

TRAC-7 Continuous Improvement Process Model

The Continuous Improvement Process (CIP) model represents a multi-tiered evaluation and continuous improvement process for the Technical Retraining to Achieve Credentials (TRAC-7) Round 1 Department of Labor (DOL) Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grant program. The model assisted grant management in identifying performance indicators and evaluation data to collect for procedural and programmatic improvement, as well as federal reporting requirements. As a model of continuous improvement, the process builds on the lessons learned and evaluation findings from the previous quarterly periods to identify shortcomings and aid with improving processes to better fill gaps. The strategies the grant management engaged in to assess the status of and improve program performance were evidence-based and involved program staff and consortium partners in collaborative revisions that increased understanding and consistency in reporting metrics.

Review processes and corresponding quantitative and qualitative data collection activities are identified in the model to offer methods for gathering evidence of programmatic improvement and measure indicators of progress. These indicators are procedural for overall grant management and oversight at the consortium sites, and performance-based for compliance with federal monitoring and evaluation reporting. Indicators include components of leadership models, federal reporting monitoring and review processes, self-assessments, systems alignment and gaps analyses, quarterly budget and outcome projections, site-based internal systems of checks and balances, reviews of milestones, deliverable documents, progress and implementation measures, and consortium site compliance reviews.

The TRAC-7 grant management uses the TRAC-7 CIP model as an evidence-based, practical tool. Grounded in lessons learned in the previous quarterly grant phases, grant program staff modified their leadership model and engaged in individual and team-based self-assessment that involved revisiting program staff roles and responsibilities and reflection on the effectiveness of current processes. Gaps were identified and responsibilities were modified to focus attention on those areas most in need of improvement. An alignment of systems to meet federal program outcomes as well as site-based outcomes more effectively was collaboratively developed and implemented by program staff and consortium partners. Similar processes were done for programmatic outcomes as with budgetary targets in that projections were developed with the end in mind and back loaded to the present. Milestones, deliverables, progress and implementation measures were reviewed for comprehension and understanding among site-based partners. Operationalized definitions were created to increase the transparency and consistency of metrics reported from the consortium sites and grant program staff into the federal reporting forms.



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TRAC-7 Continuous Improvement Process (CIP) Diagram

