The Professional Learning Communities at Work™ Continuum: Responding to Conflict

DIRECTIONS: Individually, silently, and *honestly* assess the current reality of your school's implementation of each indicator listed in the left column. Consider what evidence or anecdotes support your assessment. This form may also be used to assess district or team implementation.

We have established processes for addressing conflict and use conflict as a tool for learning together in order to improve our school.

Indicator	Pre-Initiating	Initiating	Implementing	Developing	Sustaining
Members of the staff recognize that conflict is an essential and inevitable by-product of a successful substantive change effort. They have thoughtfully and purposefully created processes to help use conflict as a tool for learning together and improving the school.	People react to conflict with classic fight-or-flight responses. Most staff members withdraw from interactions in order to avoid contact with those they find disagreeable. Others are perpetually at war in acrimonious, unproductive arguments that never seem to get resolved. Groups tend to regard each other as adversaries.	Addressing conflict is viewed as an administrative responsibility. School leaders take steps to resolve conflict as quickly as possible. The primary objective in addressing disputes is to restore the peace and return to the status quo.	Teams have established norms and collective commitments in an effort both to minimize conflict and to clarify how they will address conflict at the team level. Nonetheless, many staff members are reluctant to challenge the thinking or behavior of a colleague. If the situation becomes too disturbing, they will expect the administration to intervene.	Staff members have created processes to help identify and address the underlying issues causing conflict. They are willing to practice those processes in an effort to become more skillful in engaging in crucial conversations that seek productive resolution to conflict.	Staff members view conflict as a source of creative energy and an opportunity for building shared knowledge. They have created specific strategies for exploring one another's thinking, and they make a conscious effort to understand as well as to be understood. They seek ways to test their competing assumptions through action research and are open to examining research, data, and information that support or challenge their respective positions. They approach disagreements with high levels of trust and an assumption of good intentions on the part of all members because they know they are united by a common purpose and the collective pursuit of shared goals and priorities.

Where Do We Go From Here? Worksheet Responding to Conflict

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Indicator of a PLC at Work	What steps or activities must be initiated to create this condition in your school?	Who will be responsible for initiating or sustaining these steps or activities?	What is a realistic timeline for each step or phase of the activity?	What will you use to assess the effectiveness of your initiative?
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