

Common Mistakes in Building Consensus

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Include Opinion Leaders on Guiding Coalition

- Who supports an idea is more important to its adoption than the merits of the idea.
- About 15% of members of organizations are Opinion Leaders - socially connected, knowledgeable, and trusted by others in the organization. Get them on board and the others will follow.

– Patterson, et. al., 2008

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- We use a process that allows cynics and skeptics to dominate.
- We pool opinions rather than build shared knowledge.

A Cardinal Rule of PLCs

- The answer to the question, “how do we begin.....” virtually every aspect of the PLC concept is *building shared knowledge*. Put another way, a *learning community* always begins the decision-making process by *learning together*.
- Building shared knowledge is the prerequisite homework of a PLC when it is time to make a collective decision.

To Build Shared Knowledge of PLCs

- Read articles and the “Advocates” document on www.allthingsplc.info
- Read Books on PLCs
 - Most Comprehensive: *Revisiting PLCs at Work*
 - Building powerful teams: *Learning By Doing*
 - Responding to Kids who don’t learn: *Whatever It Takes*
- Field Trips to or video conference with a PLC
- Video conference with the DuFours
- Attend PLC Institutes, conferences
- Pilot a PLC within your department/grade level

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- We feel we need consensus on each, specific detail of implementation.
- We set an unrealistic standard for consensus and invest too much energy in resisters.

When Do We Have Consensus?

- All can embrace
- All can endorse
- All can live with
- All agree not to sabotage
- Majority Rules

Consensus

We have arrived at consensus when all points of view have been heard, and the will of the group is evident--even to those who most oppose it.

Necessary Commitments From the Principal

- Provide time for teachers to meet in teams, on a regular basis, during school day.
- Provide resources and training for teams as identified by team.
- Protect our school from competing improvement initiatives.
- Will not use results of common assessments in teacher evaluation.

Cons

Pros

Fist to Five

- 5 - I'll champion
- 4 - Strongly Agree
- 3 - Agree
- 2 - Reservations
- 1 - Oppose
- Fist - Veto

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