



# Talent for Turnaround Leadership Academy Integrated Mentoring and Induction Launch

## Critical Friends Consultancy Protocol

**February 22, 2018**

### Two 30-Minute Consultancies of Paired State Teams

Step 1: Facilitator Overview	3 minutes
Step 2: Presenter Overview	5 minutes
Step 3: Probing or Clarifying Questions	5 minutes
Step 4: Group Discussion	12 minutes
Step 5: Presenter Response	5 minutes

### Group Member Roles

#### ***Facilitator***

- Reviews the process at the outset.
- Sets time limits and keeps time carefully.
- Participates in discussions but is on the lookout for others who want to get in conversations. Adjusts time slightly depending on participation.
- May end one part early or extend another but is aware of the need to keep time.
- Reminds discussants of roles, provides warm and cool feedback, and keeps on the topic that the presenter designated.

#### ***Presenter***

- Prepares and presents an issue for consultancy. Is clear about the specific questions that should be addressed.
- Unlike most discussions, the presenter does not participate in the group discussion.
- Sits outside the group and does not maintain eye contact during the discussion. Takes notes and gauges what is helpful and what is not. Later, is specific about the feedback that was helpful.

## **Note to Presenters**

- It is important to provide the discussants with enough information to discuss effectively and create solutions for the issue you are presenting.
- Remember that you have only 5 minutes to present your issue. Discussants do have 5 minutes to clarify, but that time is intended for them to get a better idea of the scenario.
- Be clear about what you would like the group to discuss or the outcome you seek from the discussants (alternate suggestions, reinforcement for your actions, identification of potential obstacles for you, etc.).

## ***Discussants***

- Address the issue brought by the presenter and give feedback that is both warm (positive) and cool (critical).
- The feedback should be given in a supportive tone and discussants should provide practical suggestions.

### *Warm: Positive*

- What are the strengths and assets in this situation?
- What is the good news here?

### *Cool: Critical*

- Where are the gaps and disconnects?
- What is the presenter not considering?
- What are the limits in thinking?

## **The Consultancy Process**

### ***Step 1: Facilitator Overview and Check-in (3 minutes)***

- Review the process and set time limits.

### ***Step 2: Presenter Overview (5 minutes)***

- Share the issue: Short- and long-term goals for mentor recruitment and selection.
- Frame key question for specific consideration.
- Provide context.

### **Following Your Presentation**

- Listen carefully and take notes.
- Distance yourself from the discussants so that you can capture all the information discussed.
- Avoid making judgments during the discussion.

### **Step 3: Probing or Clarifying Questions (5 minutes)**

- Group members ask more questions to learn about the issue.
- This is not the time to give advice or for the presenter to get into the discussion.

### **Step 4: Discussants' Group Discussion (12 minutes)**

- The group discusses the issue (both warm and cold).
- The presenter is silent, only taking notes.
- The group addresses possible suggestions related to the question or issue.
- The group talks to each other about the dilemma related to the questions framed by the presenter around the issue.
- The presenter is not allowed to speak during this part of the session but should take notes.
- The discussion may address the following:
  - What did we hear? What did we not hear that we needed to know more about?
  - What thoughts do we have from our own experiences that might inform this dilemma?
  - What do we think about the question and issue(s) presented?

### **Step 5: Presenter Response (5 minutes)**

- The presenter responds to group feedback.
- Clarification of feedback is more helpful than a debate.

#### **For the Presenter Response**

- This time portion is your opportunity to respond to the group discussion.
- This is not the time to continue the discussion with you involved. This is an opportunity for you to summarize your impressions of the discussion.
- Consider all the information gathered and identify which ideas might be useful and which ones you are unlikely to pursue.

---

## Sources

Appleby, J. (1998). *Becoming critical friends: Reflections of an NSRF coach*. Providence, RI: The Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University.

Bambino, D. (2002). Redesigning professional development: Critical friends. *Educational Leadership*, 59(6), 25–27.

Cushman, K. (1998). *How friends can be critical as schools make essential changes*. Oxon Hill, MD: Coalition of Essential Schools.

*Note.* Other articles and materials were used to create this document; unfortunately, many of the materials used in this compilation did not have identifying information and therefore it was impossible to cite the original source.

## Resources

Annenberg Institute for School Reform: <http://www.annenberginstitute.org/>

Critical Friends Groups at the National School Reform Faculty, which is a professional development initiative of the Harmony School Education Center in Bloomington, Indiana: [https://www.nsrfharmony.org/system/files/protocols/cfg\\_purpose\\_work\\_0.pdf](https://www.nsrfharmony.org/system/files/protocols/cfg_purpose_work_0.pdf)