

The Multiple Perspectives Protocol

Modified from protocol created by NSRF.



Rationale

This protocol was designed to help make the process of using multiple perspectives to enrich our conversations transparent and to make our learning more powerful. This means more than bringing various voices together. It also means purposefully seeing what each voice contributes to the whole. We selected this protocol for our toolkit to provide structure to a group made up of teachers and professionals from a variety of institutions and levels.

Time

50 minutes

Procedure

1. Participants introduce themselves — name, point of view. Facilitator points out that point of view can be broadly defined — “woman” or “African American” or, more narrowly, “first-year teacher” or “second-year teacher.” Participants are encouraged (and helped) to select their identifying perspectives according to the group’s purpose. Clearly this involves judgment, but no one’s self-selected perspective should be argued with; however, all should be willing to negotiate. It must be stressed that we all have multiple ways we could describe ourselves and, for the purposes of this protocol, we will settle on one or two. e.g. “I am a principal who is committed to preparing students for post-secondary pursuits.” (7 minutes)
2. Facilitator presents a question which has emerged from the work of the group or which has emerged as an important one to the group. e.g. “What is college ready, actually?” or “What is college level reading, actually?” (3 minutes)
3. All write their first thoughts. (5 minutes)
4. Each participant, in turn, gives their preliminary thinking on the question, prefaced with their point of view:
“From the point of view of a high school English teacher, I think...” (10 minutes)
5. Then there is a second round, with each person giving their thinking *based upon what they heard from the other participants*:
“Having heard all of the other points of view, I now think...” (10 minutes)
6. A final round to reflect on the quality of the responses:
“I noticed that my/our responses...” (15 minutes)