

The Power of Collaborative Work Practices

Michigan Career Education Conference

Monday, February 1, 2010

1:45 p.m.

Amway Grand Plaza Hotel

Grand Rapids, Michigan

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Workshop Presenter

- Director of Crockett CTC, Detroit Public Schools
- Served as a high school principal
- Central office staff member
- Teacher
- Detroit Newspapers

Introduction

Today's Agenda

- Making the Case for Collaborative Work Practices
- Challenges
- Protocols and Tools
- What does it look and feel like
- Digging Deeper

The Agenda

WIIFM

(What's in it for me!)

- Reflective about your work practices
- New tools to engage school staffs
- Group discussions
- Have fun talking about your work
- Benefits of collaboration

The WIIFM

The Case for Collaboration

- “If schools are to improve, staff must develop the capacity to function as a professional learning community
- “If schools are to develop a collaborative culture, they must overcome a tradition of teacher isolation.

Dr. Richard and Rebecca DuFour
Professional Learning Communities at Work

- “It is no longer sufficient to have one person learning for the organization.” “The focus must be on the team and not the individual”.

Peter Senge,

- “The whole is greater than the sum of it’s parts”
- “Working together cooperatively takes time but produces better long term result.”

Stephen R. Covey
The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

The Case

Teamwork: it's not personal



The Challenge

The Challenge

- Complaining is contagious.
- Some people just like to complain and jump at any chance to vent.
- Complaints and grievances are not always what they seem.
- Good communication avoids or resolves most complaints and is essential to any successful culture
- It's never too soon to evaluate the personality and character of your organization.

(Robert D. Ramsey, "Don't Teach the Canaries Not to Sing", 2008)

The Challenge

Food for thought

- “Pooling mental effort” creates smarter organizations (Perkins, 2003)
 - The significant problems we face, cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them. (Albert Einstein)
 - Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” (Margaret Mead)
 - Our work becomes subject to critique only when we reflect on it in the company of others (Schon, 1983)
 - No one should work alone

The Benefit

Breaking Down Communication Barriers



The Benefit

Breaking Down Communication Barriers

“Sharing of diverse ideas and making compromises so that people in the organization are satisfied with the direction in which the school is moving.”

The Benefit

Protocols: Plain and Simple

- Also know as Learning tools
- Help us with our learning
- Get at problems and solutions
- Conducting meetings
- Engaging all staff members and holding them accountable
- Establishing an environment for staff to feel safe to contribute

The Benefit

Suggested Uses for Protocols

- Opening a meeting or workshop
- Working on a problem
- Closing a meeting
- Starting a group discussion
- Teaching and learning
- Interventions for conflict

The Benefit

What does it look like?

Example:

1. *Consensogram*
2. *Checking In*
3. *The Final Word*

What was it used to get at?

Group discussion (diverse ideas); exploring issues, teaching and learning

Grades and Assessments

The Process



“I’m Checking In”

The Process



“The Final Word”

The Process

Some favorites ...

- Parking Lot (anonymously communicate feedback)
- Plus /Delta (Solicit Feedback)
- The Final Word (Staff offers interpretation and listens)
- Affinity Diagram (Sort through large volumes of ideas)
- Treasure Hunt (Share work practices and ideas)
- Fears and Hopes
- Trust Fall

The Process

Digging Deeper with Protocols

- The Yee-Ha Effect vs. Valley of Despair
David Langford, Quality Learning
- Teachers can use all tools in their classrooms
- Enriching Learning: Looking at Students' Work



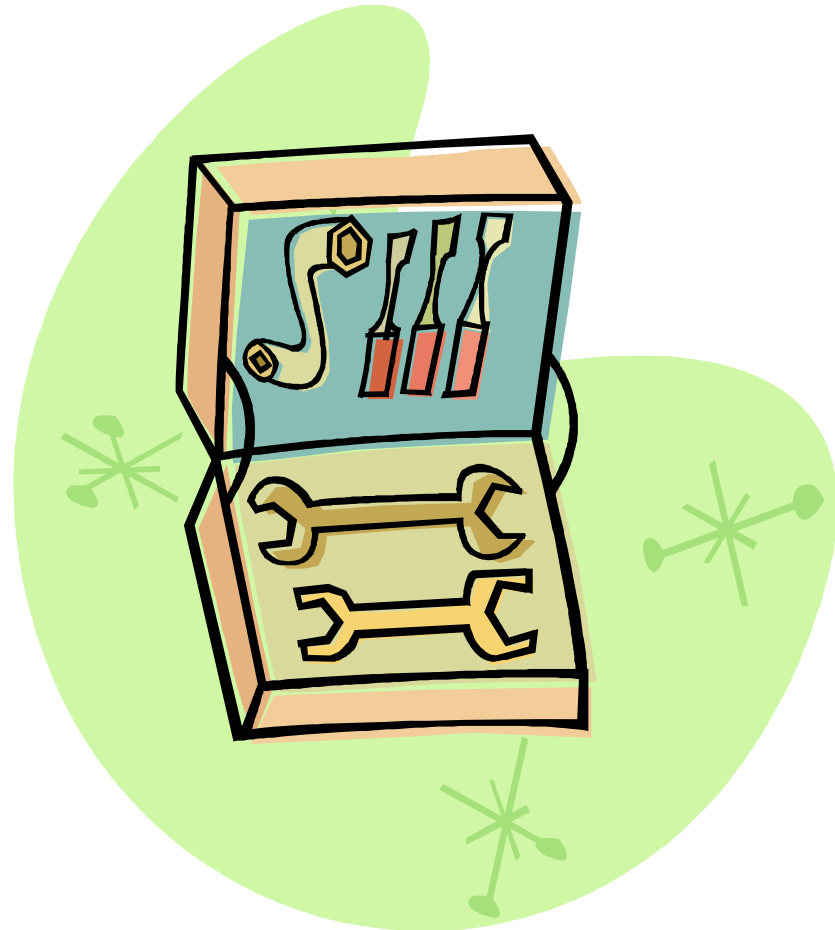
The Process

Tools you can use

The Power of Protocols: An Educator's Guide to Better Practice

– McDonald, Mohr, Dichter

**Tool Time for Education
(Langford International)**



The Process



YOUR QUESTIONS