Data-Driven Dialogue: A Facilitator's Guide to Collaborative Inquiry

Seminar Handout

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Lynn Sawyer is a national educational consultant, presenting workshops and seminars on **Learning-Focused Supervision, Facilitating Collaborative Groups, Mentoring Matters, Cognitive Coaching, Data-Driven Dialogue, Habits of Mind, and Coaching the *Framework for Teaching*.**

In her many years an educator, Lynn Sawyer has been an alternative high school teacher, curriculum specialist, and professional developer. As the Director of Professional Development for the Washoe County School District (90 K-12 schools, 4000+ teachers), Reno, Nevada, and administrator of a regional professional development agency, she trained a staff of professional development providers and conducted workshops and seminars. She led a district wide implementation of a teacher evaluation system based on *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching,* (Danielson, 1996, ASCD), which includes a coaching model to support teacher self-directedness.

She is a Training Associate for the Center for Cognitive Coaching, ASCD Faculty, MiraVia, Center for Adaptive Schools, and the recently established Danielson Group.

Her publications include:

"Revamping a Teacher Evaluation System," *Educational Leadership,* Feb 2001

"Integrating Cognitive Coaching with a Framework for Teaching," a chapter in <u>Cognitive Coaching: Weaving Threads of Learning and Change into the Culture of an Organization</u>, 2003 (Christopher-Gordon).

It is irresponsible for a school to mobilize, initiate, and act without any conscious way of determining whether such expenditure of time and energy is having a desirable effect.

---- Carl Glickman

Seeking to understand and acting on the best we know creates the essence of professional life.

---- Joyce & Calhoun

An organization's results are determined through webs of human commitments born in webs of human conversations.

---- Fernando Flores

One of the reasons for failure is that the knowledge-creating system, the method by which humans collectively learn and by which institutions improve themselves, is deeply fragmented.

---- Senge & Kim

To understand is to grasp meaning .... To grasp the meaning of a thing, event, or situation is to see it in its relations to other things: to note how it operates, what consequences follow from it, what causes it, what uses it can be put to.... Things gain meaning when used as a means to bring about consequences .... the relation of means to consequences is the center at the heart of all understanding.

---- John Dewey

The formulation of a problem is often more essential than its solution, which may be merely a matter of mathematical or experimental skill. To raise new questions, new possibilities, to regard old problems from a new angle, requires creative imagination and marks real advances.

---- Albert Einstein

It is not what people do not know that's the problem. It is what they believe to be universal truths and refuse to reconsider that causes the difficulties.

---- Martin Bruce

What nurtures the unfolding community most is serious, active experimentation where people wrestle with crucial strategic and operational issues

---- Kofman & Senge

Dialogue's purpose is to create a setting where conscious collective mindfulness can be maintained.

---- William Isaacs

What is missing from the knowledge base for teaching, therefore, are the voices of the teachers themselves, the questions teachers ask, the ways teachers use writing and intentional talk in their work lives, and the interpretive frames teachers use to understand and improve their own classroom practices.

---- Cochran-Smith & Lytle

Outcomes

- **To develop practical structures for using data to focus a group's attention and energy**

- **To understand and apply a three-phase model for guiding data-driven dialogue**

- **To extend a repertoire of tools for mediating productive group learning, planning and problem solving**

Crafting the Container

- **Starting the conversation**

- **Structuring the conversation**

- **Sustaining thinking in the conversation**

> *"It is a fatal fault to reason whilst observing, though so necessary beforehand and so useful afterwards."*
> *---- Charles Darwin*

> *"Not everything that counts can be counted. And not everything that can be counted, counts."*
> *---- Albert Einstein*

Focusing Questions for School Improvement

1. What do we talk about around here?

2. How do we talk?
    • structures • protocols • norms • consciousness

3. What don't we talk about around here?

4. Why don't we talk about what we don't talk about….?

    Four Tensions

    Task ------------------------------Process

    Comfort --------------------------Discomfort

    Autonomy ------------------------Collaboration

    Decision--------------------------Dialogue

Sources of Data

DATA	QUANTITATIVE	QUALITATIVE
Student Performance Data		
Program Data		
Community Data		

Choosing Which Data to Collect

Three Ways to Frame a Problem

Observation:

40% of our students do not turn in their math homework
.

Question:

What is the relationship between current math homework assignments and our students' performance?

Hypothesis:

Student math performance would improve if homework assignments offered more authentic tasks and real world applications.

Identify something in your own work setting that you are interested in knowing more about.

1. Develop an observation, question, and an hypothesis.

2. Decide which of the three ways of framing the issue might be the most productive approach for engaging some group you have in mind.

3. Determine at least three data sources you might tap to explore your issue.

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- **On your own, write down five ideas:**

- **Our three ideas are:**

- **Our group's idea is:**

Group Development Rubric

ATTENTION TO TASK		UNAWARE	CONSCIOUS INCOMPETENCE	CONSCIOUSLY COMPETENT	FLEXIBLY AND FLUENTLY
Learning-Focused	• The group establishes task priorities that are congruent with organizational values				
	• The group uses data to focus its attention and energy				
	• The group relates specific tasks to larger systems issues and frameworks				
Time and Energy Efficient	• The group establishes and maintains clear task and product success criteria				
	• The group establishes and maintains clear task agendas				
	• The group establishes and maintains clear time frames for its work				
Data-Driven	• The group collects and selects relevant data for its work				
	• The group develops and utilizes effective data displays				
	• The group uses data effectively to make decisions				

ATTENTION TO PROCESS		UNAWARE	CONSCIOUS INCOMPETENCE	CONSCIOUSLY COMPETENT	FLEXIBLY AND FLUENTLY
Shared Tools and Structures	• The group develops and applies shared tools and structures				
	• The group follows agreed upon protocols				
	• The group refocuses if members deviate from task agreements or process guidelines				
Learning-Focused Conversations	• Group members invite and sustain the thinking of others (pausing, paraphrasing, inquiring)				
	• Group members give their full attention to others (eye contact, listening nonjudgmentally, listening without interrupting)				
	• Group members balance advocacy for their own ideas with inquiry into the ideas of others				
Data-Driven Dialogue	• The group uses data to focus and calibrate conversations				
	• Group members inquire into and clarify assumptions; their own and others				
	• Group members seek shared understanding				

ATTENTION TO RELATIONSHIP		UNAWARE	CONSCIOUS INCOMPETENCE	CONSCIOUSLY COMPETENT	FLEXIBLY AND FLUENTLY
Norms and Values	• The group develops norms that ensure psychological safety for all group members				
	• Group members behave congruently with agreed upon norms				
	• The group filters choices and decisions through agreed upon values				
Collaborative Cultures	• Group members balance participation and encourage and elicit contributions from others				
	• Group members seek and honor diverse perspectives				
	• Group members anticipate and accept that productive conflict contributes to group success				
Professional Community	• Group members actively question and explore individual and collective teaching practices and calibrate them against clear and agreed upon standards				
	• Group members engage purposely with relevant tasks that are focused on student learning				
	• Group members consistently use data to self assess and reflect				

The Collaborative Learning Cycle

Connections & Summaries

Activating and Engaging

Exploring and Discovering

Organizing and Integrating

Assumptions

Data Teams

RECORDER: _____

Be sure to check with each team member
before recording observation

MATERIALS MANAGER: _____

Organize data, display set up charts for
viewing, recording

PROCESS CHECKER: _____

Use the Collaborative Cycle (p.44) to
guide the process: Monitor for balanced
participation

ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEER: _____

Organize the physical arrangement for team
work – chairs in a horseshoe around the
central displays

Theories of Causation

Framing: Observation, Question or Hypothesis   ("story line")

Use this space to record two possible theories of causation regarding your problem frame:

1.

2.

Circle one theory. In the space below, record at least three sources of data that you could use to confirm this theory.
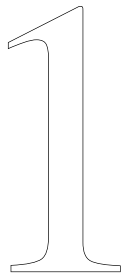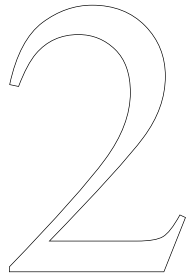
HERE'S WHAT!	SO WHAT?	NOW WHAT?

3

2

1

+1

Reflections

-

-

-

Walk-About Survey

_____

NAME	**NAME**	**NAME**
NAME	**NAME**	**NAME**
NAME	**NAME**	**NAME**

A to Z Listing

A _____

B _____

C _____

D _____

E _____

F _____

G _____

H _____

I _____

J _____

K _____

L _____

M _____

N _____

O _____

P _____

Q _____

R _____

S _____

T _____

U _____

V _____

W _____

X _____

Y _____

Z _____

Based on your learning in this seminar, what might you:

- Stop doing

- Continue doing

- Start doing