

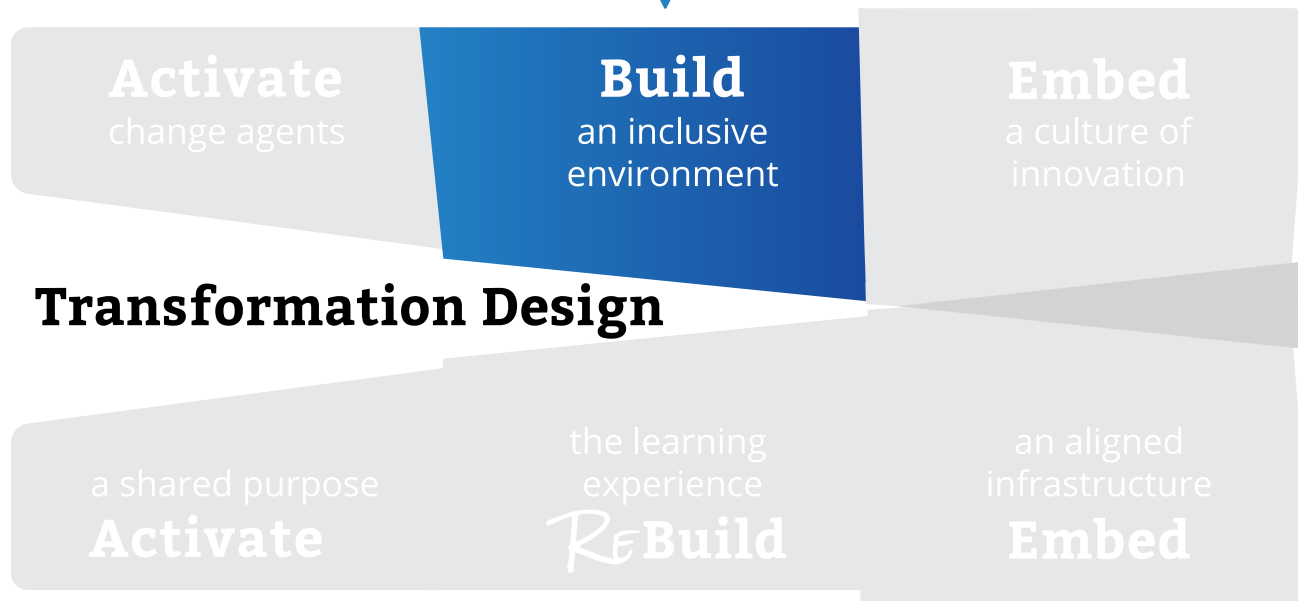


Transformation Design Deep Dive Guide

Listen. Then Communicate.

The extent to which communication begins with listening, especially to those “at the margins,” and that information about the transformation is transparent, accessible, and distributed in multiple ways.

Transformation Design
Core Practice



This Deep Dive Guide is an extension of the Transformation Design District Self-Assessment to help district communities move from reflection to action. For guidance on using this tool, visit www.transformation-design.org and download the [District Self-Assessment Guide](#).

Why Listen, then Communicate?
Listen, then Communicate is one action district communities can take to Build an Inclusive Environment: Strengthening relationships among teachers, administrators, students, families, school board members, community and business leaders so our district has the foundation of trust that creates an environment supportive of change.

Reflections from the Transformation Design District Self-Assessment (Discuss as a team.)

Reflect on the self-assessment findings about this action.

What did your team discover about this action? What are your district's strengths, assets, and resources that support this action?

Questions to Consider (Reflect as a team.)

Use these questions to identify how this action shows up in your district community.

- Who controls the narrative of your learning transformation? Who is silenced?
- To what extent are your district's communication efforts focused on learning from staff, students, and stakeholders?
- Who does your team consistently hear from through your current networks and channels? Who are you missing?
- What is your district's current structure for communicating (both listening and informing) about the learning transformation, its successes, when things don't work out as planned, and next steps? What is working/not working?
- What are you learning about the meaning that staff, students, and stakeholders are making about the learning transformation? How do they communicate that meaning to each other?

Notes from the team discussion about these questions:

The Big Idea (Complete independently.)

Review the following resources to better understand this action and why it is important.

- [What Does It Really Mean to Be a Leader Who Listens?](#) Shane Safir interview by Rosa Isiah on BAM Radio (2017). This 12-minute podcast asserts that relationships are the key to successful change, and relationships—especially across difference—are built on listening. Leaders can rethink communication strategies not as ways to share out their ideas and decisions but to instead focus on pausing, listening to those most impacted by actions and policies, and lifting up their voices among their community.
- [The Empathy Map](#), Tamarack Institute. Developing and consulting Empathy Maps with this tool help you consider the perspectives of those who are impacted by your learning transformation and identify the many forces that affect their experiences.
- [Our Schools Our Community](#), Colorado Schools Public Relations Association. This collaborative effort to change the narrative around public education in Colorado focuses on the human story not just numbers or deficits. This website (currently inactive) includes a communications toolkit for districts and organizations to build a strong dialogue with their community. The Overview, including the 1½-minute video, Why the Message Matters, and Messaging Frames sections, is also relevant to this action.

What new ideas from the Big Idea resources seem most exciting for your community? What strengths do they reveal about your district? What opportunities would you like to explore more deeply?

District Artifacts (Complete independently.)

Review the following artifacts from leading districts to benchmark the Transformation Design action in your own district and to spark new ideas.

San Francisco Unified School District

- [Joe Truss Interview with Shane Safir](#) (2018). In this 5-minute video, the principal of Visitacion Valley Middle School looks at ways he is using listening to tackle equity and innovative instruction.

St. Vrain Valley Schools

- [Advancing Public Education Together: Parent Leadership, Powerful Messaging, and the Strength of the Community](#), Don Haddad and Kerri McDermid on the NGLC Blog (2019). The district has shifted from asking the community to invest more in their schools to engaging in a narrative about the value that public schools provide to the community's economy, workforce, and democracy.
- **Communications Artifacts:**
 - [St. Vrainnovation Magazine](#)
 - [#StVrainStorm on Twitter](#)
 - [We Are the Future of America](#) (2½-minute video)

Kettle Moraine School District

- [Education Needs New Way to Succeed](#), Patricia Deklotz in *Wisconsin State Journal* (2013). In this op-ed, the district's superintendent tells a compelling story about the need for transformation.
- **Communications Artifacts:**
 - [Facebook Group: Operation KM Spirit](#)
 - [Future Ready Videos](#)

Which artifacts inspired you? Why?

In what ways do these artifacts demonstrate a listening approach to communication? What strategies do the districts use to make information about their learning transformation transparent and accessible?

What do these examples illuminate about your own district's work?

A Common Understanding

(Discuss as a team.)

Gather as a team to develop a common understanding about this action and why it is important. Share insights and inspirations gained from your independent study of Big Idea resources and District Artifacts. Challenge yourselves to think big and be bold as you take on this action in your district.

What are the key takeaways to keep in mind as you plan?

Action Planning

(Complete as a team.)

Developing this Transformation Design action into common practice across your district community can advance your learning transformation and help you better serve your students, family, and local community. Use the structure below to create a plan to strengthen use of this action by your district community.

What has your district already done? (Refer to your responses to [Questions to Consider](#) earlier.)

What needs further development? Which of these are key levers that, if they were strengthened, would significantly advance your district's learning transformation?

What is your goal for moving forward? What do you want to accomplish?

Assign people to take action with clear deadlines and deliverables (e.g., by the end of the month, the communications director and a parent representative on the core team will create a prototype of a community newsletter). These Action Steps are an opportunity to “walk the talk” of the change you are trying to create in your district: consider how team members will own these steps and how to invite stakeholders to participate!!

Action Steps	Timeline	People Responsible	Communication Plan (Listen & Share)	Success Criteria
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Progress Tracking

Set a date to reconvene to review progress on the Action Steps. Use a project management tool or another way to collectively track progress between meetings.

Date to review progress:

Other Notes:



Next Generation Learning Challenges (NGLC) is a nonprofit initiative that empowers educators and communities to reimagine and transform the student learning experience, cultivating academics, life skills, wellness, and citizenship so that students can thrive in a world of rapid change.

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