Building Trauma-Informed Organizations that Support Workforce Wellness

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YOUR SPEAKER

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this session, participants will...

1. Be able to articulate the core principles of trauma-informed approach and explain their relevance in the context of organizational culture and workforce wellness.

2. Recognize signs of trauma and stress in themselves and employees, as well as explore practical strategies for fostering a trauma-informed culture, including empathetic leadership practices and supportive policies.

3. Develop the ability to create an action plan for implementing trauma-informed practices within their organizations.

GROUNDING MOMENT

INTRODUCTION TO TRAUMA

WHAT IS TRAUMA?

"Trauma is a widespread, harmful and costly public health problem. It occurs as a result of violence, abuse, neglect, loss, disaster, war, and other emotionally harmful experiences. Trauma has no boundaries with regard to age, gender, socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, geography, or sexual orientation."

Source: SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach

TRAUMA AND THE WORKPLACE

Challenges Outside Of Work → ← **Challenges At Work**
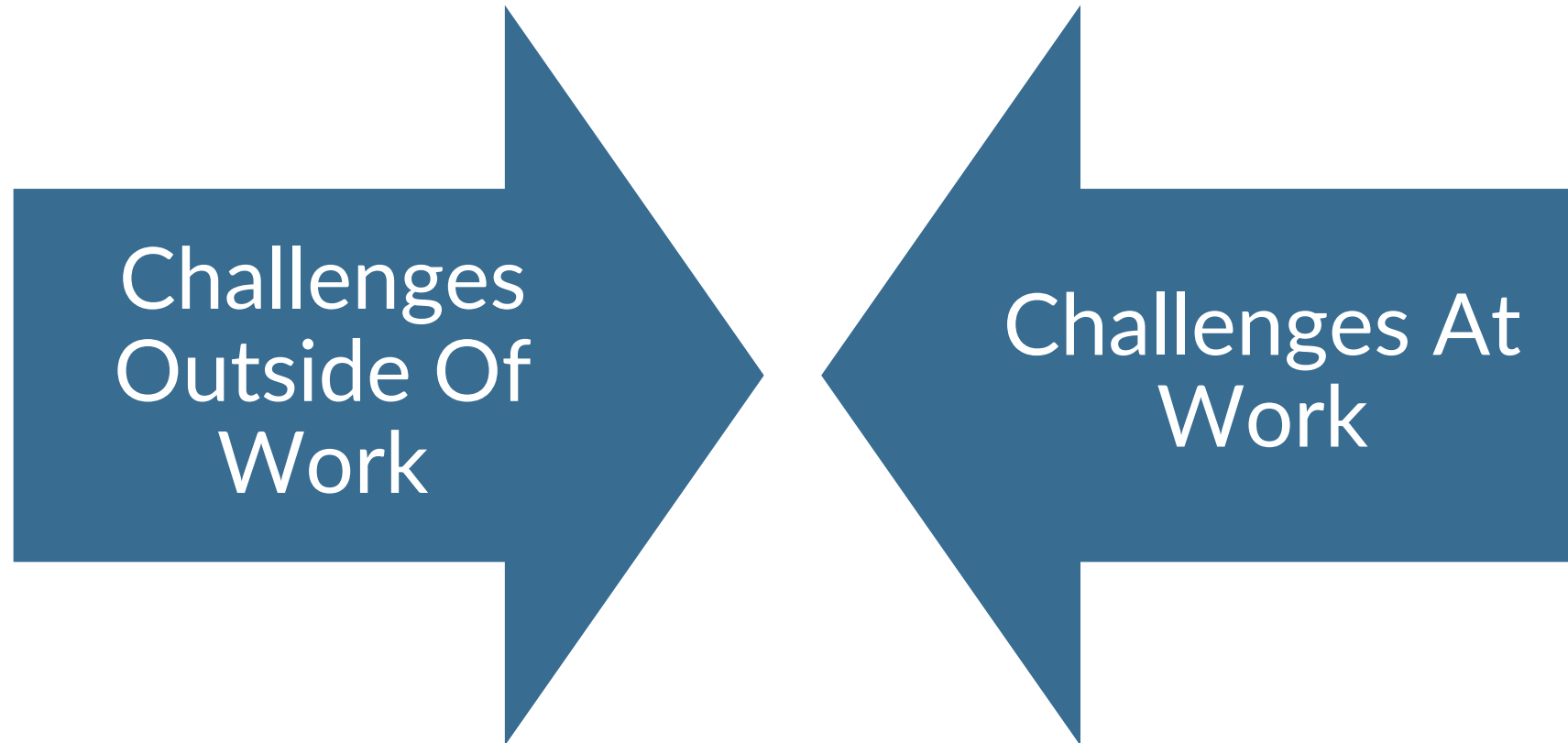
TRAUMA AND THE WORKPLACE

Collectively, trauma can manifest in the workplace through…
- Higher turnover
- Higher absenteeism
- Higher presenteeism
- Lower productivity
- Increased errors, impaired executive function
- Increased counterproductive workplace practices
- Deterioration of team culture

Source: Campaign for Trauma-Informed Policy & Practice

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE
TRAUMA-INFORMED?

Organizations that take a trauma-informed approach in the workplace develop a culture that "emphasize[s] respecting and appropriately responding to the effects of trauma at all levels." These organizations understand the pervasiveness of trauma and actively work to lessen and/or stop re-traumatization by developing environments that prioritize healing and recovery.

Source: Buffalo Center for Social Research

TRAUMA-INFORMED PRINCIPLES

GUIDING PRINCIPLES TO A
TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH

Safety

Trustworthiness & Transparency

Peer Support

Collaboration & Mutuality

Empowerment, Voice, & Choice

Cultural, Historical, & Gender Issues

Source: CDC
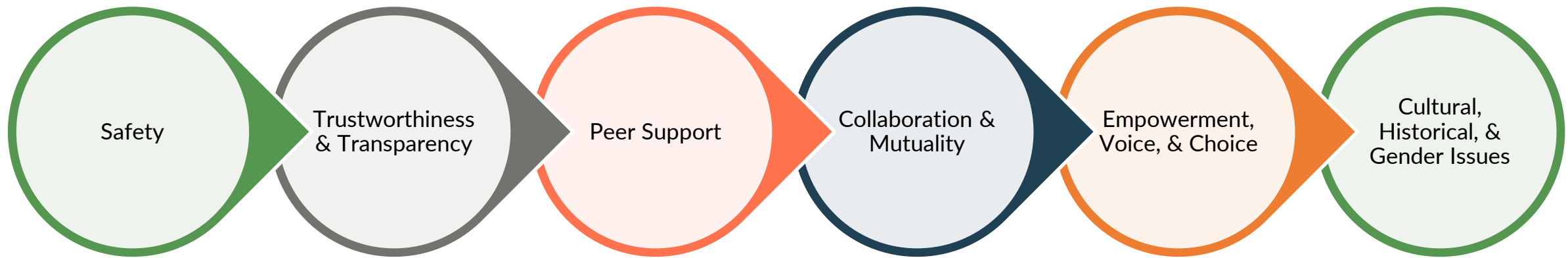
FOUR R'S OF A
TRAUMA-INFORMED ORGANIZATION

Realize

- the widespread impact of trauma and understand potential paths to recovery

Recognize

- the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved with the system

Respond

- by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices

Actively Resist Re-traumatization

- e.g. provide content/trigger warnings when applicable

Source: SAMHSA

SUPPORTIVE POLICIES & PRACTICES

- Empathy is a skill – one that is associated with positive outcomes
- Empathy involves:
  - Recognizing unique strengths/challenges
  - Listening actively
  - Committing to learning from each other

Source: Campaign for Trauma-Informed Policy & Practice

ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIES
Support Holistic Well-Being & Mental Health

- "Basic" wellbeing/mental health programs are simply not enough

- Consider providing resources that are proactive, preventative, restorative, and reparative

Source: Campaign for Trauma-Informed Policy & Practice

- Deterioration/nonexistence of a healthy work culture can increase:
  - Turnover
  - Absenteeism
  - Presenteeism

- Organizational culture should reflect
  - Mission
  - Vision
  - Values

Source: Campaign for Trauma-Informed Policy & Practice

- Roles to consider:
  - Chief Wellness Officer
  - Wellness Committee
  - Trauma-Informed Champion Team

Source: Campaign for Trauma-Informed Policy & Practice

- Peer-to-peer mutual support
- Trauma-Informed activities:
  - Mentoring
  - Support/interest groups
  - Affinity groups

Source: Campaign for Trauma-Informed Policy & Practice

ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIES

Leverage Opportunities to do More of What is Working

- What we notice and focus on grows
- Intentionally notice strengths, build upon what is working
- Leverage positive developments

Source: Campaign for Trauma-Informed Policy & Practice

ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIES
Provide More Choice, Flexibility, & Autonomy

"Provide enough structure to create clear expectations and flexibility to empower individualized approaches based on what fits best for each person."

Source: Campaign for Trauma-Informed Policy & Practice

- Feeling like you can meaningfully participate in shaping your organization's future:

  - Supports retention
  - Improves culture
  - Adds to overall wellness
  - Helps ensure a higher chance of success, integration, and staff satisfaction

Source: Campaign for Trauma-Informed Policy & Practice

ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIES

Promote Accessibility, Belonging, & JEDI

- Embrace and celebrate diverse perspectives, identities, and experiences
- Policies, leadership, and team members demonstrate understanding – and work to address – how the pain and trauma of underlying inequities can contribute to the accumulation of stress and adversity
- Think holistically about accessibility

Source: Campaign for Trauma-Informed Policy & Practice

ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIES
Improve Physical & Psychological Safety

- To prevent and address challenges and conflicts:
  - Strong accountability
  - Clear avenues
  - Explicit protocols

Source: Campaign for Trauma-Informed Policy & Practice

ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIES
Build More Trust & Transparency

- Organizations where team members trust leadership & management experience 74% less stress, 50% higher productivity, and 40% less burnout
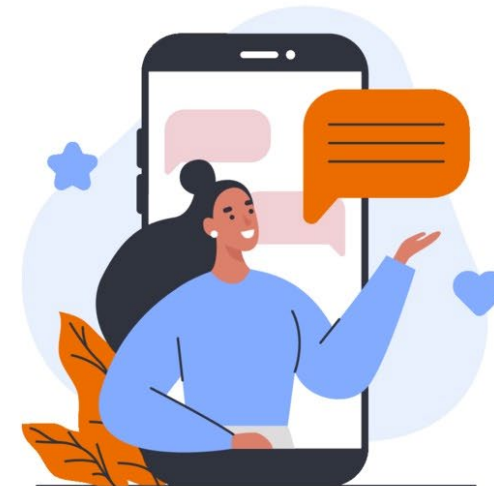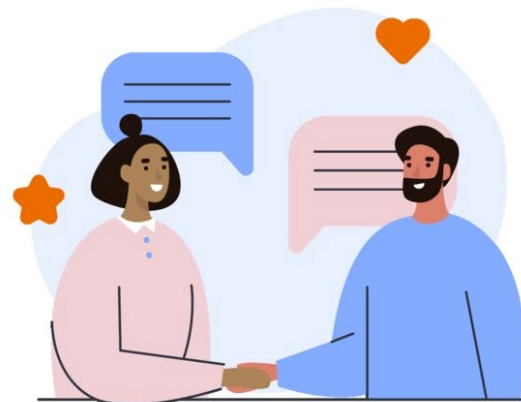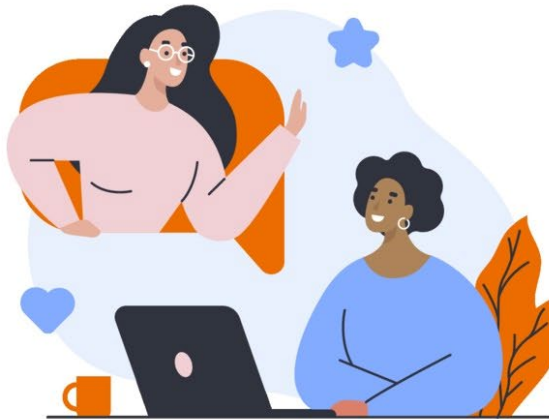- Relational trust bolsters performance

Source: Campaign for Trauma-Informed Policy & Practice

ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIES
Diversify Communication Channels

- Communicate for trust, transparency, safety, collaboration, etc. etc.
- Communication touches everything we have been talking about today

Source: Campaign for Trauma-Informed Policy & Practice

- Solicit feedback from staff
  - Create a baseline
  - Regularly check in
  - Create trust (be trustworthy)
  - Act on the feedback!

- Stigma can be isolating
- Being trauma-aware can reduce the likelihood of re-traumatization
- Leadership, managers, and all team members should receive ongoing training and education on trauma, mental health, wellness, etc.

Source: Campaign for Trauma-Informed Policy & Practice

ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIES
Model the Model

- Lead by example!
  - Demonstrate self-awareness and accountability
- Set expectations and follow them
  - Take breaks
  - limit time spent working outside of standard hours
  - Take vacation/PTO
  - Openly discuss strengths, challenges, and what is helping in stressful times

ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIES

Some Additional Action Steps

- Make mental health screenings and tools available to all team members
- Offer health insurance with no or low out-of-pocket costs for mental health counseling and medication
- Provide free or subsidized lifestyle coaching, counseling, or self-management programs
- Distribute materials about the signs and symptoms of mental health challenges and opportunities for treatment
- Host seminars or workshops that address trauma and trauma-informed stress management techniques
- Create and maintain dedicated, quiet spaces
- Ensure team members can choose how they utilize breaks and other downtime

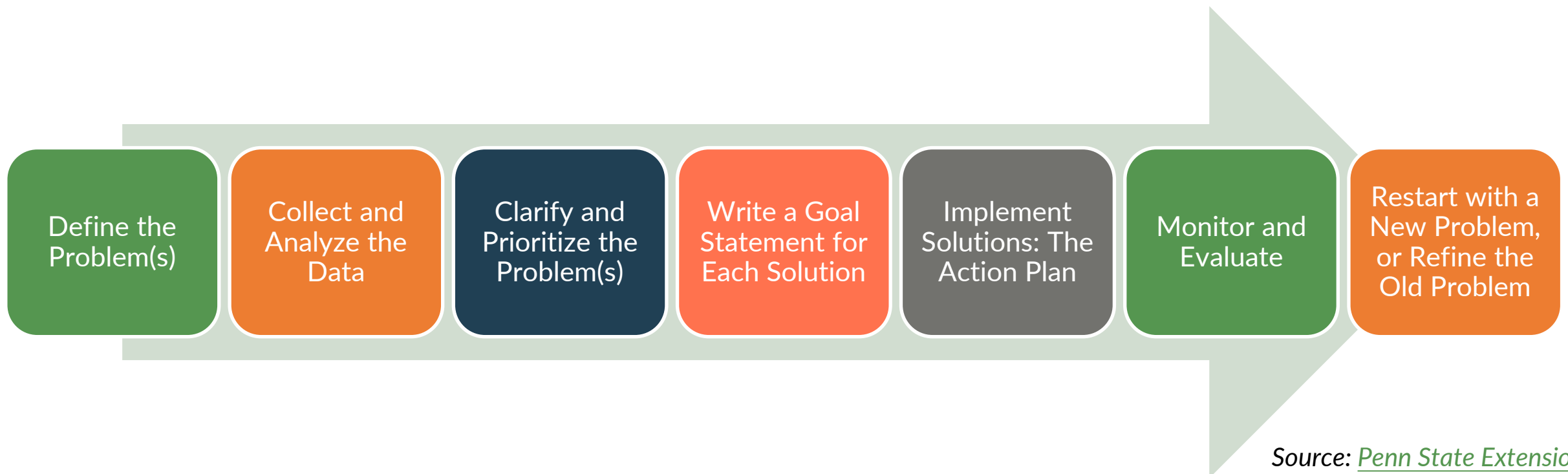*Source: Campaign for Trauma-Informed Policy & Practice*

PLANNING & IMPLEMENTING ACTION

ACTION PLANNING
Definition & Components

Action Planning is an approach, rather than a specific method, which **helps focus ideas and decide what steps you need to take to achieve particular goals**. It is a statement of what you want to achieve over a given period of time.

Define the Problem(s) → Collect and Analyze the Data → Clarify and Prioritize the Problem(s) → Write a Goal Statement for Each Solution → Implement Solutions: The Action Plan → Monitor and Evaluate → Restart with a New Problem, or Refine the Old Problem

Source: Penn State Extension

An action plan is a **documented strategy for solving a problem**. An action plan can also be known as a statement of work or study plan.
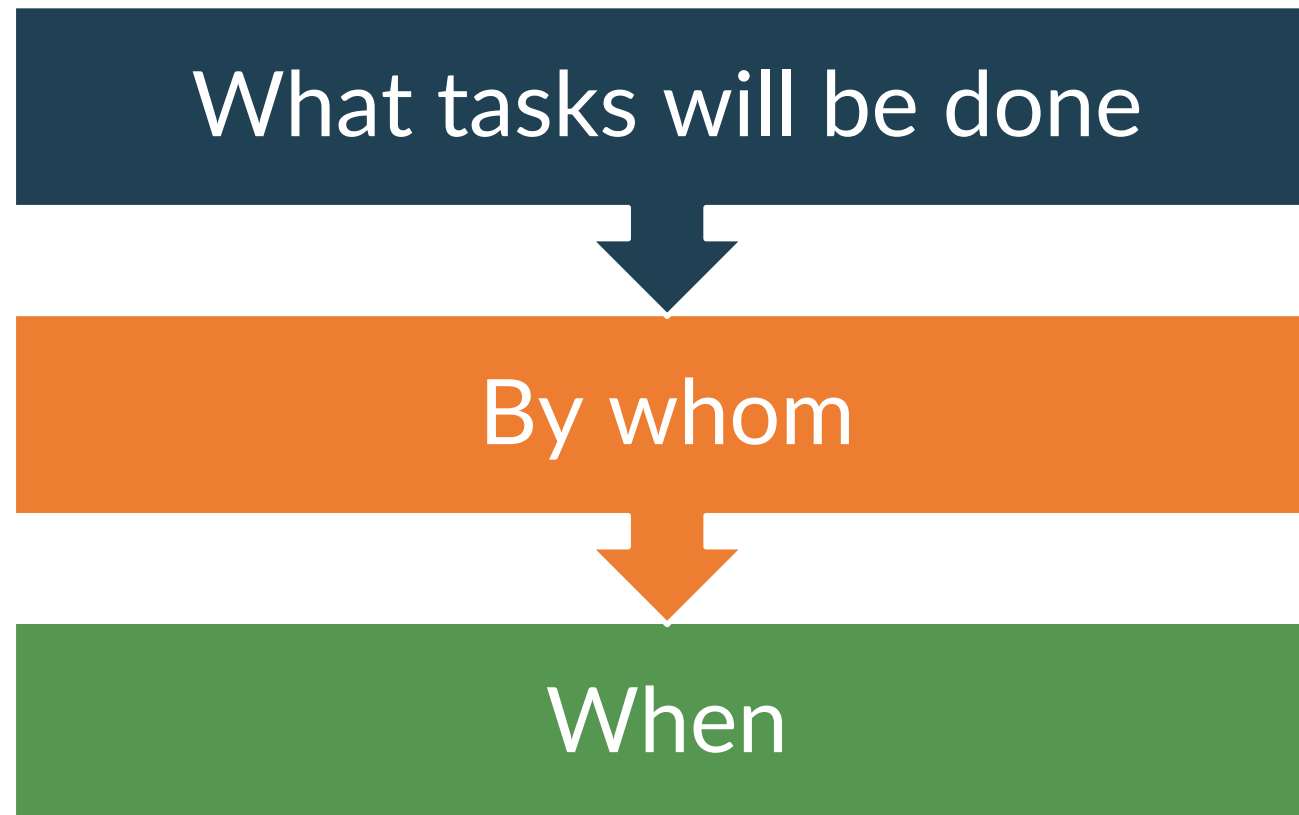
What tasks will be done

By whom

When

STAR² CENTER RESOURCE HIGHLIGHT

Building An Inclusive Organization Toolkit

Click here to access the Building An Inclusive Organization Toolkit!

STAR^2 CENTER RESOURCES

- **Recruitment & Retention Self-Assessment Tool**
- **Health Center Comprehensive Workforce Plan Template** (*formerly Health Center Provider Recruitment & Retention Plan - Newly updated!*)
- **Pay Equity Checklist**
- **Financial Assessment For Provider Turnover Tool** (*Newly Updated!*)
- **Building an Inclusive Organization Toolkit**
- **Onboarding Checklist**
- **Supporting Mental Health Through Compensation Equity Factsheet**

You can find all the STAR^2 Center's free resources here

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QUESTIONS

STAY IN TOUCH!

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