# Developing a Theory of Action and Logic Model

## Virtual Meeting Facilitation Guide

## [Date], [Approx. 120-Minute Time Slot]

### Objectives:

* Identify essential components of a theory of action and logic model
* Understand how to develop a theory of action and logic model
* Using concepts from today’s session, develop concrete goals and create an initial theory of action and logic model

| Time\* | Topic | Activity | Learning Objectives | Resources |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **5 min.** | Welcome and Introductions |  | * Welcome participants and provide time for new participants to introduce themselves. Ask new members to share their name, position/title, organization affiliation, and core job responsibilities/expertise. * Summarize the previous meeting objectives and outcomes. * Introduce key objectives for this meeting (see above). | * Agenda |
| **25 min.** | Developing a Theory of Action and Logic Model | Presentation | * Using the PowerPoint (PPT) presentation, provide an overview of theories of action and logic models. * Allow time for discussion and Q&As. Ask participants to share personal experiences when they may have developed a theory of action and/or logic model. * What examples would others like to share about your own experiences with theories of action/logic models? * How was the process similar or different than what we described? * What questions or ideas emerge from this presentation that you would like to discuss in more depth? | * PPT Presentation |
| **60 min.** |  | Develop the Theory of Action and Logic Model | * Facilitate a process through which Networked Improvement Community (NIC) members develop a theory of action and logic model. Several helpful guides, toolkits, and templates are available to support this process. These resources are listed at the end of this facilitator guide. * Establish goals that address the problem statement and root causes. Review goals to make sure they are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely (SMART). Once finalized, the goals can be included as long-term outcomes, or impacts, in the program’s theory of action and logic model. * Develop a series of if-then statements to create a simple theory of action. * Create a well-specified theory of action that shows the relationships across program resources and activities, outputs, and outcomes. Identify success conditions and assumptions for achieving outcomes. * Use the theory of action to inform the development of one or more logic models to support evaluation and continuous improvement. * Throughout the development process, continually review the problem statement and root causes to ensure that the theory of action and logic model sufficiently address them. | * PPT Presentation * Theory of Action and Logic Model Resources (see references below) |
| **20 min.** |  | Review Drafts | * As a whole group, review the draft theory of action and logic model. Share reflections about the current drafts. Determine whether additional feedback is needed from end users or other stakeholders before they can be finalized. * Questions that may be helpful during this review include: * Are the activities sufficiently concrete to understand and carry out? Who will be responsible for ensuring that activities are carried out? * What barriers could get in the way of successfully implementing the logic model, and how can these barriers be addressed? * What other people or groups need to be represented in the NIC to ensure the logic model is successfully implemented? * To what extent are the activities, outputs, and outcomes specific, feasible, and measurable? * Is the timeline for which activities, outputs, and outcomes are to be completed reasonable? | * Draft Theory of Action and Logic Model |
| **10 min.** | Wrap Up and Next Steps | Identify and Assign Next Steps | * Follow up with key stakeholders to gather additional information needed to finalize a theory of action and logic model, and to assign tasks. * Summarize key points from the meeting and share with NIC members. * Assign followup activities. * Schedule the next meeting to review/finalize the theory of action and logic model, and to begin developing the measurement infrastructure. | * Agenda and Notes Page |

\*Times are estimates only. Time may fluctuate based on the nature of the discussion, group size, and meeting format (e.g., face-to-face vs. virtual).

### Resources for Developing Theories of Action and Logic Models

Anderson, A.A. (2006). *The community builder’s approach to theory of change: A practical guide to theory development*. New York, NY: The Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change. Available at: <https://www.theoryofchange.org/pdf/TOC_fac_guide.pdf>

Applied Engineering Management (AEM). (2016). *Logic model toolkit - Quick reference guide and annotated logic model template*. Herndon, VA: Author. Available at: <https://tqp.grads360.org/services/PDCService.svc/GetPDCDocumentFile?fileId=28615>

Bryk, A.S., Gomez, L.M., Grunow, A., and LeMahieu, P.G. (2015). *Learning to improve: How America’s schools can get better at getting better*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Midwest. (2018). *Continuous improvement through networked improvement communities: Root cause analysis and theory of action facilitator’s guide*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, REL Midwest. Available at: <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/midwest/pdf/eventhandout/REL-Midwest-Iowa-NIC-Coaching-Module1-Facilitators-Guide-508.pdf>

REL Midwest. (2018). *Continuous improvement through networked improvement communities: Root cause analysis and theory of action event slides*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, REL Midwest. Available at: <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/midwest/pdf/eventslides/REL-Midwest-Iowa-NIC-Coaching-Module1-Slides-508.pdf>

Shakman, K., and Rodriguez, S.M. (2015). *Logic models for program design, implementation, and evaluation: Workshop toolkit* (REL 2015–057). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, REL Northeast & Islands. Available at: <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/northeast/pdf/REL_2015057.pdf>

W.K. Kellogg Foundation. (2004). *Logic model development guide* (p. 5). Battle Creek, MI: Author. Available at <https://www.wkkf.org/resource-directory/resources/2004/01/logic-model-development-guide>