NTI TIP SHEET #4
June 2017

5 Tips to Support Users to Complete NTI

#1 ESTABLISH RELEVANCE THROUGHOUT
Your role as a cohort leader requires you to establish and communicate why this training is important to both the children and families you serve and to each and every user. But don’t go at it alone. Get support from leadership and other departments before, during and after the training.

✓ Involve leadership at the front end. Build the case for how this training aligns with departmental priorities. Communicate this message regularly.
✓ Take it down a level. Communicate why NTI is a solution for something specific a team is currently working on now.
✓ Convince users that time spent doing NTI will be beneficial to their work, to outcomes for children and families. Be concrete. Preview what users will get out of upcoming modules with email teasers.

HINT: High Tech: Have leadership record a 3-minute video underscoring their commitment to this initiative. Have the video accompany the invitation email. Low Tech: Include a couple key leadership endorsement quotes in your initial communications.

#2 PAY CAREFUL ATTENTION TO TIME
The number one reason why users cannot progress as planned is time. Help users understand the time commitment and plan appropriately. Plans are made to be revisited so problem solve as needed.

✓ Communicate time requirements prior to launch
✓ Create a realistic schedule for module completion and a course completion deadline
✓ Use Outlook task and calendar reminders to promote accountability
✓ If users are having difficulty meeting deadlines, find out why and course correct

HINT: Knowing what to expect is helpful in any new situation. Inform users that module 1 may take longer than later modules. Also let them know that the introductory module is foundational and later modules are more content rich. Provide guidance to users about how to approach the resources section within the curriculum. For learners who like to delve deeply, they may need to increase the allotted time per module.
#3 PROVIDE CONTINUOUS ENCOURAGEMENT

Providing ongoing motivation for users is critical. Make sure to involve peers in the recognition and support role as well. If you hear of examples of how users are incorporating the training into their work, broadcast this information.

- Recognize progression or completion
- Remind users about how their progress fits into required learning hours if applicable
- Use team meetings, conference calls or check-ins to make use of content as it is learned
- Set up an online discussion boards and invite users to participate
- Share your monthly data broadly

**HINT:** Knowing that a real person is watching over a user’s progress can humanize the online environment. Some pilot sites ask that their users send their CEU certificates to a supervisor or cohort lead. They track and use this information to celebrate success and promote progression.

#4 OFFER REWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Learners do not often expect positive reinforcement from online courses. Find ways to build in tangible rewards and recognition. Be creative and make sure the strategy is meaningful to the users. Consistent small rewards and recognition are more effective than infrequent, large ones.

- Send an email to users and management recognizing individuals for their module or course accomplishments
- Create healthy, fun competition – Kudos to one of our SC teams for using the SCORECARD pictured above!
- Jeans on Friday was a simple reward given by a team in TN
- Free conference attendance will be a reward given by a private provider agency
- Starbucks cards and gas cards were an incentive used by a team

#5 CREATE CONDUCIVE WORK ENVIRONMENTS

NTI can be done anywhere and anytime. One of the most difficult parts about learning at a desk is constant interruptions. If users are going to work at their desks, consider strategies to protect time and environment.

- Provide headphones to all users to improve concentration and minimize distractions
- Turn off all email notifications during training
- Have staff schedule and complete training during designated times
- Create half or full day learning sessions where staff bring their computers and work together
- Consider allowing staff to work from home one day a week to ensure non-interrupted time.
- Post signs to remind others that users are “in training” and should not be interrupted

**HINT:** Ask users up front what they think they will need to be successful. If additional supports are needed later, add them. For early completers, have them share their success strategies.
Don’t Hesitate to Contact Your State Implementation Specialist

California and Oklahoma
Emily Smith Goering 202.798.3424
Email Emily

Illinois, South Carolina and Tennessee
Mary Wichansky 240.606.4846
Email Mary

Maine, Minnesota and Washington
Lisa Maynard 585.507.7588
Email Lisa