

HIGH-PERFORMANCE
instructional
LEADERSHIP
CERTIFICATION

MODULE 4

SEEING DEEPER WITH LEARNING DYNAMICS

WELCOME TO MODULE 4 — HOW TO SEE THE WHOLE ICEBERG

- In their framework The _____ Window, psychologists Joseph Luft and Harrington Ingram observed that there are four categories of information about ourselves.
- First, there's the _____ quadrant, which contains information that's visible to both ourselves and others.
- Second, there's the _____ quadrant, which contains information that we haven't noticed about ourselves, but that's visible to others.
- Third, there's the _____ quadrant, which contains information that we know about ourselves, but choose not to reveal to others.
- Fourth, there's the _____ quadrant, which contains information that neither we ourselves, nor others, realize about us.
- Conversation can allow us to gain a deep _____ of teacher practice, and by using all three types of feedback – _____, _____, and _____ – we can walk away from these conversations with powerful insights about what it takes to improve at the individual and school levels.

START WITH THE TEACHER'S GOALS

- If we want to _____ teacher practice at a deep level, it's essential to figure out what the teacher is trying to accomplish with any particular instructional activity that we might happen to observe.
- There are _____ main points at which it's essential for us to seek out the teacher's purpose.
- The first is while we're _____. We should be able to get some sense of the purpose of the activity or the lesson just from sitting in the classroom.
- Often the purpose of a lesson or activity is _____, and what teachers share with students isn't always the ultimate purpose. So if a teacher has a particular objective, or purpose statement, or essential question written on the board, just know, there might be more to it than meets the eye.
- You might find it helpful to take on students' _____: what are they thinking the purpose of this lesson is? How are they making sense of it?
- The second opportunity to inquire about the teacher's purpose is when you're having a _____ with the teacher.
- The exact phrasing of your questions doesn't matter all that much. What matters is that you _____, that you seek first to understand the teacher's instructional purpose, their goals for the lesson. Only then can you start to understand what you saw, and give effective _____.

START WITH THE TEACHER'S GOALS

ACTION ITEM:

The next time you're observing in a classroom, try to figure out what the teacher's goals for the lesson are. Consider the aspects that are clear to students, as well as any deeper purposes the teacher might have in mind. Then, talk with the teacher directly, and inquire about their goals.

Compare what you thought the teacher's goals were based on what you observed, with what the teacher said his or her goals were, as well as anything else you picked up from the conversation.

Let us know using the survey form at <http://members.principalcenter.com/lessons/start-with-the-teachers-goals/>

TEACHER GOALS EXAMPLE: KAREN

ACTION ITEM:

What were you thinking as you saw each of the three clips? What were your thoughts about Karen's instructional purpose, or goals for the lesson? How did your thoughts about Karen's instructional purpose/goals change as you saw more of the lesson?

Let us know using the survey form at <http://members.principalcenter.com/lessons/teacher-goals-example-karen/>

BEYOND BLAME: SEEING THE UNIVERSAL PATTERNS OF CAUSE AND EFFECT

- If we don't understand the universal _____ of cause and effect, we'll often default to blame. Blame is the most straightforward explanation for what's taking place in the classroom, but it's usually an _____.
- If we attribute or blame what we see in the classroom on some inherent characteristic of the teacher, we're limiting the opportunities for _____, not just for struggling teachers, but for _____ teachers, too.
- To change their practice, teachers have to see a new _____. But if there's an opportunity for improvement that they haven't taken advantage of yet – if they could be doing better, but aren't – that creates a sense of _____ and guilt.
- If teachers fear that they're going to suffer professional consequences by taking _____, they won't. They'll blame anyone but themselves, and this takes away their sense of _____, their sense that they can improve.
- If we can _____ practice, and focus our feedback on those patterns rather than on blaming the teacher, it's much, much easier for teachers to take risks and try new things, without feeling threatened.
- Being aware of these universal patterns, or _____, can help us avoid committing what psychologists call _____.

BEYOND BLAME: SEEING THE UNIVERSAL PATTERNS OF CAUSE AND EFFECT

the fundamental attribution error.

- Fundamental attribution error, in layman's terms, is our tendency to attribute what we see other people doing to _____, to immutable traits, rather than specific _____ and _____.
- So if _____ is too simple an explanation for what we're seeing in the classroom, what are some better explanations? Here are four key Learning Dynamics™:
 1. _____ feedback loops
 2. _____ feedback loops
 3. Delayed _____
 4. _____
- Any time you hear excuses or blaming, that's a sure sign that there's a better _____ hiding just beneath the surface. Don't let yourself or your teachers off the hook with simple explanations based on blame or excuses. Look deeper. Look for the universal _____.

CORE LEARNING DYNAMICS

— AMPLIFYING FEEDBACK LOOPS

- An amplifying feedback loop is a _____-and-_____ relationship between two things that amplify, or accelerate, each other.
- When we have an amplifying feedback loop with negative consequences, we call that a _____ cycle. On the other hand, if we have an amplifying feedback loop that's positive, we call it a _____ cycle.
- Amplifying feedback loops happen at all levels, and in every aspect of practice, including teacher _____ and _____.
- Because they can swing things so far in one direction, and so far in the opposite directions, _____ and _____ negative amplifying feedback loops is one of the highest-leverage ways to bring about improvement.
- When we identify amplifying feedback loops, we're getting at the deep, underlying _____ that determine so much of what students are experiencing in the classroom.
- Professional practice isn't just about the people. It's not about blame. It's about _____ of cause-and-effect, and the biggest differences, positive or negative, come from those amplifying feedback loops.

ACTION ITEM:

When have you see a positive amplifying feedback loop, or a virtuous cycle in your work as an educator? When have you seen a negative amplifying feedback loop, or vicious cycle, in your work as an educator?

Let us know using the survey form at <http://members.principalcenter.com/lessons/core-learning-dynamics-amplifying-feedback-loops/>

CORE LEARNING DYNAMICS

— DAMPENING FEEDBACK LOOPS

- A dampening feedback loop is a pattern of cause and effect that tends to _____ things. So unlike an amplifying feedback loop, which can very quickly cause dramatic changes, a dampening feedback loop is a subtle, calming force that works against _____.
- A lot of the subtle classroom management moves that are really effective and create a calm, productive environment work because they're dampening feedback loops. They give the teacher a way to respond to problems without _____ them.
- Dampening feedback loops can either keep things under _____, or keep us _____ in the same old status quo. It's the same _____ – and again, it's universal.
- We can help teachers install dampening feedback loops when they need more effective ways to keep things under control, and we can help teachers break out of dampening feedback loops that are keeping them stuck in the _____.

ACTION ITEM:

What are two examples of dampening feedback loops that you've encountered in your career as an educator? When have you seen dampening feedback loops that kept things stable, and in a healthy range, and when have you seen a dampening feedback loop keep someone stuck in the status quo?

Let us know using the survey form at <http://members.principalcenter.com/lessons/dampening-feedback-loops/>

CORE LEARNING DYNAMICS

— DELAYED REACTIONS

- The third common Learning Dynamic™ is a _____ reaction.
- Because schools are such busy places, delayed reactions can often cause us to miss other patterns of cause-and-effect, especially since we're often in classrooms for just a brief period of time.
- As you're seeking the whole iceberg of a teacher's practice you must keep in mind, a lot of what you see is a consequence of what has happened in the past.
- Blaming the teacher triggers defensiveness, and instead of having a calm, productive discussion about practice, we start to lock horns with the teacher. This is an example of a negative amplifying feedback loop.
- We never see the whole iceberg of teacher practice when we're observing a lesson, and it's only through conversation that we can start to get a sense of what's beneath the surface.

ACTION ITEM:

When have you made the assumption that you saw cause and effect in a lesson, only to realize later that the real cause happened before you showed up? When has the delayed reaction dynamic affected your feedback to a teacher?

Let us know using the survey form at <http://members.principalcenter.com/lessons/core-learning-dynamics-delayed-reactions/>

CORE LEARNING DYNAMICS

— SIDE EFFECTS AND INTERACTIONS

- Damaging side effects of _____ systems are always something we have to keep an eye out for, so that in solving one problem, we don't unwittingly create an even bigger problem.
- Relationship _____ are one of the most common types of side effects, and often, that's a good thing. The more _____ experiences we have with each other, the more _____ we'll build, not because we set out to build trust, but because it's a natural _____ of working together.
- If you want to change teacher _____, you've got to be able to see that _____ clearly, and talk about it in ways that don't trigger teachers' natural _____ and _____.

USING LEARNING DYNAMICS™ WITH DIRECTIVE, REFLECTIVE, AND REFLEXIVE FEEDBACK

- When you're using _____ feedback, Learning Dynamics™ can help you share your rationale with teachers, in a much more _____ and _____ way.
- The sweet spot for most instructional leaders is helping teachers understand the _____ their instruction is having on students.
- Our greatest opportunity is in helping teachers move from _____-aware to _____-aware.
- Ultimately, wearing the _____ hat is a matter of taking on greater responsibility for the whole system in which teachers do their work.
- So the key to taking advantage of Learning Dynamics™ at the _____ level is to look for ways that those dynamics are playing out beyond the walls of an individual _____.
- You must be open to the possibility that the best way to bring about improvement in that classroom is to change something _____ that classroom, at the _____ level.

ACTION ITEM:

Download the 10 Questions for Better Feedback On Teaching at <https://www.principalcenter.com/wp-content/uploads/10-questions-better-feedback.pdf>

MODULE 4 ACTION CHALLENGE

ACTION ITEM:

Visit a classroom for a brief, informal visit, no more than 10 or 15 minutes, and look for the four Learning Dynamics™ we've talked about in this module. Don't just look at what the teacher is doing, and what the students are doing. Try to find the patterns, the links between what's happening beneath the surface and what you can actually see above the surface.

Look for amplifying feedback loops, dampening feedback loops, delayed reactions, and unintended consequences. But then, most importantly, talk with the teacher. You can't truly see the patterns until you have a conversation, because so much of the work of teaching happens beneath the surface. And figure out, in that conversation, whether you're better off playing the boss role, the coach role, or the leader role, and adjust your approach accordingly.

What did you learn from talking with the teacher? What Learning Dynamics™ did you uncover? What type of feedback, directive, reflective, or reflexive, did you focus on?

Let us know using the survey form at <http://members.principalcenter.com/lessons/action-challenge/>

6-STEP PROCESS FOR USING LEARNING DYNAMICS™

- The first step is to _____ what's going on in the classroom, and to try to get a sense of what the teacher is trying to accomplish with the learning activity you're observing.
- if we pressure teachers to just show us what we want to see, we're never really going to gain _____ into teacher practice, and we need that insight if we want to change teacher _____.
- The second step is to _____ what you notice.
- The third step is to _____. Before you talk, think about whether there's going to be a _____ aspect to this conversation.
- If there's something very serious that you need to address in a directive way, take care of that, but don't try to cram in some _____ at the same time. It's very confusing to teachers when we blend _____ and _____ feedback.
- The fourth step is to _____. When you have a chance to talk with the teacher, start by sharing a bit of _____ from your visit—something you observed—and ask a question to get the teacher talking.
- In this step, you'll want to do here is ask a fairly _____ question that will get the teacher talking about the aspect of the lesson that you're interested in, but not with such a _____ question that it shuts down the conversation or makes them _____.

6-STEP PROCESS FOR USING LEARNING DYNAMICS™

- The fifth step is to _____. Let the teacher direct the conversation.
- There are two specific things that you should listen for in this step. The first is anything _____ –that bottom part of the iceberg that wasn't visible during the observation.
- The second is the _____ we've talked about in this module. What patterns of cause and effect do you see, and how is the teacher talking about cause and effect?
- The sweet spot for most feedback is helping the teacher move from _____-aware to _____-aware, so be especially on the lookout for any links you can identify between what the teacher did, and how it impacted students.
- Some of the most valuable conversations are _____ feedback conversations, in which you're not making any suggestions, but you're learning a ton about the teacher's practice and what you can do as a leader to make things better for students.
- The final step is to _____, and figure out what to do next. The simplest and most common answer may surprise you: _____.
- In a normal, professional conversation, it's OK if there's not a strong sense of _____.