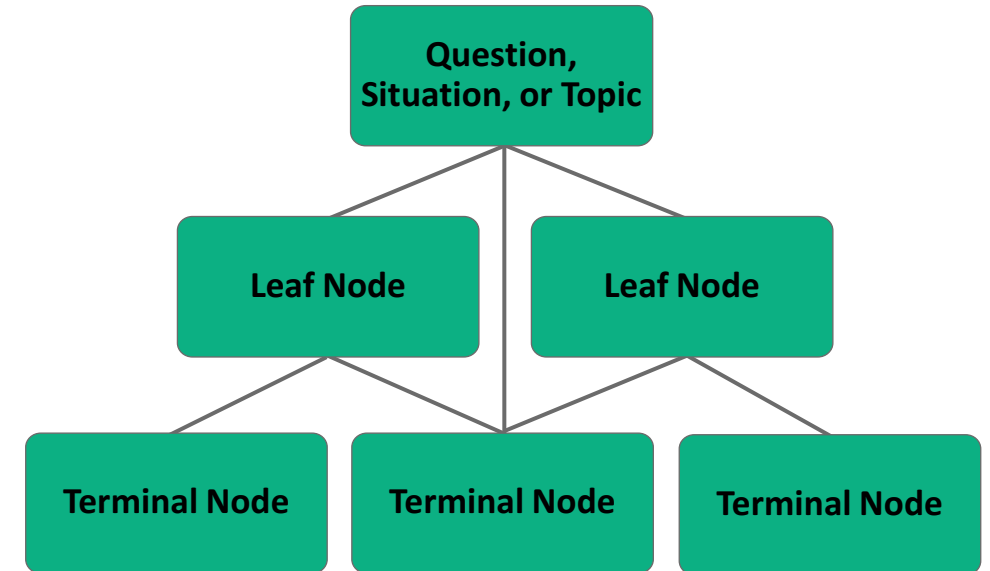
Channeling Change: A Guiding Framework

Step 2: Develop a Decision-Making Model

- Use a decision-making process or model to identify potential options, outcomes, and impact.
- Use as an assist for determining if change is right for your state.

For this training, we will review two tools to help with this:

- Decision Tree model
- Root Cause Analysis approach



Channeling Change: A Guiding Framework

Step 3: Analyze the Results

- Evaluate and determine the option(s) for your state:
 - Implement change, or
 - Maintain the status quo.

Step 4: Take Action

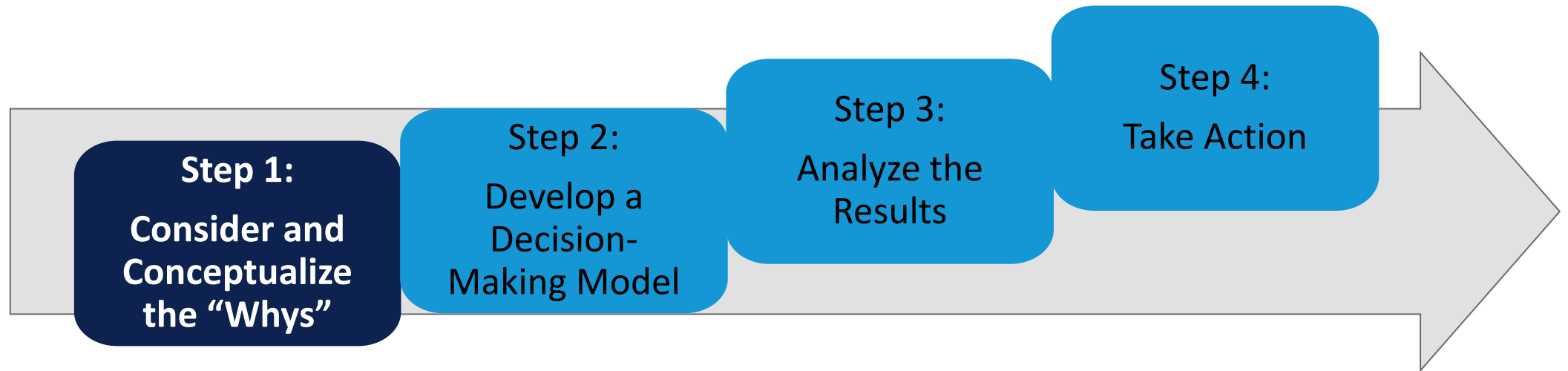
- Determine next steps.
- Initiate change, if applicable.
- Share results and communicate decision.



Break



Channeling Change: A Guiding Framework



Activity–Step 1: Consider and Conceptualize

In your state teams:

- Choose your pre-session consideration, situation, topic, or issue.
- Assign someone to capture your team’s responses!
- Brainstorm your responses to the guiding considerations in the Workbook.

Once you finish the handout, discuss and be prepared to report out on the following:

- What stood out to your team as you went through this activity? For example:
 - Themes, knowledge gaps, new information
- Are there any questions your state couldn’t answer?
- What would be needed to get those answers?



Share Out

- Your consideration, situation, topic, or issue.
- What stood out to your team as you went through this activity?

For example:

- Themes, knowledge gaps, new information
- Are there any questions your state couldn't answer?
- What would be needed to get those answers?



Additional Questions From ASDM and on MSG 1d



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Additional Questions from ASDM

The following are “parking lot” questions asked at the State Director’s meeting during the mini-institute on NRS changes:

- If a student is placed using alternative assessments but then is administered a pre- and post-test:
 - Can the student achieve an MSG type 1A?
 - Is the student reported on table 4B?
 - Is the student included in the calculation for the post testing rate?
- Table 14: website address for online state directory of providers:
 - Under the examples given for types of programs offered, which providers or types of programs should be included?
 - Do we need to list the dollar amount of funding by provider?



Additional Questions from ASDM cont.

- Alternative placement: How does the option for alternative placement affect the requirement in CFR 462.40 (c) (1) to “measure the educational gain of all students who receive 12 hours or more of instruction in the State's adult education program with a test that the Secretary has determined is suitable for use in the NRS?”
- How will we assess literacy and numeracy gains that may be needed, especially with on-the-job training?
- Does alternative placement need to be conducted using an assessment or could it be done by using participant qualifications (e.g., new employee at a workplace)?



Lunch



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Channeling Change: Options and Alternatives

A Snapshot of Pre- and Posttesting and Alternative Placement



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Program Types Appropriate for Alternative Placement

Integrated education
and training programs

Workplace literacy
programs

Preparatory classes for
high school equivalency
testing

Postsecondary bridge
programs

Adult high schools using
credits or Carnegie units

Other adult education
programs designed to
yield MSG outcomes
other than 1a



The Role of Assessment

The National Research Council (NRC) has outlined several purposes for assessment in educational settings:

- Yield critical diagnostic information about the learners
- Evaluate student progress
- Evaluate programs

Source: Mislevy et al., 2002

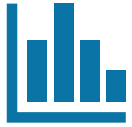


A Snapshot of Assessment Flexibility

	MSG types	Pretest required (Yes/No)
Allowable for all participants	Type 1.a. Achievement as measured by a pre- and posttest	Yes
	Type 1.b. Awarding of credits or Carnegie units	No
	Type 1.c. Enrolled in postsecondary education and training	No
	Type 1.d. Pass a subtest on a State-recognized high school equivalency examination	No
	Type 2. Documented attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent	No
Allowable for participants receiving IET through postsecondary institutions	Type 3. Secondary or postsecondary transcript or report card for sufficient credit hours that shows a participant is meeting the state unit's academic standards	No
Allowable only for participants in IET or WPL programs	Type 4. Satisfactory or better progress report, toward established milestones, from an employer or training provider who is providing training	No
	Type 5. Successfully passing an exam that is required for a particular occupation or progress in attaining technical or occupational skills, as evidenced by trade-related benchmarks	No



Potential Benefits of Pre- and Post-testing



Baseline
measurement



Progress
monitoring



Accountability



Data-driven
decision making



Comparative

Source: Brame & Biel, 2015; NDTAC, 2019



Potential Costs/Challenges of Pre- and Posttesting

- Adds time and financial costs to the intake process—and some partners and participants do not see its value.
- Pre-tests not always accurate enough to predict program performance e.g., HSE.
- Students leaving the program before posttesting.
- “Fatigue effect” from intake and testing may inhibit performance.
- Students’ negative expectations based on past educational experiences or a student’s desire to do well on a test may also influence scores.

Source: Public comment on NRS Information Collection Request, 2023; NDTAC, 2019.



Exploring a Few Alternatives to Pretesting

- Authentic assessments involve real-world tasks and require students to apply knowledge and skills in practical situations.
- Criterion-referenced tests measure how well a student has learned a specific set of skills that are defined by predetermined standards.
- Diagnostic or locator tests can help identify student strengths and weaknesses in specific areas to inform instructional decisions.



Considerations for Authentic Assessments

Performance of authentic tasks

- Align assessments with student learning objectives and define a clear criterion on what successful performance looks like.
- Reflect real world challenges and applications of knowledge in assessed tasks.
- Review and refine regularly, assessment tasks as needed.

Assessment of transferrable skills

- Use multiple assessment formats such as presentations, portfolios, and peer assessments.
- Encourage students to be innovative in problem solving and performing tasks in new situations.

Assess student performance over time

- Provide students with an opportunity to rehearse, practice, and look for useful resources.
- Provide students with an opportunity to reflect on their learning experience.

Source: Frey, et al., 2012; Koh, 2017; Nguyen, 2021; Indiana University Bloomington, n.d.



Considerations for Criterion-Referenced Tests

- Define specific learning objective or skills that need to be assessed and that are aligned with the content being tested.
- Create test items that directly measure defined learning objectives.
- Create diverse testing formats that allow for a comprehensive assessment of skills, such as mixing multiple choice, short answer, and performance-based tasks.
- Provide actionable feedback that informs both students and educators about strengths and weaknesses.

Source: Burton, 2006; Classtime, n.d.; Wisconsin, 2021



Considerations for Diagnostic & Locator Assessments



Use multiple data points and measures to help understand patterns and guide assessments.



Use progress monitoring at regular intervals to assess student improvement.



Ensure that there is a process for tracking fidelity metrics.



Coordinate with assessment services to ensure test policy and information are accessible to students.

Source: Brown & Harris, 2021; Thompson, et. al., 2021



Potential Benefits of Alternative Placement

- Matching students with the appropriate coursework may increase their likelihood of success.
- Opportunity for participant to demonstrate applied knowledge.
- Tailored measurement of success in programs designed to yield outcomes other than MSG type 1a.
- Assessment of in-demand skills as determined by the workplace/employer needs.
- Insights into assessment costs and benefits and the impact on various student populations.

Source: Belfield & Crosta, 2012; Saxon & Morante, 2014



The Goal of Alternative Placement

- Align assessment administration to the appropriate adult education service type.
- Reduce costs and burden for programs and participants unnecessarily engaged in formal pre- and post-testing.
- Incentivize the continued development, implementation, and enhancement of innovative IET and workplace literacy program opportunities.
- Promote a more targeted and efficient use of local instructional resources in programs that measure educational gain through pre- and post-testing.



Considerations for Alternative Placement



How do alternative assessment and placement strategies affect students' overall academic performance, persistence, and progress?

What does it take to implement alternative assessment and placement strategies?

What does it cost?

Source: NDTAC, 2019; CAPR, 2014-2024



Data-Informed Choice

- Review existing data.
- Assess alignment with WIOA goals.
- Evaluate effectiveness of current practices.
- Consider learner needs and program context.
- Pilot test alternative placement assessments.
- Monitor and evaluate impact.



Activity: Comparative Analysis-MSG and Posttest Rates

Part 1: State Teams

Using the data you compiled for your state in the pre-session, discuss the following:

- What are the overall MSG rates and posttest rates for adult education programs within the state?
- What patterns, trends, or outliers do you see in these data?
- What factors may contribute to variations in outcomes between different placement approaches?

Post Part 1 on flip chart

Part 2: State-to-State Exchange

In your mixed state teams, share and discuss your responses to Part 1.

After each state has shared, discuss the following (as time allows) respective to each state:

- How do or might learner demographics, program characteristics, and instructional methods affect assessment outcomes?



Break



Activity: Comparative Analysis-MSG and Posttest Rates

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Part 2: State-to-State Exchange

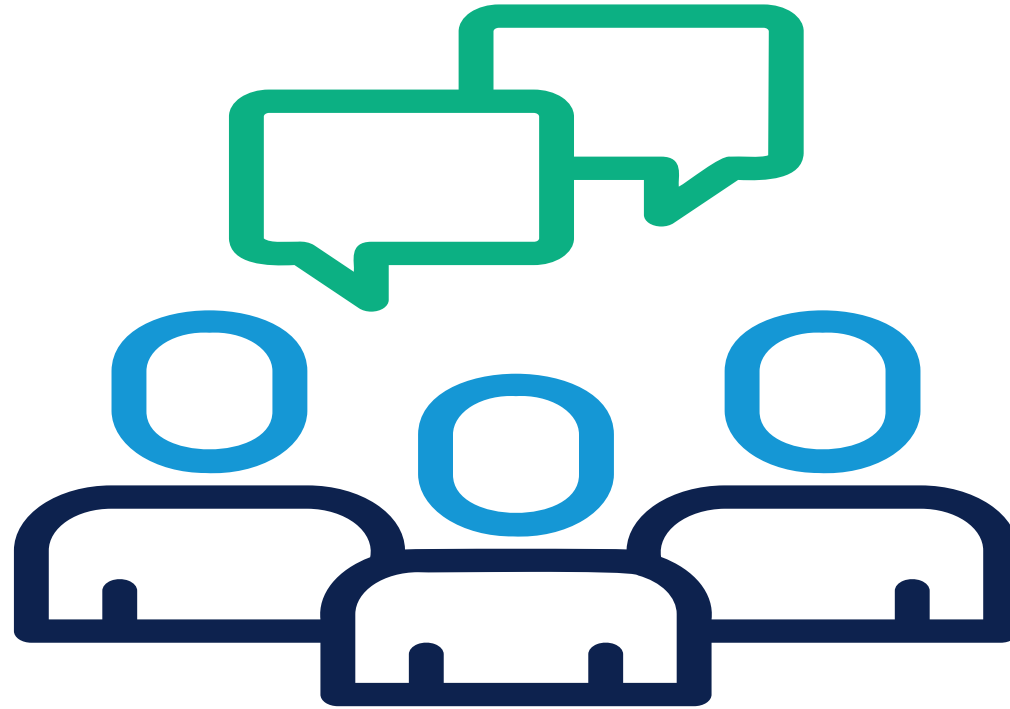
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Report Out



Is Change Right for You?

Decision-Making Tools



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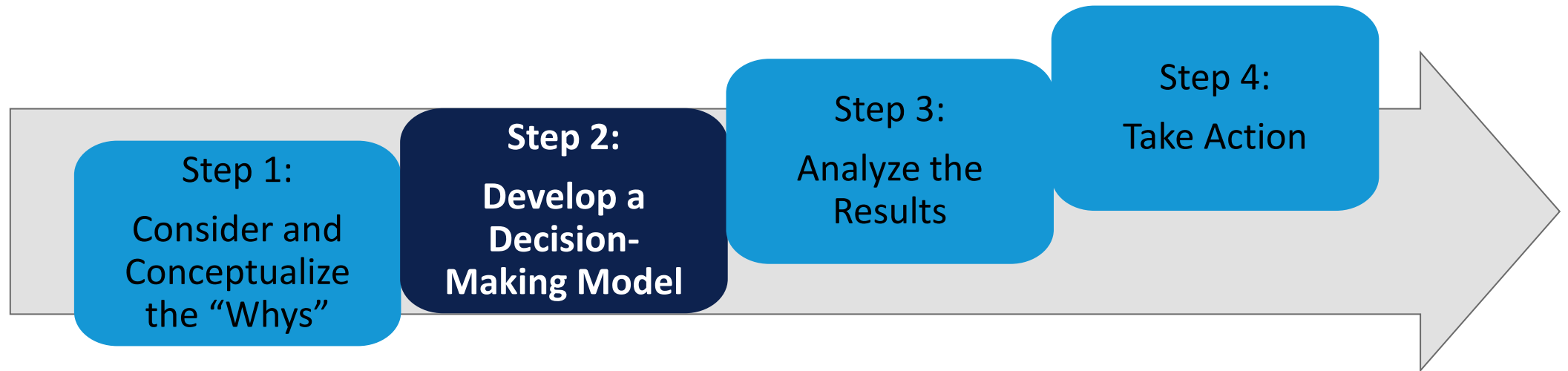
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Channeling Change: A Guiding Framework

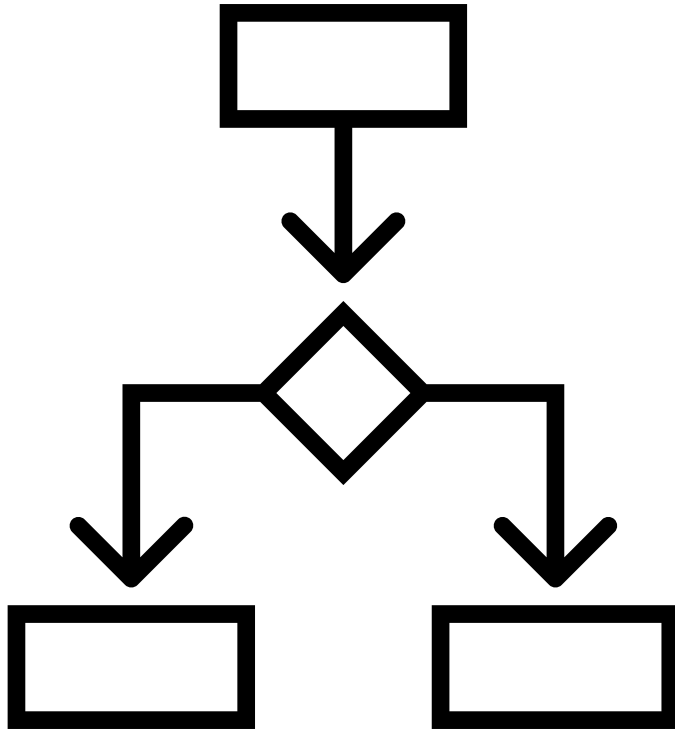


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Decision-Making Tools

Decision Tree Analysis



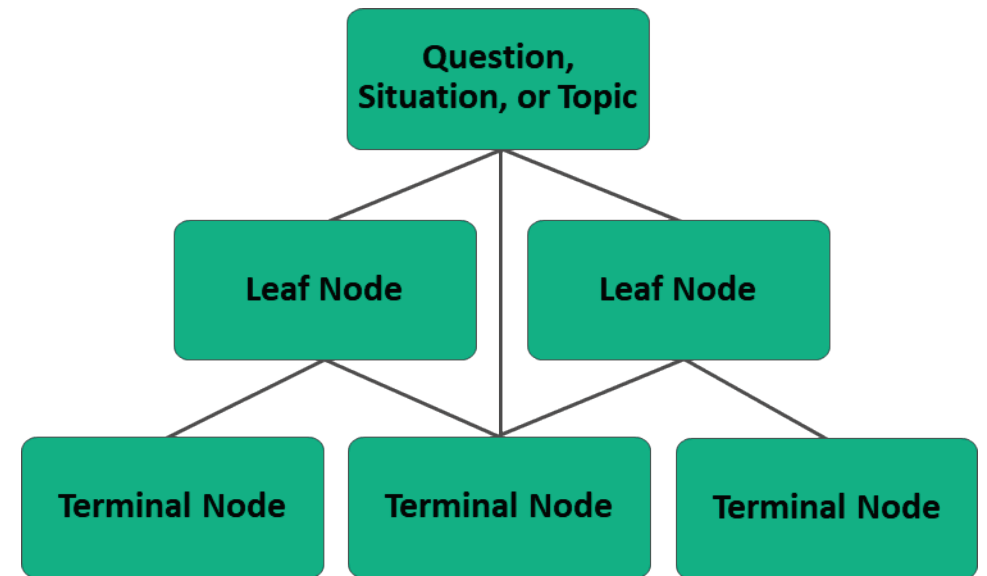
Root Cause Analysis



Decision Tree

What is it?

- A decision-making approach to identify possible outcomes or paths to help inform a decision.
- Provides a visual representation of decision points and outcomes:
 - Nodes (root, leaf, and terminal OR root node, node, terminal leaf) and branches.



Decision Tree (continued)

Advantages

- Good for nonlinear relationships across different variables.
- Easy to understand and visualize.
 - Clarity on path to the final decision.
- Flexible: Can be used with categorical (yes/no) and/or numerical data.
- Draws on data but does not require the data to be in a specific structure.
- Helps identify what is and is not in your control.
- Good for communicating information to broad, diverse audiences.

Challenges

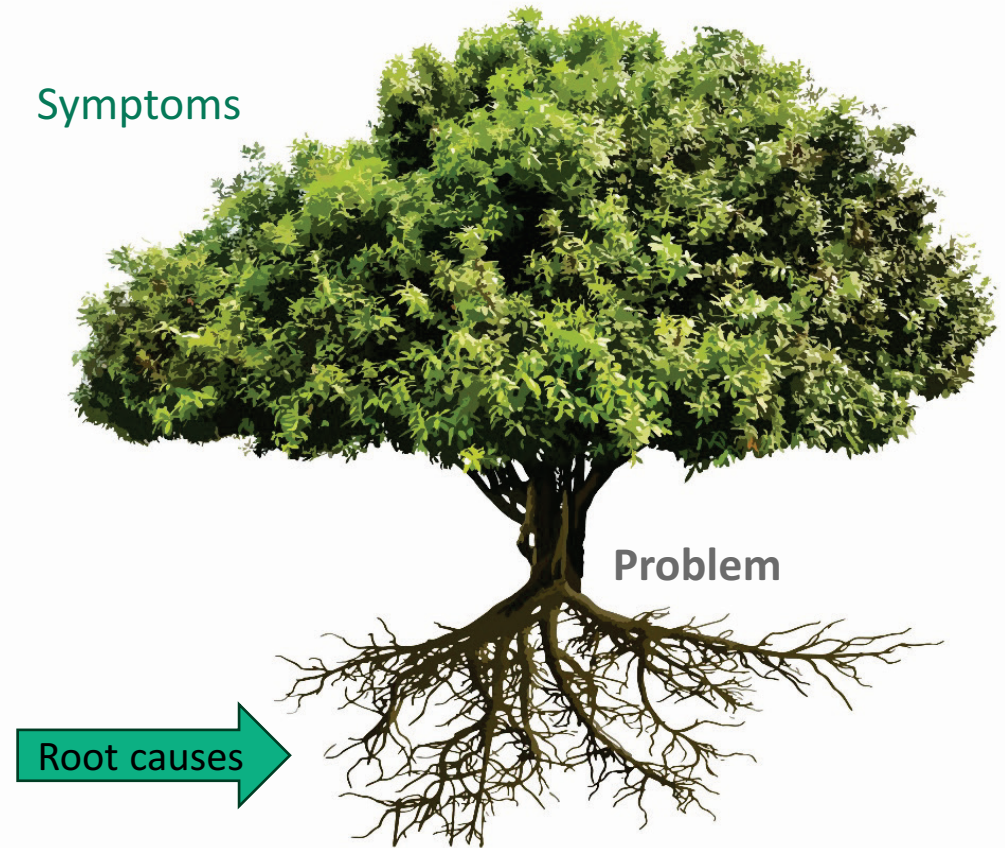
- Can become large and complex.
- Expectation bias.



Root Cause Analysis

What is it?

- An approach to identify the fundamental reason (root cause) for the occurrence of a problem.
- Uses questioning to deconstruct the problem and uncover the underlying issues:
 - Helps you select the appropriate measures to address the issues.



Root Cause Analysis (continued)

The 5 “Whys” Approach

- Identify the specific problem.
- Ask “why” the problem happens.
- Capture the answer.
- If the answer you just provided doesn’t identify the root cause of the problem, ask “why” again.
- Repeat until everyone agrees you have identified the root cause of the problem.

Alternate approach: Deconstruct the problem with questions.



Root Cause Analysis (continued)

Advantages

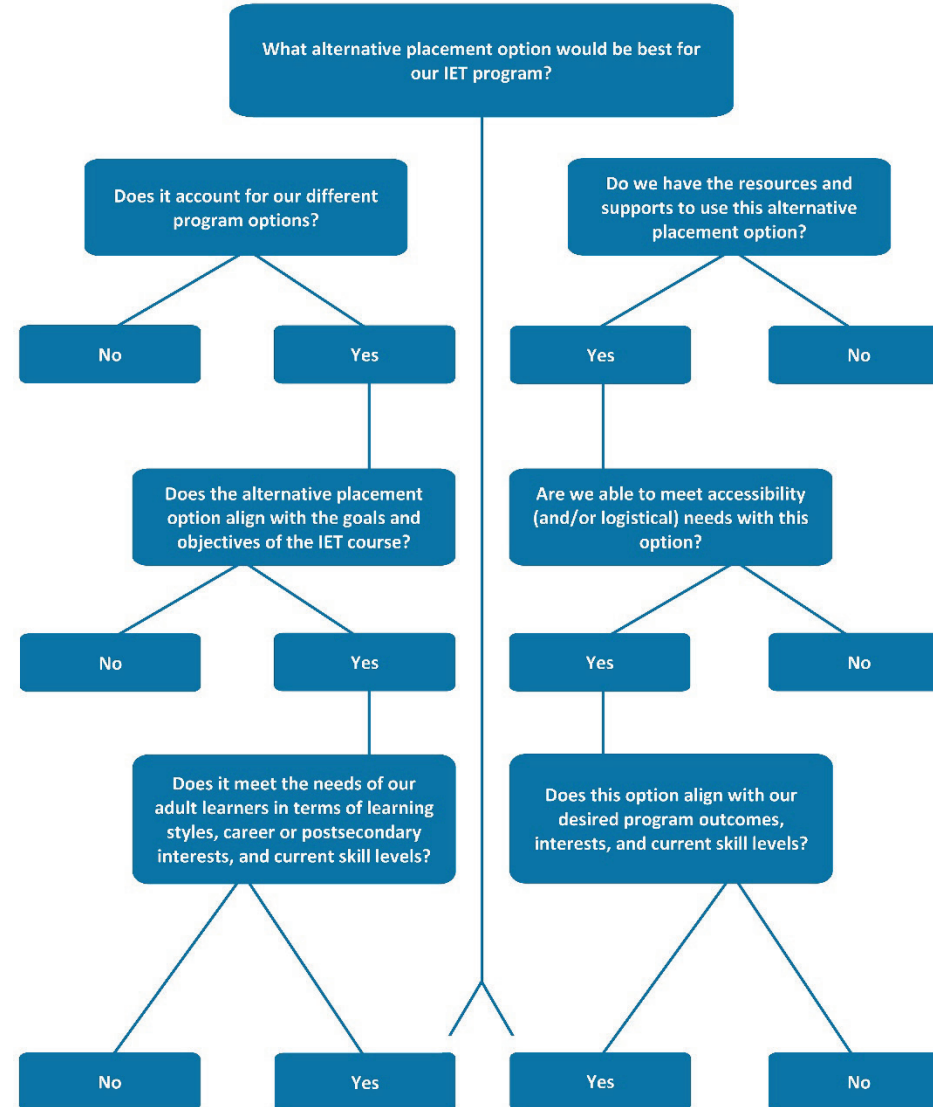
- Gets to root causes of a problem.
- Prevents recurrence of issue because the actual cause of a problem can be addressed.
- Easy to see how one problem or issue impacts another problem or issue within the root cause analysis.
- Helps identify what is and is not in your control.
- Can be used to identify why something is working well!

Challenges

- There may be multiple root causes and each cause needs to be explored separately.
- Can be subjective and complex (quality data help to avoid this!).
- Usually starts with a problem.



Scenario–State Level-Decision Tree Example



Scenario—State Level Root Cause Analysis “5” Whys Example

1. **Why are our IET MSG rates low (or lower than expected)?**
 - a. Because the needs of all of our students in the IET program aren't being met, only some of the student population's needs are met.
2. **Why are some student needs not being met in the IET program?**
 - a. Because not all IET instruction is personalized, relevant and engaging for some students enrolled in our IET program.
3. **Why isn't all IET instruction personalized, relevant and engaging for some students enrolled in our IET program?**
 - a. Because we added new IET programming due to increased student enrollment, we couldn't hire teachers with the relevant background to match the instructional needs of the additional programming.
4. **Why weren't we able to hire teachers with the relevant background to match the instructional needs of the additional programming?**
 - a. Because the teacher recruiting process took longer than anticipated and we weren't fully staffed until the middle of the program year.



Wrap-Up, Day 1



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Welcome Back! Recap of Day 1 and Overview of Day 2



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Preview of an Upcoming Resource



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MSG Impact Tool

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State Podcast: Live from The New Orleans, Phoenix, and the DMV!

New York (New Orleans)

Washington State (Phoenix)

Wisconsin (DMV-Crystal City)



State Teams: Step 2

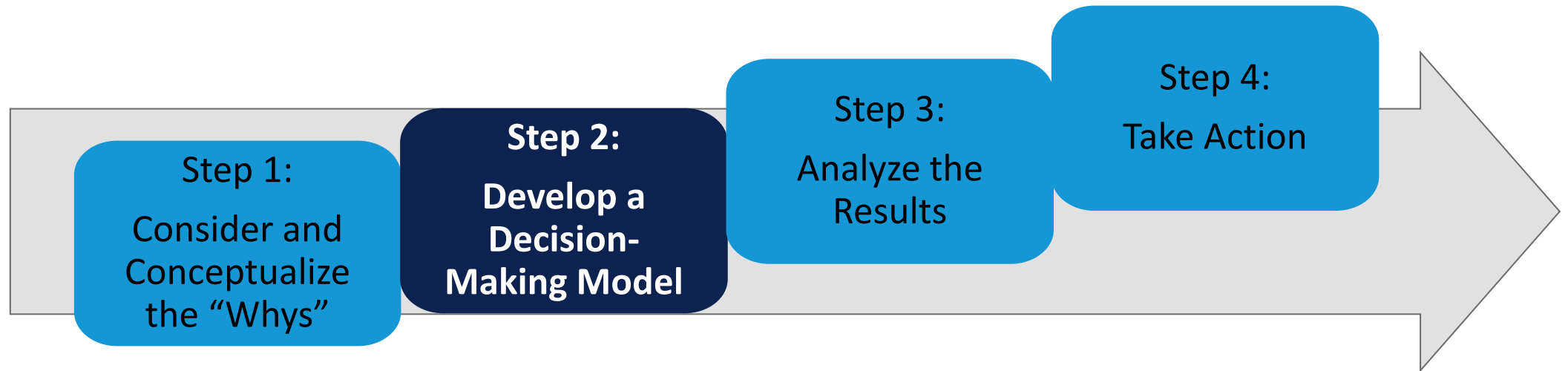
Develop Your Decision-Making Model



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Channeling Change: A Guiding Framework



State Teams: Develop Your Decision-Making Model

Part 1

- Choose a decision-making model for your situation, topic, or issue.
- Draw on your
 - Pre-session work, especially data on MSGs, assessment types, and participant demographics;
 - Responses to yesterday’s guiding considerations; and
 - Any other information that is relevant.
- Plot out your model on flip chart.

Once you have completed this, go to Part 2.

Part 2

- Select an element from your decision-making model.
- Place that element in the decision-making model that you did not use in Part 1.
 - For example, if Part 1 was a decision -tree, take a node from the decision tree and do an RCA; if Part 1 was an RCA, use one of the “whys” that had multiple paths, and use a decision tree.

Break



State Teams: Develop Your Decision-Making Model

Part 1

- Choose a decision-making model for your situation, topic, or issue.
- Draw on your:
 - pre-session work, especially data on MSGs, assessment types, and participant demographics;
 - responses to yesterday’s guiding considerations; and
 - any other information that is relevant.
- Plot out your model on flip chart.

Once you have completed this, go to Part 2.

Part 2

- Select an element from your decision-making model.
- Place that element in the decision-making model you ***did not use*** in Part 1. For example:
 - If you chose a decision tree model for Part 1, take a node from the decision tree and do an RCA.
 - If you chose an RCA model for Part 1, then use one of the “Whys” that had multiple paths and use a decision tree.



Lunch



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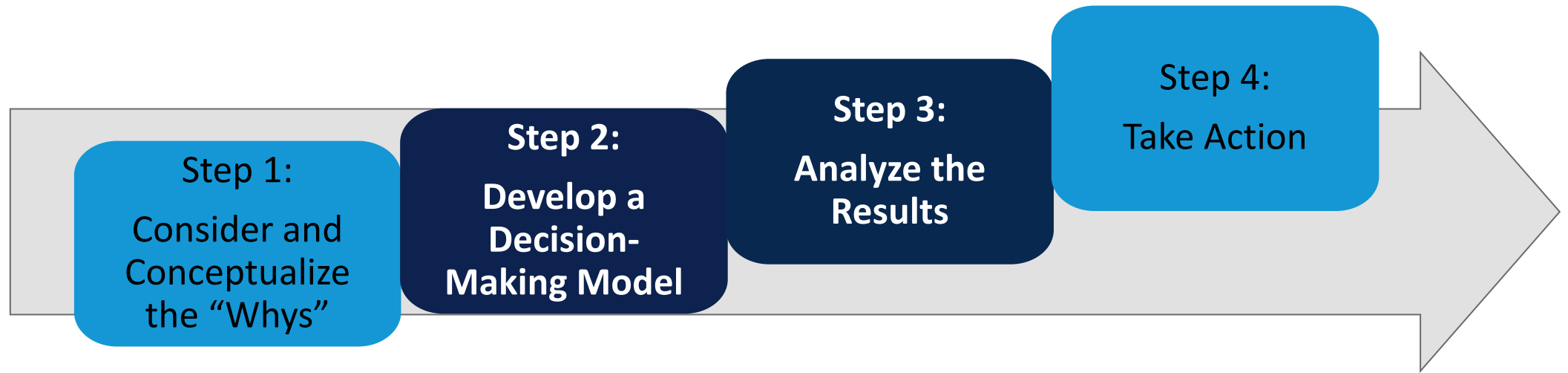
Parking Lot



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State-to-State Exchange: Share Your Draft Model

In your mixed state team pairs:

- Review your topic and the data types used to inform your model.
 - Share your primary decision-making model (the one chosen in Part 1).
 - The listening team will ask clarifying questions and provide feedback.
 - You will have **20 minutes** for this.
- Finally, allot **10 minutes** to share what implications this has on the decision to be made.
 - For example*, based on the model, questions received, and feedback,
 - Should the state move forward, continue as is, or adapt a hybrid approach?
 - Are the students we most need to serve supported by the decision?

These are examples. States should feel free to pose other questions as part of the analysis.

- **Then, switch and repeat the process.**



Break



Debrief

1. What's one thing you learned in the state-to-state exchange that may inform your final model or decision?
2. Share one data-driven element of your primary model.



Finalize Decision Model: Gallery Version

1. Review your model and make any changes based on the state-to-state exchange and debrief.
2. Based on your model:
 - a. What decision would you recommend?

OR

 - b. What are two recommendations you would make that could inform a final decision?
3. Based on this version of your model and **on a separate flip chart**, capture your responses to the following (list form is OK):
 - a. What key pieces of data does your state have that inform the model, analysis, and the final decision (even if that has not yet been made)?
 - b. What key pieces of data are missing or needed?
4. **Post your decision model and the data response flip chart in the gallery.**
5. **Select who will guide gallery attendees through your model** (in other words, select your reporters for the Gallery Walk Opening!).



Wrap-Up, Day 2



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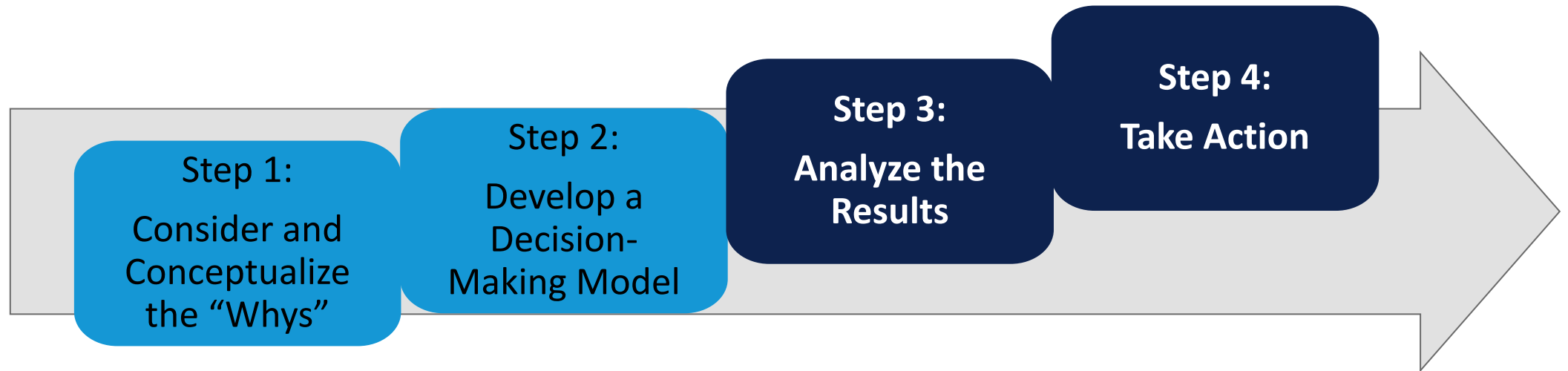
Welcome Back and Review of Day 3



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Gallery Walk



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Gallery Walk Opening!

Review each state's model and data responses. As you review, note

- Common themes across all models
- One or two “aha moments” or “I want to learn more about that” reactions



Gallery Walk Review

Each state will have 2 minutes to share the following:

- The **situation, topic, or issue** that was being considered.
- **One highlight** from the primary decision model.
- The **recommended decision** *OR* **two additional recommendations** to help inform the decision.

After four states have shared, we will take a 5-minute break, regroup, and hear from the next set of states.



Break



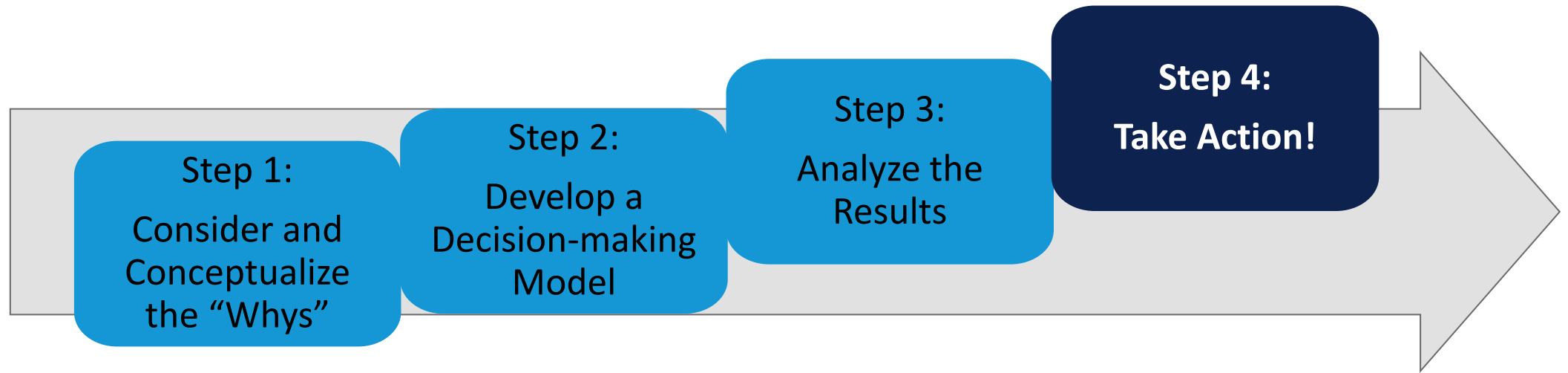
Impact and Action



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What Action Is Next?

Potential next steps may include:

- Additional data analysis
 - Run other options through the same process:
 - » Consideration, comparison
 - Review and highlight potential gaps, trends, or data drivers that may inform model or decision (note: avoid overanalyzing!)



What Action Is Next? (Continued)

- Vet decision-making model content with others, including
 - Accuracy (e.g., nodes, root cause contributors)
 - Potential alternatives
 - Stakeholder reflections and input/feedback
- Formalize decision:
 - “Yes” or “Yes” variations; No
 - Implement now or in the future?
 - Scalability—at what level?
- Create an action plan
 - Approvals
 - Embed in policy
 - Determine timeline, resources for implementation, benchmarks, and evaluation, responsible staff
 - » Study (e.g., Plan, Do, Study, Adapt)



Action Brainstorm

Part 1: In your state team, identify and write out one key action and the related elements.

Part 2: With your assigned state partners, share your Action and Action Rationale.

Brainstorm the following based on your decision model results or proposed recommendations from those results:

Action: Based on your decision model results or proposed recommendation based on the results, what is a next step action your team might make?

Action Rationale: Why is this the action you would take? What is the purpose, intended impact, result, or goal behind this action?

Action Leader/Support: Who would have the primary role in leading this action?

Action Timeline: Anticipated start and completion for the action?

Potential Resources: What resources are needed for this action to take place?



Lunch



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Action Brainstorm

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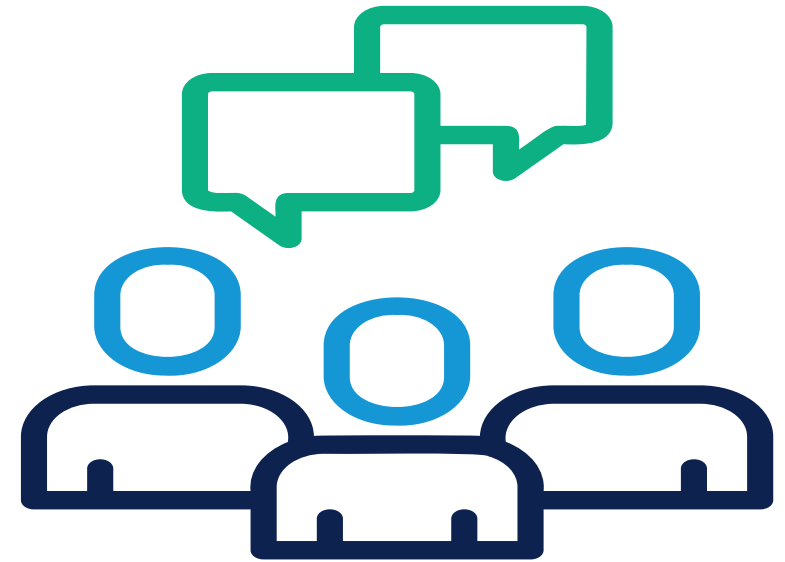
Action Timeline: Anticipated start and completion for the action?

Potential Resources: What resources are needed for this action to take place?



Share Out

- Was there commonality in your chosen actions?
- Volunteer share out from two to three states.



Wrap-Up, Day 3



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