

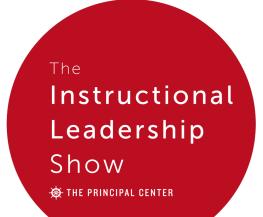
Instructional Leadership
Show

Episode #96

Testing Your Hunches
About Teacher Performance



Our Essential Question



How can we draw sound conclusions about each teacher's performance, while helping them improve between now and the end of the school year?

Now Is The Time



We've had plenty of opportunity to form an opinion of each teacher's practice by this point in the year.

Hunches Aren't Enough



Our opinions can be a good starting point, but they can't be the basis for our final teacher evaluations.

We need to develop working hypotheses for each eacher.

No Putting It Off



The longer we delay forming and interrogating detailed opinions, the more difficult it will be to finish teacher evaluations and make a difference in teacher practice this year.



"I don't think she's putting enough effort into planning."

Hunches



"I think he's losing the students, and doesn't do enough formative assessment to know when it's happening."

Hunches



"I think she's getting kids to be on their best behavior for formal observations, but really struggling with classroom management the rest of the time."

The Myth of Judgment

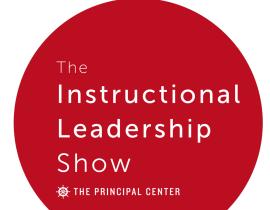


"I only rate teachers after all the evidence is in."

The Myth of Judgment

"I only rate teachers after all the evidence is in."

- No you don't—we're constantly updating our mental assessments of our staff
- The earlier you articulate your hunches, the better you can validate and act on them



Develop Working Hypotheses



We don't need to withhold judgment until the very end of the year.

We need to *update* our judgments based on new evidence.

Informal Evidence

Never say:

"This is non-evaluative."

Everything you are aware of—regardless of the source—shapes your judgment...

...but not all information is equally trustworthy.



Using Working Hypotheses



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Using Working Hypotheses

- 1. Articulate a judgment
- 2. Interrogate that judgment



Overall Hunches

Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory

"Buckets" of similar teachers

Areas of needed whole-staff PD

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The "Working Hypothesis" Approach

- In a given domain, teachers fall into certain "buckets" or categories that you mentally lump together:
 - —Classroom Management: Warm, Loose, Strict, Student-Directed
 - —Instructional Skill: Growing, Skilled, PD Leader
 - —Reflective Practice: Self-directed, Collaborative, Introspective
- Decide which domains you'll address
- Decide on initial "buckets" or "types" within each domain
- Re-use your writing when making the same claim about multiple teachers



Articulate & Interrogate



Informal Evidence \rightarrow Hypothesis \rightarrow Formal Evidence \rightarrow CEIJ

Claim
Evidence
Interpretation
Judgment

CEIJ for Improvement Plans

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Construct a CEIJ Argument

- **Claim**—A summary statement describing the teacher's typical practice in a given area. Key phrase: "Is characterized by..."
- **Evidence**—Multiple, specific, documented incidents and instances that support the claim. Key phrase: "For example, on _/_/_..."
- Interpretation—A clear articulation of the consequences of the teacher's typical practice, e.g. on student learning, school culture, or other relevant outcomes. Key phrase: "As a result..."
- **Judgment**—The final rating of teacher's overall practice in specific area, using language and scale of evaluation framework. Key phrase: "Therefore, ____'s practice in domain ____ is best described as Level ."



The Claim



- Is this just one isolated incident? Chance? One bad day? One exceptionally well-planned lesson?
- Or is this *typical* of the teacher's practice?

The Evidence



- Do I have multiple pieces of evidence to back my claim?
- If some evidence is informal (or hearsay), do I have firsthand evidence that supports or refutes it?

The Interpretation



- Am I being arbitrary, or does this really matter?
- Is this a pet peeve of mine? Can the teacher be successful without doing what I think is best?
- What are the consequences for student learning? Do they flow directly from the teacher's practice?

The Judgment

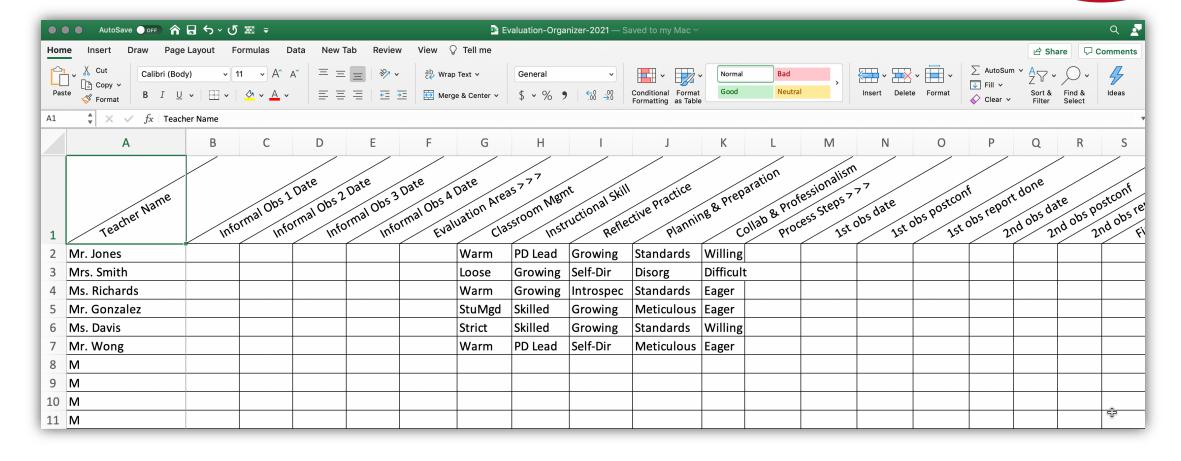


- Specific rating on specific criteria
- •If I'm not sure, now I know where I need more evidence
- •If I don't gather more evidence, the default will be "satisfactory"

Evaluation Organizer Spreadsheet

PrincipalCenter.com/eval-org

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Takeaways

- Don't defer judgment until the end of the year
- Be honest with yourself about your current assessments of teacher practice—develop working hypotheses
- Articulate and interrogate your working hypotheses with CEIJ:
 - Claim
 - Evidence
 - Interpretation
 - Judgment
- Keep updating your working hypotheses as you gather new evidence
- Start using the Evaluation Organizer Spreadsheet

