



Tips and Tactics for Managing Conflict and Solving Problems

Category: Teacher Leadership

Workshop Overview

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

Category: Teacher Leadership

Duration: Full workshop – 3 hours

Desired Outcomes:

Participants will...

- Understand the characteristics of solutions-based schools.
- Uncover ways to surface problems.
- Learn how to keep disagreements from becoming disputes.
- Acquire skills to avoid temporary fixes and instead find long-lasting solutions.

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.
- **Resources:** Requires prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating resources for educator learning.
- **Data:** Uses a variety of sources and types of student, educator, and system data to plan, assess, and evaluate 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
 - Problem Preview Worksheet
 - Handout: Conversations Clock
 - Activity Sheet 1: What’s the Problem Here?
 - Activity Sheet 2: Dilemma du Jour
 - Activity Sheet 3: Tools of the Trade
 - Workshop Agenda
 - Attendee Notes
 - 3-2-1 Evaluation Form
 - Certificate of Completion
- “Think About It” Exercise
- 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. Qualities of Solutions-Based Schools
2. Seeing Problems in a New Light
3. Managing Disagreements
4. Making Sense of Consensus

Subtopics:

1. Qualities of Solutions-Based Schools

- a. Characteristics of Solutions-Based Schools
- b. How, When, and Who Should Be Involved
- c. Difficulties in Solving Problems

2. Seeing Problems in a New Light

- a. Problems are Our "Pal"
- b. The PAL credo
- c. Barriers to Being a PAL
- d. Surfacing Problems

3. Managing Disagreements

- a. Changing the Game
- b. Ten Steps to Yes
- c. Putting Norms to Good Use

4. Making Sense of Consensus

- a. What Consensus Is/Isn't
- b. Payoffs and Pitfalls
- c. Using Reality and Impact Filters
- d. Arriving at Consensus

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)
Getting Started		
Introduce self, co-teacher, participants		
Explain materials issued to participants		
Cover objectives (from Workshop Overview)	1-6	10
Activity – Gearing Up for Conversations	6	(5)
Topic 1 – Qualities of Solutions-Based Schools		
Activity – Who Decides?	13	(15)
Topic 2 – Seeing Problems in a New Light		
Activity – Role-Play	23	(20)
Break		
Topic 3 – Managing Disagreements		
Activity – Establishing Group Norms	31	(20)
Topic 4 – Making Sense of Consensus		
Activity – Mini-Lesson	41-42	(25)
Closing Thoughts		
	45	10
Total of 2 hours and 45 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 6

**Activity: Gearing Up for Conversations**

Allow 5 minutes for this activity.

Objective:

Attendees should assemble into groups to match the number of spaces associated with the four times on the clock in **Handout: Conversations Clock**. These groups will participate together at various times throughout the workshop.

Materials:

Distribute **Handout: Conversations Clock**. This clock will be used throughout the presentation to arrange people into the four different group activities.

Instructions:

12:00 – Form a group of four with people from the same grade level or subject area as you. Your own name goes on the first line. All three teachers in the 12:00 group must have the same three names in that time slot.

(Note: If you have a small staff, designate participants by primary and upper grades).

3:00 – Form a group of three people that work at a different grade level or subject area than you. Write their names in the 3:00 time slot.

6:00 – Find another person who you don't know very well or who you haven't worked closely with in the past. Write both of your names in the 6:00 time slot.

9:00 – Form a group of six people whose names are not already on your clock. These team members will comprise your 9:00 group.

After participants have assembled their groups and recorded the names on their handouts, have them return to their seats.

“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.



Problem Solving Survey: Assessing My Team

Directions: This survey will help you think about how your team approaches problems. Read each statement. Then check the corresponding box that best describes group behavior or patterns in working through various issues.

Before We Begin	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely
1. My team agrees on who should make a decision. (Who has responsibility to solve the problem—the group, team leaders, administration, or individual teachers?)			
2. My team agrees on a process and group behavior before we look toward solutions. (Consensus, majority vote, establishing norms, PAL, etc.)			
3. My team evaluates what impact the decision will have. (Is it a long-term decision? Will it alter a major goal of the school? Are we willing to spend the time required for success?)			
4. We designate a team leader/facilitator to move us along and keep us on task.			
Getting to Yes			
5. Team members ask open-ended questions and seek clarification of what we think others have said.			
6. We communicate effectively by talking about issues, stating facts, and separating people from problems.			
7. We keep the process moving by avoiding emotional outbursts and unrelated issues.			
8. We're all comfortable with the expected outcomes and the likelihood of meeting these outcomes.			
Wrapping Things Up			
9. Solutions are put in writing.			
10. We agree on a plan to implement these solutions.			
11.) Dates are set to evaluate the success of solutions, to make modifications, and to evaluate and review.			