



Bringing Professional Practice into FOCUS

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**TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION OF  
PRACTICE-BASED INQUIRY<sup>®</sup> VISIT  
CHAIRS  
AND TEAM MEMBERS**

**a guide to catalpa services**

**Catalpa Ltd.**

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### **The PBI® Collection**

*Answers to the Basic Questions about Practice-Based Inquiry®*, serves as a brief introduction and overview to Practice-Based Inquiry. It is based on the text of the Catalpa Ltd. website.

*Fundamentals and Foundations of Practice-Based Inquiry®*, is published by Catalpa Ltd. as part of a series that explain both the conceptual and practical dimensions of Practice-Based Inquiry. It presents a comprehensive description of PBI definitions, assumptions and underlying concepts. It considers the place of PBI in the historical tradition of professional practice. Its central focus is how PBI works as a legitimate methodology and technology of inquiry that generates accurate and legitimate findings about the quality of professional practice. Its thorough and authoritative discussion of *Practice-Based Inquiry* provides the details necessary for understanding the value and how to use PBI as a research tool.

### **Handbooks for Catalpa Services**

Catalpa is proud to provide services to help clients claim and use the benefits of *Practice-Based Inquiry*. The following handbooks describe the stipulations and procedures for Catalpa services of protocol accreditation, chair certification and visit report endorsement as well as the outlines for how a Center can be licensed to use PBI®.

*Assuring the Legitimacy of Practice-Based Inquiry®: The Preparation, Review and Accreditation of a PBI® Visit Protocol.*

*Assuring the Legitimacy of Practice-Based Inquiry®: The Certification of Team Members and of Chairs to Lead Teams.*

*Assuring the Legitimacy of Practice-Based Inquiry®: Endorsing PBI® Visit Reports.*

*Assuring the Legitimacy of Practice-Based Inquiry®: Licensing PBI® Regional Centers.*

### **Guides to Ensuring the Legitimacy of PBI® Visits**

Catalpa offers a growing series of guides on how to design, conduct and follow-up on a PBI® visit.

### **Catalpa's web-site ([www.Catalpa.org](http://www.Catalpa.org))**

Catalpa's web site provides a comprehensive set of resources for those interested in Practice-Based Inquiry. The website provides you with further examples, details, links to documents and other relevant web-sites, as well as references to other studies and descriptive documents. These include access to visit reports prepared by PBI visit teams, studies and discussions of the benefits of PBI, *Handbooks* and *Guides* about how to ensure the value and rigor of Practice-Based Inquiry and an informative newsletter about the work of people around the world who use Practice-Based Inquiry principles in their work.

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Leslie Oh 1/14/08 1:02 PM  
**Comment:** There are two "NOT A VALID LINK" warnings in this document.

## **INTRODUCTION: THE IMPORTANCE OF PEOPLE TO PRACTICE-BASED INQUIRY®**

Practice-Based Inquiry® is an inquiry methodology. Because the Practice-Based Inquiry® visit is at its heart a very human process that requires considerable team discussion, the foundations and procedures that make it rigorous are unusual.

The identity, role, agendas, skills, judgment, knowledge, experience, coherence and lucidity of individual team members are important factors that shape both the collection of evidence and the framing of conclusions.

The chair's authority and function in leading the team makes the chair particularly important. Chairs who understand the principles of Practice-Based Inquiry® and who are skilled at making them work in practice are critical to the writing of solid, accurate and useful reports. Experienced chairs are also key to building an agency's capacity to manage PBI visits and to develop ever-effective uses of Practice-Based Inquiry.

Thus, any visit that makes claim to provide rigor in its procedures must deliberately consider the training and certification of team members and chairs. Catalpa's program to train and certify Practice-Based Inquiry® team members and chairs is a central part of its services.

While team members are usually locally certified and supported, Catalpa does provide some ancillary programs to strengthen their participation and understanding of Practice-Based Inquiry®.

Catalpa's program for certifying chairs is rigorous and keyed to the fact that regional agencies are developing their capacity to mount legitimate visits. Thus, Catalpa offers several services at this time that directly to ensure the competence of chairs. This guide spells out the nature and organization of chair certification. It is designed so that it can be adjusted to meet the particular characteristics of a sponsoring agency without compromising its intent or rigor.

## THE TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION OF TEAM MEMBERS

With the exception of a Catalpa visit, team member training is usually the responsibility of the sponsoring agency. The team chair of a visit usually conducts the training of the team for that visit.

Catalpa does provide several services to support team members.

Catalpa will send an official letter to each team member, noting his or her service in terms of the protocol of the sponsoring agency. The letter notes the requirements for team members and that each person performed well, is the team's chair attests. It is intended to be helpful for that person's portfolio. (This service is optional and is negotiated with the supporting agency.)

Catalpa does provide advanced credit from local educational institutions. (This varies and depends on the supporting agency. Catalpa strongly supports these initiatives but has no formal responsibility for them.)

Individuals who have served on teams are eligible for Membership in Catalpa's web-based Team-Room™ discussion group. Individual membership is \$15 a year.

### Qualification

Any person who has completed training and served on a visit that is governed by a certified *Practice-Based Inquiry* protocol is a *PBI* Team Member.

### Benefits

Benefits for a *PBI* Team Member are specified in the protocol for a particular visit.

They usually include a certificate from the supporting agency, a certificate or letter from Catalpa Ltd., access to the Participant section of the Catalpa web site, CEU and graduate credits, and a subscription to Catalpa's newsletter. The certificate indicates the number of visits on which a person has served. The person may use this designation on her or her resumes or other listings of professional experience and skills.

## THE TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION OF CHAIRS

### THE SKILLS OF A CHAIR

The chair is a combination of clear thinker, action-based researcher, events director and good writer. For most protocols, chairs will have had direct practitioner experience in the institution under study.

The chair's responsibilities and tasks for conducting the visit define the critical skills necessary to facilitate a legitimate visit. Each skill is an application of a conceptual understanding of the visit practice. Skills are followed by examples of common tasks and responsibilities that are closely related to that skill.

#### LEADING A TEAM

##### **The chair knows how to use the visit's protocol to ensure legitimate findings.**

- ◆ The chair effectively monitors the team's progress and the quality of its inquiry.
- ◆ The chair supports individual team members in their work to learn about the school.
- ◆ The chair effectively manages his or her authority over the visit schedule, as well as over the composition of membership on a sitting team to support the purpose of the inquiry.
- ◆ The chair supports the team members and pushes them to use the protocol and guidance documents so that they think clearly while they build conclusions and write the report.
- ◆ The chair maintains an ongoing daily discussion with the school principal about the visit team or school issues that arise during the visit.

##### **The chair knows how to move a team's conversation and thinking back and forth between an abstract and a concrete consideration of the particulars of the institution.**

- ◆ The chair competently leads the discussion as inquiry.
- ◆ The chair ensures that the team carefully considers its evidence and its judgments, as well as how they come together in a specific conclusion.

##### **The chair knows how to lead the team in writing the report.**

- ◆ The chair represents the team in the final editing of the report, reading the report out loud to the school, and conducting the factual review conference with the principal.

**The chair knows how to manage the details of the logistics of the visit.**

- ◆ The chair manages the visit schedule well, making adjustments as the visit unfolds.
- ◆ The chair team members to specific visit tasks.
- ◆ The chair clarifies daily schedules and manages all team meetings.

**The chair knows how to advocate for the welfare of the team during visit.**

- ◆ The chair oversees the well being of the team by ensuring that there is an adequate team room and appropriate food and that there are enough supplies.
- ◆ The chair appropriately and effectively handles personal emergencies of team members, unexpected events in the life of the school and problems either the team of the school sees in the conduct of the visit.

**A WORKING UNDERSTANDING OF PRACTICE-BASED INQUIRY®**

**The chair possesses a good understanding of the concepts of Practice-based Inquiry,® demonstrated by making competent judgments about the conduct of the visit during the visit that are consistent with Practice-based Inquiry®'s underlying principles.**

- ◆ The chair serves as the team's guardian of the Practice-Based Inquiry® methodology and of the specific visit protocol being used.
- ◆ The chair handles unusual situations and potential crises well.
- ◆ The chair knows when to ask for help.

**The chair knows how to teach a team the basics of the principles of Practice-based Inquiry® so that it can use them as tools of the inquiry.**

- ◆ The chair teaches the tools of the inquiry to the team so team members can sharpen their skills.
- ◆ The chair ensures that all team members clearly understand the fundamentals and procedures of the visit protocol and that the team carries them out well.

**The chair knows how to articulate the procedures of the visit to the institution being visited.**

It is key that the institution being visited has a reasonable understanding of what will happen during the visit, what the report will be like and what it is responsible for carrying out to make the visit work well.

- ◆ Before as visit, the chair meets with the principal and school leaders, as well as with faculty and staff to discuss the visit and its logistics.
- ◆ The chair represents the team to the school and the media during the visit. PBI® Team Member

**LEVELS OF PBI® CHAIR CERTIFICATION**

Chairing a PBI visit is a practice. Learning to do it well requires that seminar training and actual chairing experiences are combined.

Catalpa certifies chairs at four levels of competence. Each level builds upon the former level and represents additional experience and skills.

**PBI APPRENTICE CHAIR**

An accepted applicant has access to Catalpa print and web resources for chairs.

**Qualifications**

An apprentice chair has significant experience as a professional practitioner (usually 5 years).

An apprentice chair has served as a team member on one Practice-Based Inquiry® visit teams.

An apprentice chair has applied for and been accepted in a Catalpa supported program of chair training and certification.

**Further detail**

An apprentice chair has applied for and been accepted into a Catalpa approved program of chair training.

Apprentice chairs do not need an agency affiliation. But, if an applicant is applying under the auspices of an agency, that should be noted and it should clearly be indicated who pays the fees associated with chair certification.

**Fee**

\$25

**(PROTOCOL SPECIFIC) PBI CHAIR (E.G., CHICAGO ALLIANCE PBI VISIT CHAIR.)****Functions certified to perform**

A PBI Chair is certified to conduct a visit with all the authority accorded to a chair. The visit must use a specific PBI® protocol in which the chair knows and has had training.

**Qualifications**

A PBI chair has served as a team member on at least two visits that were chaired by a certified PBI® chair, using a Practice-Based Inquiry® protocol.

A PBI chair has successfully completed the intense seminar on Practice-Based Inquiry®.

A PBI chair has successfully completed the apprentice visit training program specified in protocol for that visit.

A PBI chair has chaired one visit under apprenticeship of a certified chair.

A PBI chair has successfully completed certification visit, which is observed by a Catalpa Chair or a Master Chair, who then makes recommendation as to certification.

**Further detail**

A PBI chair has effectively participated in at least 35 hours of Practice-Based Inquiry® **seminars and/or workshops** designated for PBI Chair training. These may include face-to-face, on-line and tutorial workshops. A PBI chair must have spent at least 20 hours considering the foundations and fundamentals of PBI® and how to use them in conducting a visit. A PBI chair must have devoted at least 15 hours to the details and issues of chairing a visit based on a specific protocol.

The leader of the seminar will comment on the work of each apprentice in the seminar noting his or her level of demonstrated competence in understanding the elements of Practice-Based Inquiry® and the procedures of the protocol and being able to use them.

A PBI chair has successfully completed an “**apprentice visit.**” The apprentice chair serves on a team led by a PBI or Catalpa chair during a full visit under the specific protocol of the certification, which is the same protocol considered in the training. The certified chair both conducts a post-visit

interview with the applicant and submits to Catalpa a brief statement about the apprentice's performance.

A PBI chair successfully conducts an “**observed visit**” under the specified protocol. At least three different portions of this visit are observed by a Catalpa chair, who conducts the visit and also coaches the apprentice during this visit. When the visit is concluded the Catalpa chair conducts an interview/discussion with the apprentice. On the basis of the visit and the interview, the Catalpa Chair recommends the apprentice to Catalpa for certification as a “certified PBI Chair.

It is an initial certification that may be withdrawn. This certification is for a limited number of visits (usually two).

On the first two visits, the initially certified chair must then receive at least 5 hours of visit coaching on each visit from a Catalpa Chair or a Master Catalpa chair. (If it is a Catalpa chair, he/she must keep the Master chair informed.) This coaching may be part of Catalpa's chair endorsement. The Catalpa chair prepares a brief description of the demonstrated competence of the new chair and discusses it with the Master Chair. The Master Chair carefully reviews reports from the visit and decides whether to award the apprentice chair full certification.

The first certificate has a term of three years. Renewed certificates each have terms of 5 years. The Master Catalpa chair monitors the work and reports of each chair. He prepares a brief annual review based on the visit reports. He may ask for interviews with and/or observations of the PBI chair, as well. The Master chair decides to renew the certificate and grant more advanced certificates with the approval of the Principal Partner.

In extreme events, certificates may be suspended for cause.

### **Fees**

Estimated fees may range from \$2,000 to 3,000 for training, monitoring and certification. Fee will vary considerably depending on whether the applicant is part of a program or on her own and the circumstances for the training. Catalpa is in the process of developing on-line exercises for some of the training, which will reduce fees over time.

## CATALPA CHAIR

### Functions certified to perform

Catalpa chairs may conduct a visit using any certified Practice-Based Inquiry® protocol.

They may coach chairs.

They may train apprentice chairs.

### Qualifications

A Catalpa Chair is certified as a PBI® (Specific protocol) Chair.

A Catalpa Chair has successfully led five visits using at least two protocols.

A Catalpa Chair has successfully participated in at least 20 hours of advanced seminars designed for Catalpa Chairs.

A Catalpa Chair has successfully completed a tailored coaching apprenticeship (that includes discussion, reading, writing and apprenticeship on at least two visits) with a Catalpa or Master Chair.

### Further details

A Catalpa Chair has passed a face to face final interview with the Master Catalpa Chair that occurs after other requirements are met. Questions include issues related to the chair's practice, knowledge of the PBI® constructs, and future plans as a Catalpa Chair. The Catalpa Master Chair then prepares a written review and recommendation for the Catalpa principal partner.

The Catalpa Chair is certified for 5 years.

Recertification includes review of ongoing reading, training and visit leadership experience.

### Fees

Estimated fees for becoming a Catalpa Certified Chair range from \$500–2,000, for training, monitoring and certification. This fee will vary considerably depending on whether applicant is part of a program or on her own and the circumstances for the training. Catalpa is in the process of developing on-line exercises for some of the training. This will reduce fees over time.

## **MASTER CATALPA CHAIR**

### **Functions certified to perform**

The Master Catalpa Chair is certified to prepare protocols, certify protocols, and train and certify chairs.

The Master Catalpa Chair provides executive-level leadership to the development, welfare and effectiveness of PBI® chairs at all levels.

The training of Catalpa chairs.

The Master Catalpa Chair is a life-time certification with review and renewal every 5 years.

### **Qualifications**

The Master Catalpa Chair has previously been certified as a Catalpa Chair

The Master Catalpa Chair has completed advanced seminar in Practice-Based Inquiry® principles.

The Master Catalpa Chair is a life time certification with review every 5 years.

### **Fees**

The estimated fees to become Master Catalpa Chair range from \$1,000-\$1,500.