



# How to Lead an Effective Professional Learning Community

Category: Professional Learning Communities

## Workshop Overview

Following is a general overview of this workshop, including desired participant outcomes, an explanation of the workshop’s alignment with the Learning Forward Standards for Professional Learning, and resources that are included in print and electronic form.

**Category:** Meeting All Learner Needs

**Duration:** Full workshop – 3 hours

### Desired Outcomes:

Participants will...

- Understand the role of the team within a professional learning community.
- Identify strategies to guide teams toward collective improvements.
- Determine how team leaders can support the work of teams in order to get results.

### Learning Forward Standards for Professional Learning:

- **Learning Communities:** Occurs within learning communities committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and goal alignment.
- **Leadership:** Requires skillful leaders who develop capacity, advocate, and create support systems for professional learning.
- **Learning Designs:** Integrates theories, research, and models of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes.
- **Implementation:** Applies research on change and sustains support for implementation of professional learning for long term change.
- **Outcomes:** Aligns its outcomes with educator performance and student curriculum standards.

### Resources in This Binder:

- Handouts
  - Taking the Pulse of Our Team Survey
  - Activity Sheet 1: Establishing Group Norms
  - Activity Sheet 2: Affinity Process for Brainstorming
  - Activity Sheet 3: Now What?
  - Workshop Agenda
  - Attendee Notes
  - 3-2-1 Evaluation Form
  - Certificate of Completion
- “Think About It” Exercise
- Sample Meeting Agenda
- Ready, Set, Go Planning Activity





## Topic Outline

Understanding the general flow of topics to be covered is an important part of giving a strong presentation. This allows the presenter(s) to lead effective group discussions and speak extemporaneously. Following are the main topics covered in this PowerPoint presentation. As you prepare to give the workshop, you may want to refer to this page often.



### Main Topics:

1. Making Collaboration Effective
2. What Successful Teams Do
3. Strategies for Executing the Plan

### Subtopics:

#### 1. Making Collaboration Effective

- a. Defining Effective Collaboration
- b. A Systematic Approach
- c. Using Norms to Increase Effectiveness

#### 2. What Successful Teams Do

- a. Set Goals
- b. Use a Process of Inquiry
- c. Set SMART Goals
- d. Reflect

#### 3. Strategies for Executing the Plan

- a. Structure Meetings
- b. Use Clear Agendas
- c. Celebrate!
- d. Planning Our Next Steps

## Presentation Outline




This outline is designed for you to see the PowerPoint presentation at a glance. Note that slide numbers and the approximate amount of time needed per slide are shown in the right two columns. **The times in bold print show the approximate total time needed for that topic, which includes the approximate times for the activities, shown in parentheses.** You might consider keeping this page within reach during the presentation.

Section of Presentation	Slide #	Timing (mins)
<b>Getting Started</b>		
Introduce self, co-teacher, participants	1-4	
Explain materials issued to participants		
Cover objectives (from Workshop Overview)	4	<b>25</b>
<b>Activity</b> – True Collaboration	4	(20)
<b>Topic 1 – Making Collaboration Effective</b>		
<b>Activity</b> – Think, Pair, Share	9-11	(15)
<b>Activity</b> – Establishing Group Norms	14	(15)
Break		
<b>Topic 2 – What Successful Teams Do</b>		
<b>Discussion Point</b> – Process of Inquiry	15-23	<b>60</b>
<b>Discussion Point</b> – Process of Inquiry	19	(15)
<b>Activity</b> – Setting SMART Goals	22	(10)
<b>Discussion Point</b> – Taking the Pulse of Our Teams	23	(10)
<b>Topic 3 – Strategies for Executing the Plan</b>		
<b>Activity</b> – Reflection	24-29	<b>25</b>
<b>Activity</b> – Reflection	29	(10)
<b>Closing Thoughts</b>		
<b>Closing Thoughts</b>	30	<b>5</b>
Total of 2 hours and 55 minutes (not including break)		

### Helpful tip!

**This workshop can be broken up into shorter sessions so that you can adapt the presentation according to your time constraints.**

Slide 13

	<b>MAKING COLLABORATION EFFECTIVE</b>
<i>Using Norms to Increase Effectiveness</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify your own needs.</li> <li>• Share your ideas for norms.</li> <li>• Clarify what abstract norms “look like” or “sound like.”</li> <li>• Ask for missing norms.</li> <li>• Get consensus.</li> <li>• Review periodically.</li> </ul>	
<small>The MASTER Teacher Doing, Saying, Being</small>	

*Here’s a typical protocol for establishing norms. Let’s quickly walk through this process, and then you’ll have time to actually practice it in groups.*

**Identify your own needs.** *Each participant identifies his or her own needs using a quick-write or affinity process. You want participants to reflect on what’s important to them as individuals.*

**Share your ideas for norms.** *Use a round-robin process. You want each person to have input.*

**Clarify what abstract norms “look like” or “sound like.”** *The facilitator should clarify what abstract norms “look like” or “sound like” – you want to make sure to clarify norms that are unclear or which are perhaps worded in negative ways.*

**Ask for missing norms.** *Recommend or prompt others to identify any missing norms. To prompt others, you might ask a question such as, “How does the group want to resolve situations in which...?” Your goal is to uncover any potential norms that are necessary for the group to function.*

**Get consensus.** *Ask for agreement from the total group. Remember, your goal is to get agreement from the group so that they adhere to the norms. If they don’t agree, they might not feel that they need to follow them. People are more likely to buy into a concept when they feel they are a part of the decision process.*

**Review periodically.** *Even the most effective groups need to review their norms to make sure that they’re working. In a PLC, it’s recommended that this review take place at least once each year. It’s especially helpful to review when there are new team members.*

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### Slide 14

**PDXPERT** MAKING COLLABORATION EFFECTIVE

*Using Norms to Increase Effectiveness*

- Reflect on the process you used to develop group norms.
- How might this process benefit your team?

**ACTIVITY: Establishing Group Norms**

The MASTER Teacher  
Teacher Support System

**Activity: Establishing Group Norms**

Allow 15 minutes for this activity.

**Materials:**

Chart paper, markers, and sticky notes or enough paper for each member to write.

**Instructions:**

Distribute **Activity Sheet 1: Establishing Group Norms**. Also distribute **Activity Sheet 2: Affinity Process for Brainstorming** for those who want to try using this process (refer to **Activity Sheet 1: Establishing Group Norms** for instructions on when to use the affinity process). Have participants follow the instructions on the activity sheet to guide them as a team to establish group norms. Note: The first step in this activity is to establish a group facilitator and recorder. You should consider whether it will be best for you to assign these roles, or have groups assign them themselves.

**Debrief:** Click to display the points on this slide. Ask groups to reflect on the process they used to establish their group norms, and have each group share thoughts about the question, “How might this process benefit your team?”

**Future use:** The activity sheets can be used as references whenever teams meet to establish group norms.

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## “Think About It” Exercise



Have staff complete this exercise to begin implementing what they learned during the workshop. Distribute this document to staff by attaching the file to the Next Day Follow-Up Email, or make copies for the staff.

Fill out your responses to the questions in each quadrant. Please bring this form to our next department or grade-level meeting.

**Something old:**

(Information that was a review or something I had previously learned.)

**Something new:**

(Information I gained from today’s session.)

**Something I’ll try:**

(A facilitation or leadership process or strategy that I feel ready to use.)

**Something I need help to do:**

(A facilitation or leadership process or strategy for which I need more support or instruction.)