

National Institute of Corrections Virtual Conference 2016 Transcript for Interview with Brandon Mathews

Announcer: This is the podcast of the National Institute of Corrections Virtual Conference. Please join us November 9, 2016 for our third annual conference titled *Leading with Innovation*, where you will receive a full day of presentations, innovative chats, and networking all brought to you by NIC. Visit us at www.nicic.gov/go/VC2016 to register.

And now... here's a sneak peek!

National Institute of Corrections: Participants will be introduced to the 10 principles of implementation leadership, learning how they can contribute to successful EBP implementation and ultimately successful organizational change. Innovative leadership principles are necessary to successfully implement EBP in correctional environment as leaders are often faced with critical challenges that can impede implementation efforts. This workshop introduces the 10 essential principles of implementation leadership to the correctional field to guide leaders in their efforts to overcome these implementation challenges. Each principle will be explained and demonstrated through case study examples, preparing correctional leaders for increased EBP implementation success.

Okay. So the essence of what you're going to be discussing at the virtual conference will be the topic of leadership which is something that's very near and dear to us here at NIC. We have numerous leadership courses as we try to help inform and educate the leaders in the correctional field, to help them do their jobs better and to bring up correctional officers and other staff to leadership positions themselves. So Brandon, can you tell us how you first became involved in this topic of leadership?

Brandon Mathews: Sure. So I've been leading in the community correction space for the last two and a half or just under three years, and a lot of the implementation challenges that we discussed have

come through in practical applications, some failures, some successes, and really it's an aggregation of experience and some academic research that has taken place over the last three and a half, four years as well. So a colleague and I really took to taking some of these fundamental leadership principles that are out there in the various disciplines and combining them into what we viewed as a very hit-pocket understandable out-of-the-cloud practical understanding of what it really means to lead in the correctional spaces whenever these practices are involved.

NIC: Okay. Are you still currently an active correction staff person?

Mathews: I am. So I was running a community correctional facility and then five facilities, one was kind of re-entry prison type of situation, and now I'm on the parole board.

NIC: Okay, all right. So now I understand here though that you have your own company or that you're at least part of a company called Strategic Implementation Research and Consulting, so how did you go from working in corrections to being part of this leadership think-tank?

Mathews: Well again, it was really experiential and so over the last three years I've been involved in implementing some fairly innovative EBPs in the Colorado system, things from evidence-based case planning tools to contingency management, disciplinary models, motivational interviewing, practice model type of things. And there was a gap in this space here when it came to true leadership principles and fundamentals, and really disseminating them in an understandable way. And that's how they came about, it was really trying to fill the gap and provide an outlet for folks who needed information, who needed training, who needed consultation, a place where they could go that wasn't here again in DC or on the East Coast or West Coast that was local and had local knowledge and attachments.

NIC: Okay. So what you provide to people is proximity. So you're close to where they are, you're right next door as it were to where they are and where they're experiencing the problems, and therefore you're able to offer a different type of service than say someone like in NIJ or in NIC might be able to provide, is that correct?

Mathews: Yeah, in some of that is more. I would view that as more high or but at a higher level where there's really an on-the-ground presence that's missing. You can provide people with as much conceptual and

theoretical understanding as you want, but you really need individuals who are practitioners and can bring that conceptual and theoretical knowledge to the practice. And that's how it kind of evolved, and that's how this particular topic evolves to make it more hands-on and more understandable grounded rather than academic type of library book, it was more of a how to.

NIC: And so when you provide services to people, are you with them for several days, several months, how does that process work?

Mathews: Well, it really depends on them and whatever the challenges. Just that it's just to provide workshop type of stuff that can be done fairly quickly, but if it's long-term implementation issues, changing culture, not just training leadership but coaching leadership and coaching the cultural artifacts that are necessary to sustain it, that can be much more long-term. So it's really dependent upon what it is that's going on in the system that is asking for help.

NIC: You provide leadership instruction directly to people in the field. What can we expect from you during your presentation?

Mathews: Well, the goal is to take these kind of, some serious, some tongue-in-cheek principles and connect them to real world problems that folks are dealing with out in the field and provide them with a new perspective or a new direction as to how they can lead through these implementation challenges. The goal is to, I guess we want to change the language instead of talking about leadership as this in the clouds type of concept, talk about it as a nuts and bolts, this is how you do it when you're dealing with innovation, implementation, when you're dealing with human challenges around organizational change. I mean that's the goal, is to make it less conceptual and more concrete.

NIC: Okay. And what would you say is the largest human challenge that you've seen in working with people?

Mathews: With a lot of capacity issues and that ranges from individual capacity to change, to capacity to actually sustain the practices at a system level. The capacity tends to be the problem. So this leadership piece is really about helping individuals who are responsible for these implementation efforts build their leadership capacities to continue pushing through some of those challenges they face. Because the implementations aren't gonna stop simply because there's challenges. These EBPs are directed, getting us to those outcomes necessary so

they're not gonna stop. So the goal is to build some of leadership competencies around implementation specifically so that we can overcome some of these things and get these innovations implemented inside our systems and to fidelity so that we can get the best outcomes.

NIC: Okay. Well, is there anything that I didn't ask you in this limited time that you would have wanted to share with everyone who's listening here?

Mathews: No, I think the biggest thing is that this particular leadership presentation workshop is much less well it's much different than I think anyone has participated in before. We really went to the academic space, our practical experience, the implementation science literature and created what we think is kind of a new leadership paradigm for correctional practitioners. However, it's really again an aggregation of all of those leadership areas that are out there, from the organizational development side, the management side, the correctional side, and built it into a kind of framework that we think is most appropriate for people implementing evidence-based practices in the correctional world. So I think it will be different, it won't be the same old leadership course or workshop that people haven't experienced over the last 10 years.

NIC: Okay, all right. Well, that's a lot to look forward to. So thank you Brandon.

Mathews: Absolutely.

Announcer: This has been a broadcast of the National Institute of Corrections. The views presented are those of the speakers and do not necessarily represent the policies or position of the National Institute of Corrections.

We hope you enjoyed this broadcast.

To register for the NIC Virtual Conference, please visit us at www.nicic.gov/go/VC2016.