

# The Change Conversation

System-Wide  
Partnership  
Syllabus



# The Change Conversation System-Wide Partnership

**For:** Multi-campus districts, college systems, large networks, and career/technical consortia

**Duration:** 12 months, including lead-site and multi-site 5-day training, ongoing coaching, and system playbook development

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## Program Description

The Change Conversation Systemwide Partnership is a 12-month engagement designed for districts, multi-campus colleges, and school networks that want consistent, MI-aligned student conversations across sites. Rather than delivering one-off trainings that don't translate, this partnership builds a core MI-skilled team at a lead site, extends support to 1–2 additional campuses or departments, and creates shared workflows, scripts, and tools that travel across your system.

The result: your system gains a common language for student change, measurable shifts in key processes (probation, attendance, stop-out response), and a system-level playbook you can keep using and refining.

## Learning Outcomes

By the end of 12 months, your system will be able to:

- Build MI-skilled core teams at a lead "hub" site and 1–2 additional campuses, with staff who can use OARS, stage-matching, and change-talk evoking in daily conversations.
- Establish shared workflows for 2–3 priority processes (e.g., probation meetings, attendance outreach, stop-out campaigns) that are MI-aligned and adapted to the local context.
- Use a system playbook that includes conversation swaps, stage-check scripts, workflow diagrams, and a brief fidelity checklist that supervisors and staff can realistically apply.
- Track early indicators of conversation quality and student response (e.g., no-show rates, student follow-through, staff confidence ratings, probation outcomes) so leadership can see whether MI is sticking.
- Plan for sustainability and scale-up, including roles for internal MI champions, peer-coaching structures, and decisions on extending to additional sites or teams.

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## Who is This For?

This partnership is designed for:

- Systems with multiple campuses or departments that want a coordinated approach to student conversations (e.g., districts with 2+ schools, multi-campus colleges, regional career/technical consortia).
- Leadership teams (superintendents, provosts, VPs of student success, deans, directors) who are tired of one-off PD that doesn't translate into sustained practice.
- Cross-role staff teams including teachers/faculty, advisors, counselors, student success coaches, retention specialists, deans, behavioral interventionists, and student affairs professionals.

Ideal scope: 1 lead site (25–40 participants for 5-day in-person training) + 1–2 additional sites (10–20 participants per site for spread training).

Prior MI experience: Not required; mixed-experience groups are welcome.

## Program Structure at a Glance

The partnership unfolds in four major phases over 12 months:

1. Discovery and Lead-Site training program (Months 1–3)
2. Full 5-Day Change Conversation training program at your lead "hub" site, with pre-work, 90-day pilot, and initial follow-up coaching.
3. Spread Training or added a 5-day training program to Additional Sites (Months 4–6)
4. 2 additional on-site training days or 4 virtual half-day sessions to extend MI and Stages of Change skills to 1–2 more campuses or departments.
5. Ongoing Coaching and Playbook Development (Months 3–9)
6. Monthly group coaching for 2–3 staff cohorts (e.g., advisors, counselors, instructors), plus co-creation of your system-level MI + Stages of Change playbook.
7. Leadership Partnership and Scale-Up Planning (Months 1–12). Quarterly leadership strategy calls to review data, refine workflows, address barriers, and plan for sustainability or expansion to additional sites.

# Phase 1: Discovery and Lead-Site Training (Months 1–3)

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## Discovery (Month 1)

- Short discovery call and campus/district walkthrough to clarify priorities, select lead site, identify 1–2 key processes to pilot, and align on timeline.
- Selection of the pilot team and coordination with the academic calendar.

## Lead-Site 5-Day Change Conversation Training Program (Months 2–3)

Your lead site receives the full Change Conversation 5-Day Training, including:

- Pre-work: 2–4 hours of asynchronous modules introducing MI spirit, OARS, and Stages of Change in school contexts.
- 5 in-person training days:
  - Day 1: MI Foundations in Schools (MI spirit, OARS, righting reflex)
  - Day 2: Stages of Change with Students and Families (stage identification, stage-matched responses)
  - Day 3: Advanced MI Skills (DARN-CAT, change talk, sustain talk, resistance)
  - Day 4: From Conversations to Systems (process mapping, workflow design, conversation swaps)
  - Day 5: Coaching, Fidelity, and Sustainability (observation tools, pilot planning, internal champion roles)
- Embedded 90-Day Pilot: Two 90-minute design sessions and two 60-minute skills labs focused on one priority process at the lead site, with a concise pilot playbook (workflow, stage-check script, conversation swaps, metrics).
- Initial Follow-Up: First monthly group coaching call and first leadership implementation call to review early pilot progress.

# Phase 2: Spread Training to Additional Sites (Months 4–6)



## Extended Training for Other Campuses

Once your lead site has traction, we extend training to 1–2 additional campuses or departments. Please note, for an additional fee, we can implement the Change Conversation 5-Day Training program at your other campuses.

Format options:

- 2 additional on-site training days (condensed version of Days 1–3 content), or
- 4 virtual half-day sessions (spread over 2–4 weeks).

Content focus:

- Essentials of MI spirit, OARS, and Stages of Change adapted to the new site's context.
- Introduction to the lead site's pilot process and playbook as a model.
- Short design session to adapt or create an MI-aligned workflow for one key process at the new site.

Participants: 10–20 staff per additional site (advisors, counselors, instructors, or other roles relevant to the target process).

# Phase 3: Ongoing Coaching and Playbook Development (Months 3–9)

## Monthly Group Coaching (9 sessions total)

- Format: 90-minute Zoom calls for 2–3 staff cohorts (e.g., one cohort of advisors, one of counselors, one of instructional staff).
- Focus: Real conversations (transcripts, role-plays, or recorded snippets), targeted skill drills (reflections, evoking change talk, stage-matching), and troubleshooting challenges as MI becomes daily practice.
- Tool: Use of a simple MI observation rubric to guide feedback and track growth.

## System Playbook Co-Creation (Months 5–9)

Working with your pilot teams and leadership, we collaboratively build a system-level MI + Stages of Change playbook, including:

- 2–3 exemplar workflows (e.g., probation meetings, chronic absenteeism outreach, stop-out/re-enrollment calls) with step-by-step diagrams.
- Stage-check prompts and scripts (1–3 questions to quickly assess student readiness).
- Conversation swap sheets showing "old line" vs. "MI-aligned line" for common staff scripts.
- Brief fidelity checklist (1–2 pages) staff and supervisors can realistically use to self-assess and give peer feedback.

Deliverable: A polished, branded playbook document (PDF or editable format) ready for onboarding new staff or scaling to additional sites.

# Phase 4: Leadership Partnership and Scale-Up Planning (Months 1–12)



## Quarterly Leadership Strategy Calls (4 calls total)

Format: 60-minute Zoom calls with campus decision-makers (superintendents, provosts, VPs, deans, directors).

Focus:

- Review early indicators (no-show rates, probation outcomes, stop-out response rates, staff confidence surveys, student follow-through).
- Refine workflows and address implementation barriers.
- Decide where to deepen MI use (e.g., add another process, extend to another site).
- Plan for sustainability: internal MI champions, peer-coaching structures, and integration with existing PD or supervision cycles.

## Optional: Resource Vault Access (Months 1–12)

Participating staff receive limited-term access to an online resource vault, including:

- Slide decks, cheat sheets, and stage decision aids.
- Short recorded demos showing "two versions" of common student conversations.
- Microlessons and quick-reference cards for team meetings or short PD slots.

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## What You'll Receive

Training and coaching:

- Full 5-Day Training Program for the lead site (25–40 staff).
- Spread training for 1–2 additional sites (2 on-site days or 4 virtual half-days per site). An additional 5-Day Training may be added for a fee
- 9 monthly group coaching calls (90 minutes each) for 2–3 staff cohorts.
- 4 quarterly leadership strategy calls (60 minutes each).

Deliverables:

- Lead-site 90-day pilot playbook (workflow, scripts, metrics).
- System-level MI + Stages of Change playbook (2–3 workflows, stage-check tools, conversation swaps, fidelity checklist).
- Optional resource vault access for participating staff.

Materials:

- Pre-work modules (video + reflection prompts).
- Slide handouts for all training days.
- MI Cheat Sheet for Educators, Stages of Change Quick Guide, Conversation Swap Sheet.
- MI observation rubric and coaching agenda templates.

## Sample 12-Month Arc

Months 1–2: Discovery, select lead site, schedule 5-Day Training, align on priority processes.

Month 2: Pre-work completion and 5-Day Training at lead site.

Month 3: Lead-site 90-day pilot begins; first group coaching and leadership calls.

Months 4–5: Spread training to Site 2 (and optionally Site 3).

Months 6–8: Ongoing coaching for all sites; playbook development and refinement.

Months 9–10: Finalize system playbook; leadership reviews early data and scale-up options.

Months 11–12: Sustainability planning, internal champion identification, decisions about extending to additional sites or teams.

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### Expected Outcomes

Systems that invest at this level typically see:

- More consistent conversation quality across campuses—fewer "fix-it" lectures, more student talk time, staff reporting less burnout in high-stakes meetings.
- Early shifts in key indicators such as probation meeting no-shows, stop-out response rates, and early persistence data for targeted processes.
- Usable, transferable protocols documented in a system playbook that new staff can learn and existing staff can refine.
- Internal capacity for peer coaching and fidelity observation, reducing reliance on external consultants for ongoing support.
- Leadership confidence to scale MI to additional processes or sites based on concrete evidence from pilots.

### Logistics & Participant Expectations

Lead-site 5-Day Training schedule: Typically 8:30 AM – 3:30 PM daily, with breaks and lunch. Exact timing adjusted to fit your campus schedule.

Room setup recommendations:

- Movable chairs and small-group tables for pair and triad work.
- Projector/screen and whiteboard or flip charts.
- Enough space for role-play practice without excessive noise interference.

Participant expectations:

- Attend all assigned training days (5 days for lead site, 2 days or 4 half-days for spread sites).
- Complete pre-work modules before first training day.
- Engage actively in role-plays, demos, process mapping, and pilot planning.
- Bring real student cases and campus processes to the learning.
- Participate in monthly coaching calls and contribute to playbook development.

Leadership expectations:

- Participate in quarterly strategy calls.
- Support pilot teams with time, access to data, and decision-making authority.
- Champion MI integration into existing workflows, supervision, and PD structures.

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### About the Facilitator

Hart Thorson specializes in helping K–12 schools, colleges, and career programs use Motivational Interviewing and the Stages of Change to improve attendance, engagement, and retention. Training design is informed by MINT (Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers) resources and adapted specifically for education settings where conversations about behavior, academics, and persistence are central to student success.

Hart has also spent nearly 15 years working in schools, managing staff, training admissions, writing curriculum, and teaching. The conversations throughout this training have been experienced firsthand by Hart, and he is proud to share this way of speaking with students, parents, and colleagues to achieve better outcomes across all areas.

### Questions or Ready to Schedule?

For more information about bringing The Change Conversation to your campus, or to discuss pricing and scheduling options:

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We'll talk through your context, confirm fit, and outline what a 5-day training and 90-day pilot could look like for your school.

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