

SYSTEMS THINKING

Systems thinking supports innovation and organizational analysis. It differs from linear thinking which focuses on reactions to problems.

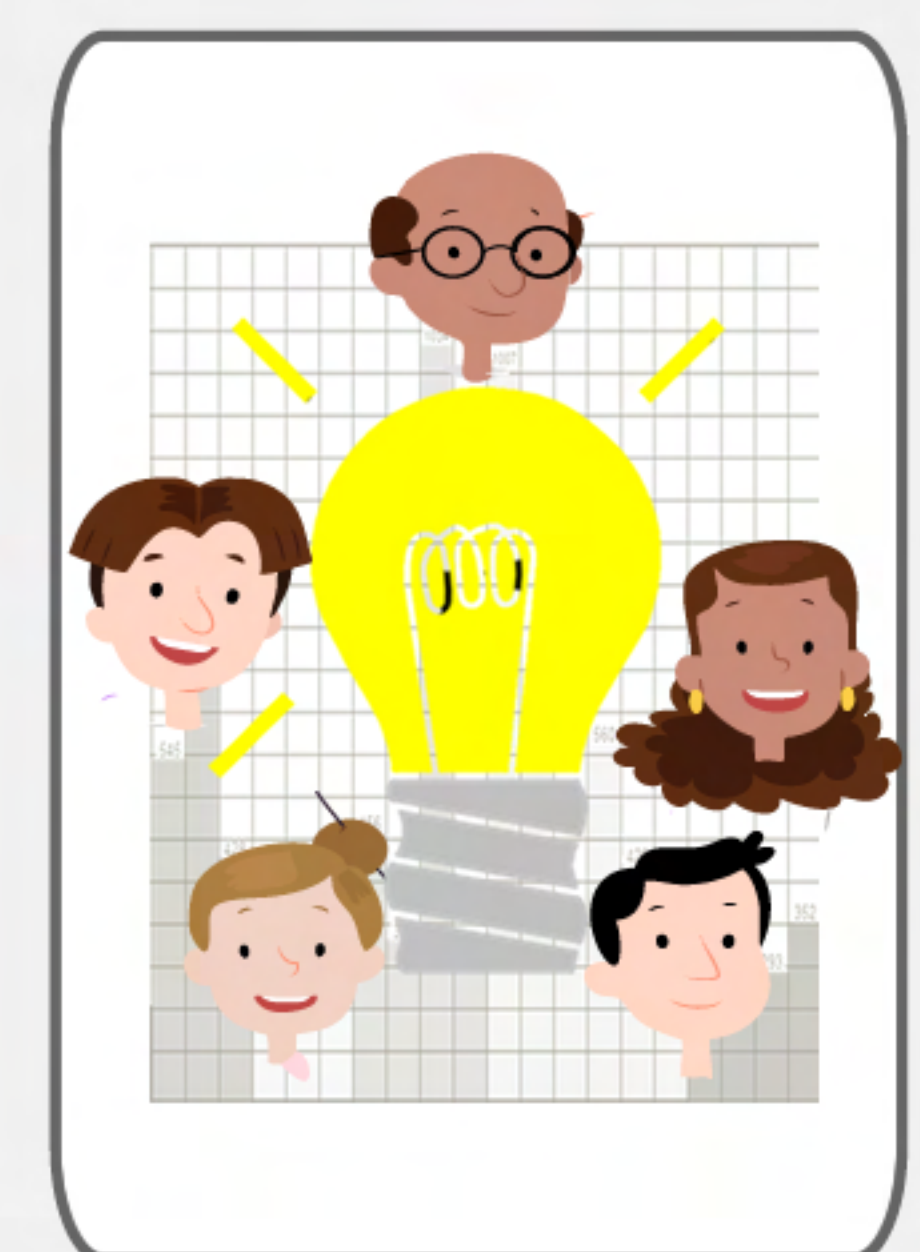
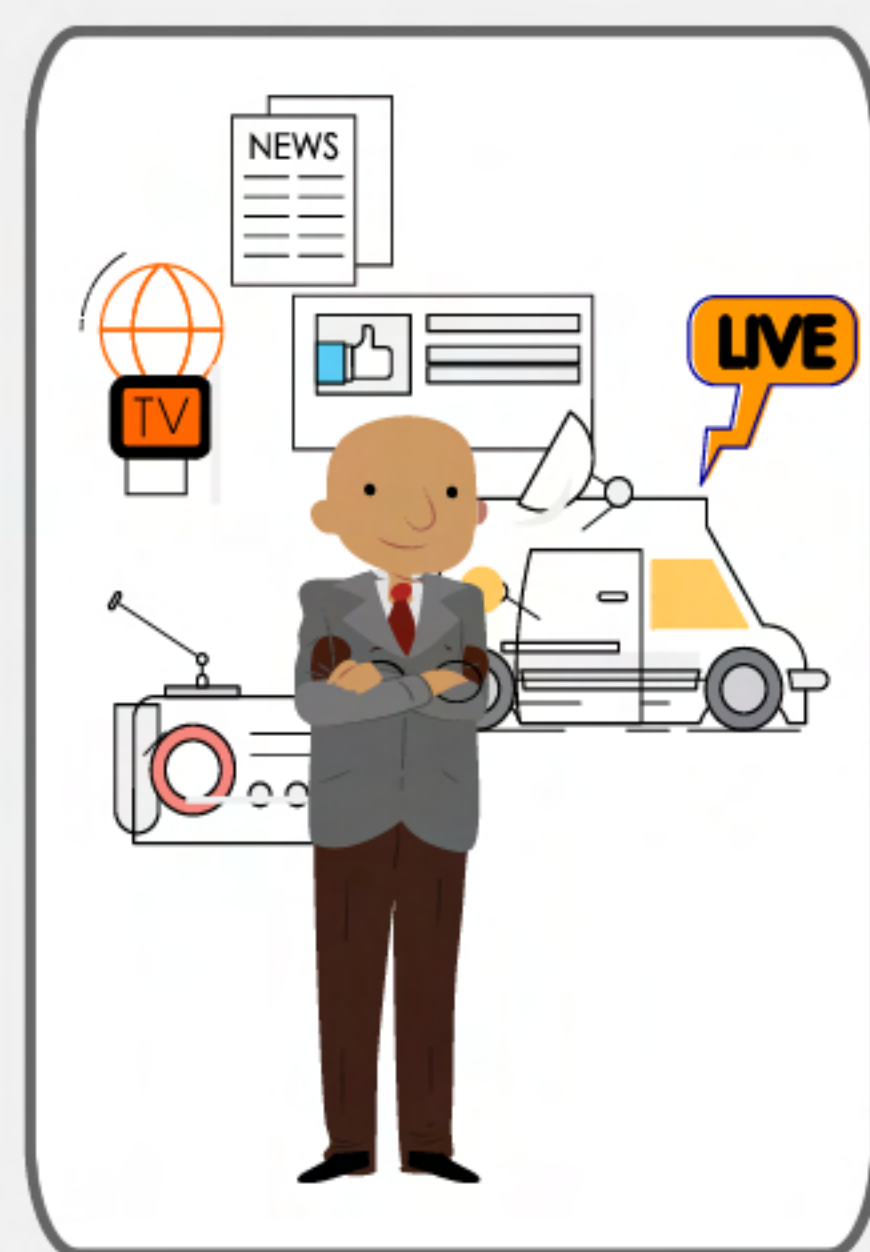
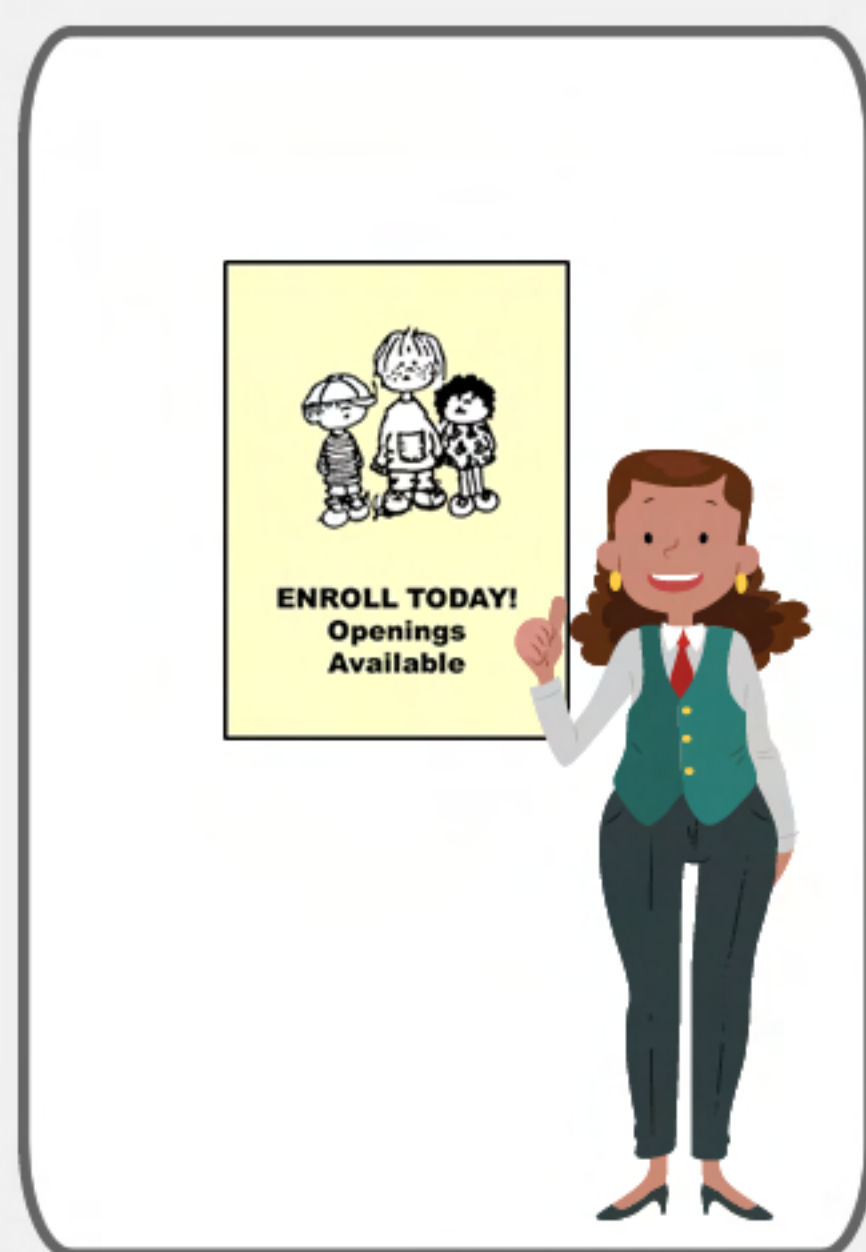
Linear Thinking

*Based on reaction
Looks at individual parts
Focuses on cause-effect relationships
Views snapshots
Finds immediate solutions*

Systems Thinking

*Based on analysis and understanding
Sees the whole
Looks for root causes, linkages and corrections
Watches for change over time
Identifies strategies to address systemic causes*

An example of shifting from **LINEAR THINKING** to **SYSTEMS THINKING**: *Under-Enrollment*



← LINEAR THINKING

SYSTEMS THINKING →

Reaction to the Problem

Have Family Advocates place recruitment flyers in the neighborhood and knock on doors.

General Improvement via a Visible Solution

Create an overall media campaign (radio, tv, social media, advertisements, posters, etc.) throughout the service area to increase awareness of the program.

Systemic Improvement Based on Evaluation

Assess which services are currently needed and in which communities. Shift recruitment efforts to be specific to those needs and to be delivered in targeted communities.

Strategic Improvement Informed by a Broad Understanding

Review the Community Assessment and family feedback to understand enrollment needs. Use this knowledge to recruit throughout the entire service area on an ongoing basis.

Innovative Improvement Supported by an Organizational Analysis

Identify program changes to support being fully enrolled: Be proactive with marketing, use technology to track workforce and housing trends, monitor data to identify future needs, include recruitment duties in all job descriptions, etc.

Do you want to learn more about this or other program management topics?

Abacus Associates L3C has specialized expertise to support Head Start grantees meet regulatory compliance and provide high quality services.

Contact us to discuss your needs and how we can support your program:

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