Exploring Complexity: Think back to a complex problem in your practice environment, where a simple solution was used—an easy fix that many hoped would solve the issue at hand, but didn’t. With a partner at your table who you know less well, discuss for a few minutes:

• What was the effect of the simple fix on the identified problem?

• When the fix was implemented, what was the effect on the people experiencing the problem?

• What was the effect of implementing this fix on the microsystem’s culture?

Now share insights with your whole table. What did you learn?
Using A QI Tool to Help Navigate Complexity: Fishbone Diagram

With your CTP team: Think about the problem you are trying to solve in your QI project. Brainstorm 3-5 “simple fixes” that people only partly familiar with the issue might suggest or have already suggested, as the obvious solutions, based on their current mental model.

Now, with your CTP team use the large paper on the wall near your table to quickly (re)create a fishbone diagram about the problem that your CTP project is focused on.

- The head of the fishbone diagram is the problem you hope to fix/improve.
- Fill out the bones—the factors contributing to the problem—with your team.
- Try to capture as many of the obvious and non-obvious factors as you can.

Now, go back and circle the factors on the fishbone diagram that represent the things you can most directly influence, as a leader.
Discuss: How does your analysis of complexity—all of the contributing/hidden factors—and the levers of greatest influence compare to the list of “quick fixes” you brainstormed above?
Connecting Communication to Culture and our Project: Communication Plan

Exploring Communication as Culture Catalyst: With your table, discuss and answer the following questions. When communication shifts from passive—unidirectional sharing of information—to active—multi-directional conversation:

- What does active communication look like?
- What happens to people’s engagement?
- What habits do you see that are unhealthy (undermine the culture you want)?
- What habits create healthy, active communication (foster the culture you want)?
Design a plan for creating better communication around your project. Not simply telling or sharing information, but rather using communication to create the culture you want, through your project. Following the example, work through the prompts below for at least 4-5 groups, who will be impacted by your project work.

Example – QI project to reduce hospital sepsis mortality.

Group 1: Bedside nurses
Status: Strongly against, Moderately against, Neutral, Moderately supportive, Strongly supportive

What this Group Needs (what they expect from communication about the project):
- Understanding of the new workflow: increased frequency of taking vital signs, new elements of an assessment, ordering labs using a protocol, calling the new sepsis alert
- Belief that they are truly empowered to act without first seeking direction from the physicians
- Validation/celebration when they do a good job (not just critique when they don’t follow the process)
- Way to elevate concerns when they get pushback on the process from physicians or pharmacists

What Does Healthy Engagement with this Group Look Like?
- Willingness to pilot the new workflow
- Raising questions about how to overcome barriers
- Sharing concerns about how to work this around the other 1000 things on their plate each shift
- Sharing ideas about how to make it easier to do this workflow or modify the workflow

How Might We Create Healthy, Bi-Directional, In-Person Engagement?
- Discussion at staff meeting next month
- Simulations of the new workflow on the pilot units, to practice together
- Having one of our team leaders go to a few shift huddles, to check-in

How Might We Create Healthy, Bi-Directional, Asynchronous Engagement?
- Create a feedback email, to go to all care team members after a sepsis alert, asking for their feedback on how it went
- Create a sepsis project idea board on the pilot units, to allow RNs to put ideas on it during their shift and allow us to move those ideas into “doing” column and “complete” column over time

How Will this Group Know that We Heard Them?
- Reflective listening during meetings
- When they get a feedback email from us and reply, send a reply to thank them for responding
- Project idea board—visible reminder that we are working on people’s ideas

What Will Happen in Our Culture, if We Do This Well?
- Increased trust that this QI project will make a difference, not just cause more fatigue
- Enhanced psychological safety—willingness to bring up new ideas, safety concerns
- New leaders emerging from the “ranks” because they see that their ideas are valued
- Help our skeptics voice their concerns in a way that leads to joint problem-solving, not just off-line complaining or passive resistance
Group 1:
Status: Strongly against, Moderately against, Neutral, Moderately supportive, Strongly supportive
What this Group Needs (what they expect from communication about our project):

What Does Healthy Engagement with this Group Look Like?

How Might We Create Healthy, Bi-Directional, In-Person Engagement?

How Might We Create Healthy, Bi-Directional, Asynchronous Engagement?

How Will this Group Know that We Heard Them?

What Will Happen in Our Culture, if We Do This Well?
Group 2:
Status: Strongly against, Moderately against, Neutral, Moderately supportive, Strongly supportive

What this Group Needs (what they expect from communication about our project):

What Does Healthy Engagement with this Group Look Like?

How Might We Create Healthy, Bi-Directional, In-Person Engagement?

How Might We Create Healthy, Bi-Directional, Asynchronous Engagement?

How Will this Group Know that We Heard Them?

What Will Happen in Our Culture, if We Do This Well?
Group 3:
Status: Strongly against, Moderately against, Neutral, Moderately supportive, Strongly supportive
What this Group Needs (what they expect from communication about our project):

What Does Healthy Engagement with this Group Look Like?

How Might We Create Healthy, Bi-Directional, In-Person Engagement?

How Might We Create Healthy, Bi-Directional, Asynchronous Engagement?

How Will this Group Know that We Heard Them?

What Will Happen in Our Culture, if We Do This Well?
Group 4:
Status: Strongly against, Moderately against, Neutral, Moderately supportive, Strongly supportive

What this Group Needs (what they expect from communication about our project):

What Does Healthy Engagement with this Group Look Like?

How Might We Create Healthy, Bi-Directional, In-Person Engagement?

How Might We Create Healthy, Bi-Directional, Asynchronous Engagement?

How Will this Group Know that We Heard Them?

What Will Happen in Our Culture, if We Do This Well?
Group 5:
Status: Strongly against, Moderately against, Neutral, Moderately supportive, Strongly supportive
What this Group Needs (what they expect from communication about our project):

What Does Healthy Engagement with this Group Look Like?

How Might We Create Healthy, Bi-Directional, In-Person Engagement?

How Might We Create Healthy, Bi-Directional, Asynchronous Engagement?

How Will this Group Know that We Heard Them?

What Will Happen in Our Culture, if We Do This Well?