Likelihood of Success of Three Tactics for Change

Leaders and implementers benefit from assessing and selecting a change tactic that best fits their initiative. Here are three approaches to tackling a change that may suit your initiative:

1. **The Panorama Approach**: A big kickoff, then all staff work steadily over the year to implement simultaneously.
2. **The Pilot Approach**: Select a small group to implement first to learn how to do it successfully before scaling up.
3. **The Fractal Approach**: All staff implements one part over a short period to build skills, momentum, and systems for scaled change.

The grid on the next page lists examples of initiatives and estimated likelihood of success with the three tactics. Some factors that informed the estimates include timeline, complexity, staff and leadership capacity, and whether the change is conducive to being separated into parts.

While this tool can provide direct guidance for leaders considering the specific initiatives listed, the process of considering these three tactics can be helpful when planning the implementation of any change initiative.

When selecting your change tactic, don't forget to consider:

- Whether the change being made focuses more on **technical aspects** (systems and processes) or **adaptive aspects** (people and behaviors)
- If there is a specific **timeline** in mind or if implementation can be more flexible
- The **resources necessary** (funding, personnel, etc.) to effectively implement the change
- Who the **appropriate stakeholders** are and if they feel a sense of ownership in the change process
- The **level of certainty** in how well the change fits with your school's values, culture, and overall vision

Success Rate of Change Tactics

Change Initiative	Panorama	Pilot	Fractal
Mastery of a specific teaching skill	**HIGH**: A limited scope change benefits from simultaneous implementation.	**MEDIUM**: Takes extra time to get everyone up to speed.	**HIGHEST**: Allows leaders to focus on all aspects of the initiative over a period of intensive effort.
Implementation of a complex set of teaching strategies	**LOW**: Supporting individuals using their own strategies toward the goal and enforcing full participation is difficult.	**MEDIUM**: A pilot group can determine the best sequence before full implementation.	**HIGH**: Factors in the need for staff to master skills over time. Early lessons learned will inform further implementation.
Implementing a new assessment system	**HIGHEST**: Administering assessments is a technical change necessary to make data-informed decisions.	**HIGH**: A pilot group can inform full implementation by discovering system glitches and improvements.	**MEDIUM**: The technical process of administering assessments doesn't directly translate to using the data to make decisions.
Developing a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS)	**LOW**: There are too many complex and interrelated changes for implementers to juggle simultaneously.	**HIGH**: After implementing, the pilot group can distribute themselves among other teams to assist full implementation.	**HIGH**: Implementers master foundational elements, then build subsequent elements on this shared understanding.
Implementing collaborative teams or professional learning communities (PLCs)	**MEDIUM**: Success depends on leaders' capacity to monitor and support teams across activities. Bad habits early on make collaboration harder later.	**MEDIUM**: This tests and improves processes before systemwide implementation, but some may see collaboration as optional.	**HIGH**: Leaders can help develop a focused process/skill, then use lessons learned to select and implement the next.
Adopting asset-based practices	**HIGHEST**: Requires full staff learning before acting individually based on experience and developmental needs.	**LOW**: Existing leaders are unlikely to influence others without systemwide effort and expectation for all staff.	**HIGH**: Monitoring and reflecting on initial small changes enables more complex changes later.
Implementing a new bell schedule	**HIGHEST**: Support staff as they manage the technical and adaptive challenges.	**MEDIUM**: A subset of staff may be able to implement, then advise as it's scaled.	**LOW**: It's usually impractical to change just parts of a schedule.
Implementing a standards-based or competency-based learning program	**LOW**: Many challenges require careful sequencing/coordination. Individuals may sit out or only partially implement while leaders are busy juggling variables.	**MEDIUM**: Allows the pilot group to learn how elements fit together and how to sequence steps. However, success requires systemic structures/resources.	**HIGHEST**: Staff can succeed together on a manageable first element to build momentum for more complex future elements.
Becoming a dual language school	**HIGH**: High: Effective for technical elements like selecting curriculum if staff have dual language experience.	**HIGHEST**: Enables already knowledgeable staff to build credibility for the model and lead subsequent implementers.	**MEDIUM**: Likely to create early wins, but since elements are interdependent it's hard to select manageable pieces.
Implementing a co-teaching model	**LOW**: Despite some common principles/processes, this tends to play out differently for each teacher, leading to low fidelity.	**HIGHEST**: Early implementers experiment first to understand elements before full implementation.	**MEDIUM**: All staff taking on a focused element provides early wins and insights to inform full implementation.