

### ***III. Ripple Effects post-intervention assessment tools***

The goal of post-intervention assessment is to measure progress, establish a baseline for the next stage of learning and make a determination of whether a particular intervention worked. To help with this assessment, Ripple Effects offers tools for formative, process, and proximal data collection, and for easy correlation of these elements with distal outcomes. As with all Ripple Effects resources, these have a very practical purpose. In this case, it is to answer these four questions about learners:

- Did they do it?
- Did they like it?
- Did it work?
- Did it matter?

#### ***Did they do it?***

##### ***Assessment of implementation process***

Historically, the implementation process has been largely overlooked in evaluation studies. However, in the last decade there has been an explosion of interest in this area (Fixsen et al. 2005). The reason is simple: meta-analyses reveal that the implementation process may have more impact on objective outcomes than designed program quality (Lipsey & Wilson, 1998). This is because gaps between the original design of “model” programs and the actual delivery of those programs are often deep and wide. Government and foundation funders increasingly require quantitative data on the implementation process.

Dane & Schneider (1998) identified four primary characteristics to examine when assessing program fidelity:

- Adherence to design in terms of protocols, training, techniques and materials
- Exposure and dosage in terms of number and frequency of sessions
- Instructional skill level, including enthusiasm, preparedness and attitude
- Participant responsiveness, the extent to which participants are engaged by and involved in the activities and content of the program.

Ripple Effects provides an automated system for measuring three of the four implementation factors identified above: adherence to design, dosage, and participant responsiveness. Because training protocols are hard wired into the software, fidelity to the fourth measure, instructional quality, is built-in.