KEY FACTORS TO SUCCESSFUL LEADERSHIP: DIRECTION, ALIGNMENT AND COMMITMENT

Three key factors that facilitate successful leadership across systems include direction, alignment, and commitment (McCauley, 2014). Monitoring and measuring these factors is a useful tool in assessing the strength of leadership efforts as they relate to trauma-informed principles adoption.

Evidence of Direction, Alignment, and Commitment within a Whole System Approach to Leadership (McCauley, 2014)

	HAPPENING	NOT HAPPENING
Direction	• There is a vision, a desired future, or a set of goals that everyone buys into. • Members of the collective easily articulate how what they are trying to achieve is worthwhile. • People agree on what collective success looks like.	• There is lack of agreement on priorities. • People feel as if they are being pulled in different directions. • There's inertia; people seem to be running in circles.
Alignment	• Everyone is clear about each other's roles and responsibilities. • The work of the individual/group fits well with the work of other individuals/groups. • There's a sense of organization, coordination, and synchronization.	• Things are in disarray: deadlines are missed, rework is required, there's duplication of effort. • People feel isolated from one another.
Commitment	• People give the extra effort needed for the group to succeed. • There's a sense of trust and mutual responsibility for the work. • People express considerable passion and motivation for the work.	• Only the easy things get done. • Everyone is just asking "what's in it for me?" • People are not "walking the talk." • Leaders delegate the work to a team of staff that will "report back", without active engagement and visibility in the process.

Success of a trauma-informed change initiative requires technical and adaptive leadership strategies. Technical leadership is a more traditional approach to management and involves defining problems, generating solutions, obtaining resources, assigning tasks, and monitoring outcomes. Under this strategy usually one leader guides the overall process and is "in charge." Adaptive leadership also responds to challenges but utilizes different strategies to respond to challenges and relies on leaders at many levels. Adaptive leaders look at the bigger picture including key patterns, put unspoken issues on the table, create a safe environment to discuss challenges and voice diversity of opinions, are aware of patterns of behavior that indicate there is an attempt to avoid difficult issues, create conditions that help people take greater responsibility for the work, and rely on others to raise questions (The National Implementation Research Network, 2017).