

Ladder of Feedback Protocol

Source: adapted by Ron Ritchhart from the "Ladder of Feedback" developed by Daniel Wilson, Harvard Project Zero

Purpose

To involve colleague teachers in providing feedback that establishes a culture of trust and constructive support by sequencing feedback in an order that is constructive.

Time allotted

About 90 minutes or more depending on the size of the specific plan, experience or piece of student work to be considered.

Group format

The protocol needs one facilitator, with understanding of and experience with the protocol, one teacher seeking feedback on a specific plan, experience or piece of student work, and three or more colleagues prepared to offer constructive feedback. Note that the ladder of feedback protocol aims to establish a culture of trust and constructive support, by making their work more public, teachers are voluntarily exposing themselves to constructive critique.

Facilitation tips

- This protocol works best if one person, preferably someone who is familiar with the protocol, acts as the facilitator. This person will not be part of a group that discusses the question(s).
- The facilitator should begin the session by restating the importance of the trust and respect that this protocol requires. Discussions and feedback that take place in the session are professional conversations between the participants and the teacher seeking feedback.
- The facilitator should also explain that the protocol will be implemented with fidelity to the process and the constructive spirit of the process. The facilitator may ask participants to reword or withdraw comments that are evaluative or judgmental.
- The protocol follows the following steps:
 - Introduction (protocol goals, guidelines and schedule): 5 – 10 minutes
 - Teacher presentation (context for work, focusing question, group is silent): 10 – 15 minutes
 - Clarifying questions (questions about missing context or the focusing question): 5 minutes
 - Examination of work (specific plan, experience, piece of student work, teacher is silent): 5 – 15 minutes
 - Pause for reflection (participants consider cool and warm feedback; all are silent): 3 minutes
 - Constructive feedback beginning with Value - What did you see in the class that you find to be particularly impressive, innovative, strong, or noteworthy? (teacher is silent): 10 minutes
 - Raise Questions & Concerns. What questions, issues, tensions, or concerns were raised for you within the lesson? (share as honest thoughts and questions, not as criticisms, teacher is silent): 10 minutes

- Make suggestions to help your colleague make improvements by sharing your ideas on how he/she might refine or advance the lesson (teacher is silent): 10 minutes
- Reflection (teacher speaks to selected questions; participants silent): 10 – 15 minutes
- Debrief (open discussion of the experiences of the group): 10 minutes