



## Job Aid: Facilitator Fundamentals

### Adopt a strengths-based not deficit-based mindset

Check yourself by asking:

- Am I treating the individual as an "expert" on their own life and work?
- Am I starting encounters and meetings with a focus on the person's or practice's strengths?
- Am I asking them what has worked well for them in the past?
- Or am I focused only on problems and deficits?

### Relationship pointers

- Nurture trust.
- Maintain professional confidentiality in your work with providers and practices.
- Stick to your lane as a practice facilitator.
- Manage requests and aim for 100% follow-up.
- Respect lines of authority.
- Value people's time.
- Honor practice members' expertise and experience.
- Embrace differences.
- Maintain professional boundaries.

### Use active listening skills to support good communication

- Slow down and stop talking.
- Use body language and verbal signals to show interest.
- Pay ATTENTION. No glances at cell phone, computer, watches.
- Paraphrase and summarize periodically to check and show understanding.
- Show empathy with feeling statements. "That must have been frustrating..."
- Don't rush to "fix" with a solution.





### Use the powerful questions technique

Asking powerful questions is a technique used to encourage engagement and help an individual think differently and more creatively about an issue. Powerful questions are not used to gather information.

Steps to the technique:

1. Use active listening skills of paraphrasing and summarizing to show understanding.
2. Assume positive intent of the receiver in your questions. Believe they want to improve practice.
3. Use open-ended questions (cannot be answered with a single word or simple yes/no).

Ask questions that require reflection on:

- New ideas about the issue
- Flexible thinking about the issue
- The learning from prior experience
- The validity of current assumptions
- Next steps

Examples of powerful questions:

- If you had a magic wand, what would you do? (discovery)
- I wonder if there could be other ways of thinking about this. What if... (flexibility)
- What have you tried so far.... (past learning)
- What is preventing you from.... (challenge assumptions)
- What do you see as next steps? (next steps)

### Be a professional pesterer to keep work moving forward

Professional pestering is one of the facilitator's most powerful tools.

- **Show-up.** Your presence reminds them of the quality improvement work. For this to work, keep a consistent schedule.
- **Check-in.** Make individual contact. Create connections and relationships and see how staff are doing with action items and changes. Support and trouble shoot as needed.
- **Project manage.** Use simple project management tactics like work plans and action item management to create accountability and keep the practice moving forward.



## Curate external resources to help a practice

### **Types of external resources:**

- Online resources like articles, toolkits, videos, and webinars
- Facilitators with specialized expertise
- Local and national listservs and user groups
- Technical consultants

### **Seek external resources when:**

- The process being improved requires technical knowledge not present in practice.
- The practice is interested in identifying best practices.
- There are no internal exemplars to learn from.
- There is disagreement on course of action.
- Feeling connected to a larger community will increase motivation for the practice.

### **Curate the best online resources for the practice**

- Conduct an environmental scan.
  - Start with your program resources.
    - What online, video, and webinar resources are already available from your facilitation program?
  - Carry out a focused online search on the topic.
    - Emphasize go-to sites like AHRQ's [Tools for Change](#).
  - Post questions about resources (and exemplars) on relevant listservs and users' groups.
    - Be sure to maintain appropriate professional confidentiality for the practice.
  - Evaluate resources and eliminate ones that do not meet evaluation criteria. Evaluate them for:
    - Relevance
    - Trustworthiness
    - Quality
    - Currency
- Create a short summary table of the best resources for the practice.



# Primary Care Practice Facilitator Training Series



**SDOH Screening Environmental Scan**  
**Improvement goal: Integrate SDOH screening in our routine workflows**

Title	Publisher	Access	Comments
PRAPARE Implementation and action toolkit*	NACHC	<a href="https://www.nachc.org/research-and-data/prapare/toolkit/">https://www.nachc.org/research-and-data/prapare/toolkit/</a>	Toolkit for implementing NACHC's PRAPARE SDOH screening tool in Community Health Centers
Identifying and Addressing Social Needs in Primary Care Setting*	AHRQ	<a href="https://www.ahrq.gov/evidencenow/tools/social-needs-tool.html">https://www.ahrq.gov/evidencenow/tools/social-needs-tool.html</a>	Tool to help primary care practices screen patients for social needs and connect them to community services.
SDOH Toolkit*	Safe Innovation of Iowa	<a href="https://www.ihsconline.org/filesimages/Tools/Pop%20Health/SIM/SDOH%20Toolkit/SIM_SDOH_Toolkit_1.pdf">https://www.ihsconline.org/filesimages/Tools/Pop%20Health/SIM/SDOH%20Toolkit/SIM_SDOH_Toolkit_1.pdf</a>	QI toolkit that walks you through implementing SDOH screening in PCP clinics
Social Determinants of Health	HIMSS	<a href="https://www.himss.org/resources/social-determinants-health">https://www.himss.org/resources/social-determinants-health</a>	Helpful overview of screening, IT, workflow and current resources
Every ONE project	AAFP	<a href="https://www.aafp.org/dam/AAFP/documents/patient_care/everyone_project/hops19-physician-guide-sdoh.pdf">https://www.aafp.org/dam/AAFP/documents/patient_care/everyone_project/hops19-physician-guide-sdoh.pdf</a>	Overview of SDOH screening from FM perspective

\*Greatest relevance to improvement goal

## Curate technical experts for the practice

- Add facilitators with specialized knowledge to your team.
- Find expert consultants and knowledge networks on the issue.
  - Ask your program director.
  - Ask other practice facilitators.
  - Check with resource centers like [NARCAD](#), [Project ECHO](#), and professional associations.