

Getting Started With Behavioral Science

Learning to Use the Center for Applied Behavioral Science (CABS) Problem-Solving Approach

CABS' BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE WORKSHOP SERIES

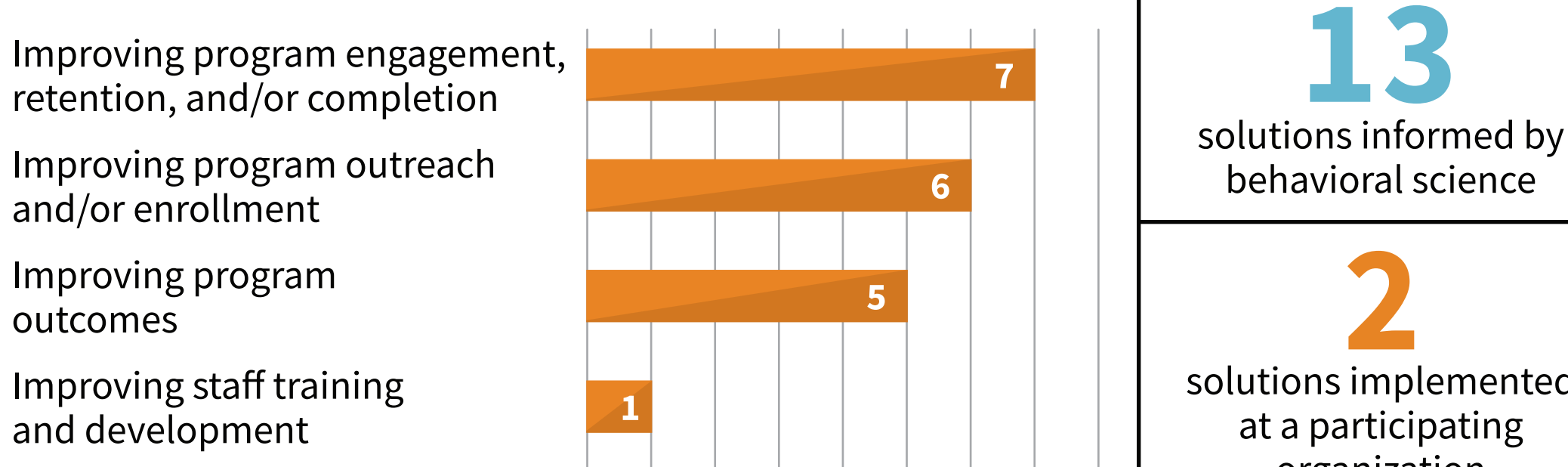
No organization ever feels completely satisfied with the effect it has. There is typically room to recruit more participants, engage them more effectively, increase program retention and completion, and achieve better outcomes. As word spreads about how behavioral science can bolster program effectiveness, many organizations want and need expert guidance to get started.

With the generous support of the Richard King Mellon Foundation and the critical assistance of Partner4Work, CABS engaged with 23 youth-serving workforce development agencies in greater Pittsburgh. Across three in-person workshops, CABS facilitated lessons and activities for participants to learn behavioral science concepts and the CABS framework.

THE PROJECT BY THE NUMBERS



TYPES OF CHALLENGES TACKLED



SESSION 1

THINKING LIKE A BEHAVIORAL SCIENTIST



INSIGHTS

Workshop participants began the behavioral design process by learning to be intentional about considering the goals and perspectives of participants, and by identifying where their programs were not fully achieving their goals.



APPLYING THE LESSON

Participants identified their programs' goals and developed measurable, specific, and neutral problem statements related to challenges they had in achieving their goals.



FROM THE PARTICIPANTS: I LEARNED...

- "...how to apply behavioral science to improve our program."
- "...there is no such thing as neutral design."
- "...how to assess, evaluate, and create goals to solve problems."

SESSION 2

TALKING LIKE A BEHAVIORAL SCIENTIST



INSIGHTS

Workshop participants learned effective communication strategies built on listening and engaging with their clients. They also learned how these insights can be used to identify potential barriers that their clients face.



APPLYING THE LESSON

Program clients joined staff to map their programs' processes from staff and client perspectives. They also identified where clients face barriers that can be addressed using behavioral solutions.



FROM THE PARTICIPANTS: I LEARNED...

- "...how to make things simpler for youth and workers."
- "...how to clarify and diagnose problems."
- "...how to map our process and identify barriers."

SESSION 3

SPRINTING LIKE A BEHAVIORAL SCIENTIST



INSIGHTS

To address barriers they identified, workshop participants learned a brainstorming technique to generate ideas for solutions informed by behavioral science and a guided approach for ranking ideas based on their anticipated impact and ease of implementation.



APPLYING THE LESSON

Participants brainstormed ideas to address identified barriers. They developed rough drafts of their favorite ideas and refined them based on comments from CABS and their peers.



FROM THE PARTICIPANTS: I LEARNED...

- "...how to develop and implement prototypes to address our barriers."
- "...the importance of feedback from your target population."
- "...I can be creative and think outside the box to improve how we do our work!"

PARTICIPANT SPOTLIGHT

The Jewish Family and Community Services Career Development Center (JFCS CDC) works with thousands of job seekers, providing the guidance, support, and encouragement they need to reach their career goals. JFCS CDC staff members stayed actively involved throughout the workshop series, and the organization applied and was selected to partner with CABS to implement a new solution. The organization's work to adopt practices informed by behavioral science is highlighted as a case study below.



- Using what they learned in session one, JFCS CDC staff developed a problem statement related to their program's goal of helping all clients find employment: **Too many CDC participants do not attend even one job-skills workshop.**
- Using what they learned in session two, JFCS CDC staff mapped the workshop-registration process from the staff and client perspective and identified two possible barriers related to the organization's problem: **(1) Registration for workshops is confusing, and (2) clients don't see the value of workshops.**
- Using what they learned in session three, JFCS CDC staff drafted a proposed solution: **Update the outreach process to use emails and text messages to target workshop registration and attendance, with direct links included to the relevant web pages.** After gathering additional information, JFCS CDC staff generated three additional prototypes of promising ideas.

SUSTAINING LIKE A BEHAVIORAL SCIENTIST

After the workshops, JFCS CDC worked with CABS to address its identified problem. Together, CABS and JFCS CDC improved on the organization's initial prototypes and implemented two solutions:



Solution 1

A staff script for providing personalized recommendations to clients about workshop attendance, registration for workshops during in-person meetings, and a reminder email to clients who registered.

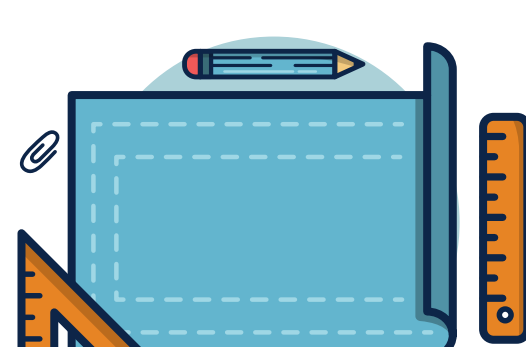


Solution 2

In addition to interventions in Solution 1, Solution 2 added a wallet-sized punch card for clients to track their workshop attendance and progress toward finding jobs.

CONCLUSION

Final Outputs:



13 prototypes for 11 organizations



2 solutions resulting in 24 clients attending 3 JFCS CDC workshops



Organizational capacity to use behavioral science to address other challenges