

You have a proven innovation you want to scale...



# Exploring the Process of Scaling Up

What are the steps—and traps—in moving from innovation to broad-based adoption and consequential change?



<p><b>Dimensions of Scale</b> Taking an educational innovation completely to scale involves five dimensions that reflect different aspects of making an intervention effective in one setting useful across a wide spectrum of contexts.</p>	<p><b>Depth</b> Getting to scale produces deep and consequential changes in practice. Requires evaluation and research to understand and enhance the causes of effectiveness.</p>	<p><b>Sustainability</b> Sustaining scaled growth means maintaining these changes in practice over substantial periods of time. Requires robust design to enable adapting to negative shifts in context.</p>	<p><b>Spread</b> Scaling up is achieved by diffusion of the innovation to large numbers of users. Requires modifications to retain effectiveness while reducing the resources and expertise required.</p>	<p><b>Shift</b> Ownership of the innovation is assumed by users, who deepen and sustain the innovation via adaptation. Requires moving beyond “brand” to support users as co-evaluators, co-designers, and co-scalers.</p>	<p><b>Evolution</b> The innovation as revised by its adapters is influential in reshaping the thinking of its designers. Requires learning from users’ adaptations about how to rethink the innovation’s model.</p>
<p><b>Sources of Leverage</b> Each dimension provides leverage for the scaling process by evolving the intervention to increase its power, durability, applicability, and flexibility.</p>	<p><b>Evaluation and Research</b> What are the sources of the innovation’s effectiveness? What conditions does each source depend on for success? How sensitive is each source to these conditions? How consistent is the innovation with the current political and cultural context of educational improvement?</p>	<p><b>Robust Design</b> How can the innovation be modified so that it functions in various types of inhospitable conditions? How typical is each condition for success in the target population of users? How can developers support varied users while evolving toward conditions for success that enable full effectiveness?</p>	<p><b>Reducing Resources and Expertise</b> How much is the overall power of the innovation affected by reducing its cost or the knowledge required to implement it? How much power is retained in a light version that requires fewer resources or less expertise of its users? How can developers support light users to achieve full effectiveness?</p>	<p><b>Moving Beyond Brand</b> How can developers support users going beyond what the originators have accomplished? How can developers build users’ capacity as co-evaluators, co-designers, and co-scalers? How can users form a “community of practice” that helps answer questions about scale?</p>	<p><b>Rethinking the Model</b> How can developers unlearn their initial beliefs, values, and assumptions about the innovation, and generate willingness to start the innovation process over again? How can developers facilitate reconceptualization and discontinuous evolution? How can developers form a “community of reflective redesign” with other innovators?</p>
<p><b>Traps to Avoid</b> Evolving along each dimension requires the developers of the innovation to overcome traps that have both cognitive and affective aspects.</p>	<p><b>Trap of Perfection</b> Developers should not seek an unattainable goal of perfection at the cost of deflecting resources from other dimensions of scale. (The great should not be the enemy of the good.)</p>	<p><b>Trap of Mutation</b> Developers should ensure that the ways they modify the innovation to adapt to various inhospitable contexts do not undercut its core conditions for success.</p>	<p><b>Trap of Optimality</b> Developers should realize a somewhat less powerful innovation that reaches much greater numbers of users is a step forward.</p>	<p><b>Trap of Origination</b> Developers should not attempt to control the original innovation in ways that deter adaptation and further innovation by users.</p>	<p><b>Trap of Unlearning</b> Developers’ unwillingness to take a fresh look can prevent genuine evolution.</p>