



Techniques for Responding to Ideas Generated in Study Circles Facilitators' Follow-Up Meeting October 2005

In October 2005, CALPRO conducted a follow-up meeting for study circle facilitators and their administrators. The goal of the meeting was to identify ways that programs can respond to ideas generated in study circles. During the meeting, small groups worked to draft action plans that addressed the following questions, each of which is essential in implementing change:

- What change would you propose to address learner persistence issues?
- What is the problem that the change is addressing?
- What sources of information provide background on the problem and/or the proposed change?
- Can you identify relevant data?
- What are potential resources to draw on when instituting the change?
- What are potential barriers a program may face when trying to make this change?
- What are some ways to address the barriers?

The groups drafted action steps for the implementation of the projects. For each action step, they identified

- The individuals responsible,
- The length of time required to complete the step,
- The required resources, and
- How progress towards the completion of the step would be evaluated.

Sample project descriptions and draft actions plans are presented here. They offer ideas and insights into ways in which site-based professional development, such as study circles, can support systemic change.

Project One

Suggested Change	Institute teacher reflective practice
Problem Addressed	Teachers need skills in the area of self-observation. There is a need for staff development to be a cyclical process in which teachers reflect on what they've learned and done. Programs must address the needs of teachers who are resistant to systemic change.
Sources of Information	NCSALL Feedback from managers, students, peers, mentors Literature review of research in area

Relevant Data	Persistence rate Learning that occurs Success rates Videotapes of self-teaching
Potential Resources	Videotapes of self-teaching Co-workers Staff development workshops CALPRO Checklists for observation (of other teachers) Checklists for self-reflection Department meetings
Potential Barriers	Fear (including fear of the unknown) Resistance Inaccurate self-perception Absence of faith Fear of results being used against oneself Resistance to "persistence" concept The amount of work to institute this Resistance to accepting personal responsibility
Ways to Address Barriers	Staff development Support at all levels Clear objectives Top-down and bottom-up processes Non-threatening, peer presenters at instructional levels

Project Two

Suggested Change	Improve learner goal setting by involving students in an ongoing process
Problem Addressed	Lack of goal setting and/or poor follow-up to goal-setting activities Students 'floundering'
Sources of Information	OTAN CALPRO Any number of print and online books/materials
Relevant Data	Learner progress data Learner persistence data
Potential Resources	Assessment (placement, etc.) to determine if goal is attainable Other successful teachers/programs
Potential Barriers	Teachers not experienced in teaching the process of goal setting Students not experienced in the process of goal setting A feeling of lack of progress Failing to revisit the stated goals
Ways to Address Barriers	Integrate 'goal setting' into lesson plans Class time spent analyzing a progress chart Revisit goals

Project Three

Suggested Change	Examine the Intersection of Persistence and Quality Teaching
Problem Addressed	Need to identify the teaching strategies that support and detract from learner persistence
Sources of Information	NCSALL OTAN CALPRO Student surveys TOPSpro Attendance Teachers' feedback Classroom observation Student learning
Relevant Data	Attendance Learning gains Results from student/teacher surveys Classroom observations
Potential Resources	Mentor teachers Other staff Students' development Professional Development Centers NCSALL research ESL Institute Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) Peer (buddying) pairings Coaching Credential clearing coursework Student advisory committee Mentoring grants
Potential Barriers	Funding Time Teacher resistance Turnover of part-time teachers Scheduling Identifying mentoring teachers Lack of administrative support
Ways to Address Barriers	Grants Flexible scheduling Early involvement of teachers (prior to implementation) Activities to build collaborative spirit in organization (like opportunities to share best practices) Pay or other incentives (e.g., food) for participation