

Virtual Lab School



Welcome!

Live Webinar will begin at 11:00 EST

Creating a Positive Staff Climate

Active, Intentional Strategies to Foster Collaboration

December 9, 2021

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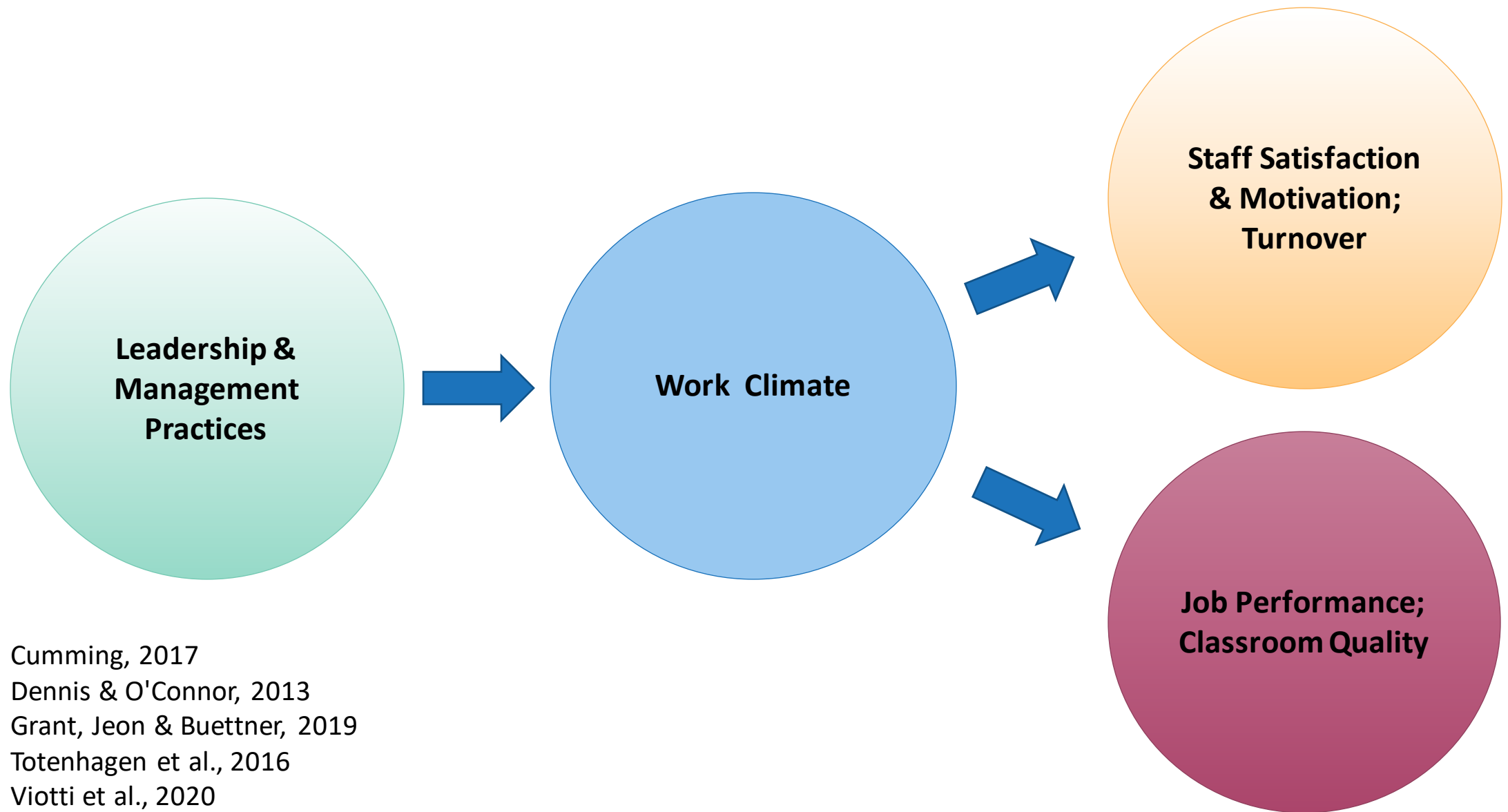
To support your learning...

- ✓ All participants have been muted
- ✓ Please type questions or comments into Chat ONLY
- ✓ We will monitor the CHAT and answer questions throughout the training
- ✓ This session is being recorded to share on the Virtual Lab School site
- ✓ We encourage you to participate in the polls throughout the training
- ✓ Share your feedback after the training!
- ✓ If we disconnect – please log back in

Mindful Meeting Opener



Ghel & Hackbert, Mindfulness Toolkit, 2019
Within Social Emotional Learning for Teachers (SELF-T), Lesson 4, Explore
<https://www.virtuallabschool.org/node/24021>



Cumming, 2017
Dennis & O'Connor, 2013
Grant, Jeon & Buettner, 2019
Totenhagen et al., 2016
Viotti et al., 2020
Wells, 2015
Zinsser & Curby, 2014

Creating & Maintaining Collaborative Teams

During hiring on onboarding

Modeling in your interactions

Intentionally communicating values

Navigating conflict and dissent

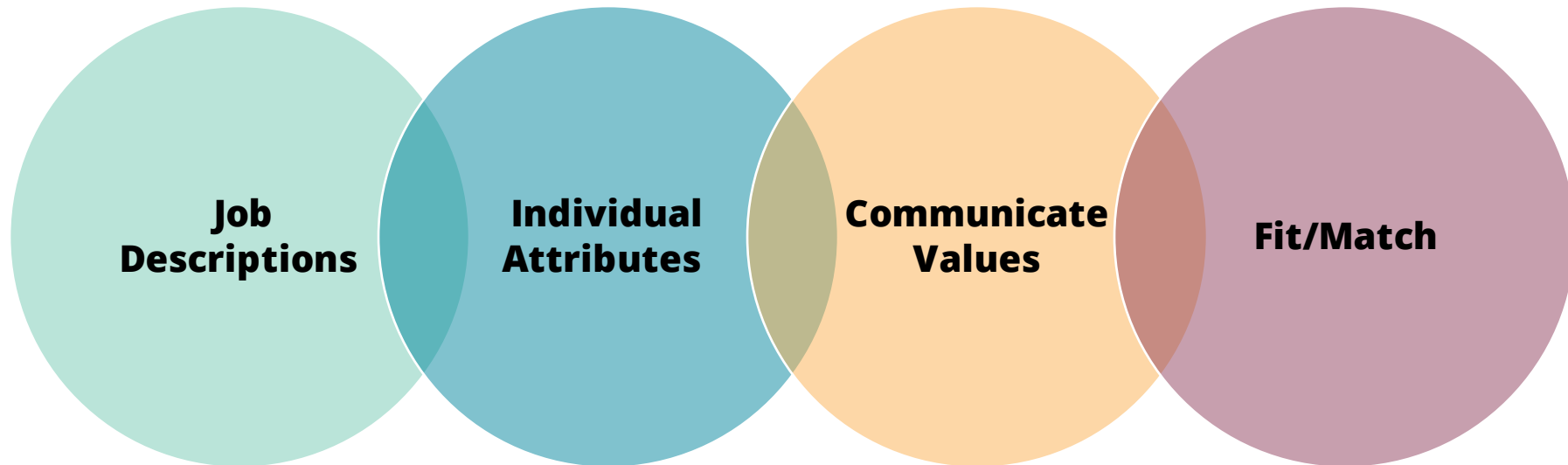
Celebrating achievements

HIRING & ONBOARDING

Strategies that Foster Collaboration

Be a Good Recruiter

Looking for the right person for the right position in the beginning will benefit you in the long run



Bozionelos et al., 2020

Chung et al., 2021

Douglass, 2019

Yao & Lee, 2021

VLS Tools to Help You Hire a Strong Team?

Concern for Others	Job requires being sensitive to others' needs and feelings and being understanding and helpful on the job.
Dependability	Job requires being reliable, responsible, and dependable, and fulfilling obligations.
Self Control	Job requires maintaining composure, keeping emotions in check, controlling anger, and avoiding aggressive behavior, even in very difficult situations.
Cooperation	Job requires being pleasant with others on the job and displaying a good-natured, cooperative attitude.
Integrity	Job requires being honest and ethical.
Adaptability/Flexibility	Job requires being open to change (positive or negative) and to considerable variety in the workplace.
Stress Tolerance	Job requires accepting criticism and dealing calmly and effectively with high stress situations.
Attention to Detail	Job requires being careful about detail and thorough in completing work tasks.
Independence	Job requires developing one's own ways of doing things, guiding oneself with little or no supervision, and depending on oneself to get things done.
Persistence	Job requires persistence in the face of obstacles.

MGT, Child Abuse Prevention, Lesson 2

Assessing Interview Questions

Effective interviewing is essential in the child care hiring process for your program. As a program manager, it is important to continually assess the interview questions you are asking to ensure that they are effective in providing insight on the candidate's knowledge, skills, and personality or disposition. In this activity, review the interview questions that you are asking candidates to see if any improvements or changes are necessary. This assessment is adapted from a collection of resources listed below.

The interview questions I ask...	Yes	No	Notes For Improvement
1) are <u>relevant-centered</u> on the required core competencies and pertain only to those qualifications required to perform a job safely and efficiently that are reasonably necessary to the operation of the program. Example (Preschool lead teacher position for children 3-5 years): <i>How has your education and experience prepared you to work with children ages 3 to 5 years of age?</i>			
2) are behaviorally based-asking candidates to describe past experiences in which they successfully demonstrated specific competencies. Example: <i>What is the biggest challenge you've faced while working in child care? How did you handle it?</i>			
3) give the candidate the opportunity to bring attention to the things they found to be important from researching the position and their vision of how they might fit in the program. Example: <i>What would your most recent supervisor say are the skills that make you</i>			

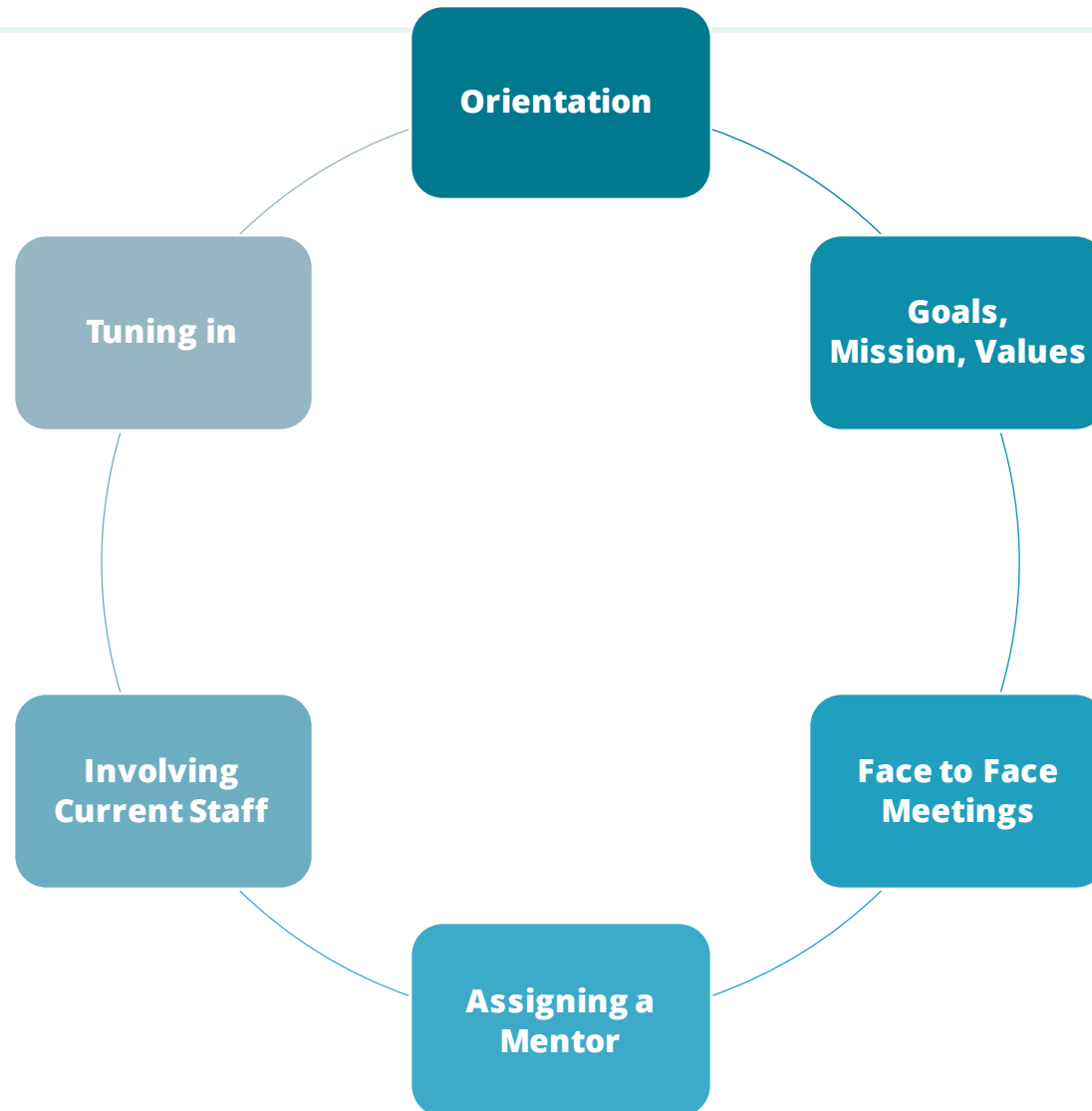
NEW VLS Resource

MGT, Program Management, Lesson 1

ASK YOURSELF

How do you promote a culture of collaboration when onboarding new staff?

Onboarding Strategies that Emphasize Collaboration



VLS Tools To Support Onboarding

Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tour of the program • Confirm receipt of all required paperwork, background checks, required training completion, etc. • One on one welcome meeting with the program manager (discuss program organizational structure, onboarding agenda and what the first 3 months will look like for the new staff member) • One-on-one meeting with the training and curriculum specialist to review program policies and answer questions • Welcome lunch with peer mentor and other staff members
Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check in meeting with peer mentor and/or training and curriculum specialist to answer any additional questions • Check in meeting with classroom staff to review responsibilities for the day • First day in the classroom
Day 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check in meeting with program manager and/or training and curriculum specialist to answer follow up questions, provide additional support • Share performance evaluation form with the new staff member, and discuss the timeline for their first observation so they know what to expect.
By the end of week 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check in meeting with program manager and/or training and curriculum specialist to answer follow up questions, provide additional support and clarification of expectations • Planned lunch/coffee break with peer mentor • New staff member joins classroom team in a coaching meeting with the training and curriculum specialist/coach
By the end of week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check in meeting with program manager and/or training and curriculum specialist to answer follow up questions, provide additional support and clarification of expectations • Training and curriculum specialist observes new staff member • New staff member meets with training and curriculum specialist/coach to outline goals and create an action plan
By the end of week 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check in meeting with program manager and/or training and curriculum specialist to answer follow up questions, provide additional support and clarification of expectations • Training and curriculum specialist observes new staff member and provides targeted support

Coming Soon!

FT, Leadership Essentials: Getting Started as a Program Manager




Reflection

Management - Program Management - Lesson 2 - Explore

Welcoming New Staff


- Reflect on a time when you were a new person entering an established group (e.g., a new work place, new school). What did you feel like on your first day? Were you warmly greeted? Who helped you learn about the “rules” at this new place? Did you feel welcomed and included in this new setting?
- Now, think about the new staff you may be helping adjust to a new work place (your child and youth program). Write down some specific activities you will do to orient staff members and welcome them to your program. What specific steps will you take during a new employee’s first weeks on the job to help them feel welcome in your learning community?

MGT, Program Management Lesson 2



MODELING

in your interactions



ASK YOURSELF:

*What are ways you currently
model collaboration in your
program?*

Evidence-Informed Practices that Foster Collaboration

- ✓ Actively listen when others share ideas
- ✓ Reinforce and credit the ideas of others
- ✓ Pause to ensure all voices are heard
- ✓ Share your own ideas, even if they are different from others
- ✓ Acknowledge when someone helped you see something in a new way
- ✓ Express gratitude when someone shares a different idea
- ✓ Share appreciation for respectful dissent
- ✓ Share information in multiple ways
- ✓ Keep decision making as transparent as possible
- ✓ Do not gossip
- ✓ Encourage others to ask questions
- ✓ Discuss key decisions with leadership partners before moving forward
- ✓ Share information as quickly as possible
- ✓ Connect decisions back to the mission/philosophy of your program

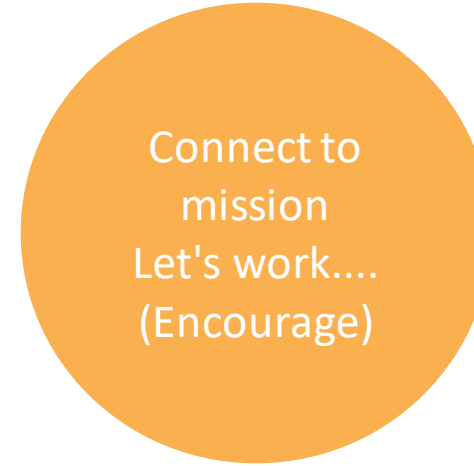
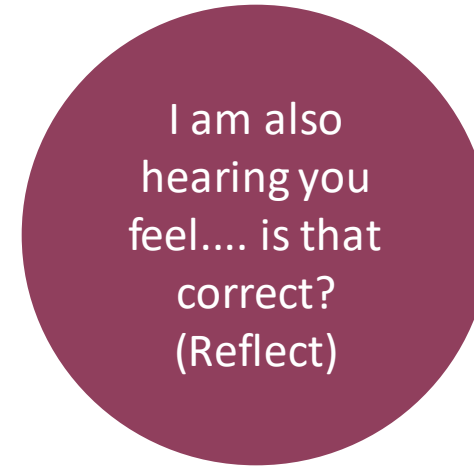


Active (Reflective) Listening

- *Furthering: "What happened next?"*
- *Restating in your own words: "Let me see if I understand correctly.."*
- *Reflecting the emotions of the speaker: "I can tell that really upset you."*
- *Asking open-ended questions: "What... How...?"*
- *Summarizing: "So I heard you say..."*

PURPOSE – to understand, not evaluate or fix





Preventing & Responding to Gossip





Gossip-free Zones

Problem Solving to Prevent Power Struggles

Holly Elissa Bruno

If we have concerns about the professional
conduct of a co-worker, we shall first let that per-
son know our concern in a way that shows respect
for their dignity and for the diversity to be found
among all members, and then attempt to resolve

IMAGINE A WORKPLACE WHERE

- The well-being of children and families is the focus of everyone's attention.
- Every employee looks forward to work.

COMMUNICATING VALUES

Intentionally teach and prioritize teamwork

ASK YOURSELF:

*What are ways you
intentionally communicate or
prioritize your commitment to
collaboration?*

Practices that Prioritize or Teach Collaboration

- ✓ Start meetings with team-building
- ✓ Use time during staff training to teach professional skills that support teamwork
- ✓ Share how you work on your own skills to be a better collaborator
- ✓ Coach or mentor staff members in this part of their professionalism

- ✓ Develop group agreements with staff
- ✓ Include collaboration as one aspect of staff performance review
- ✓ Include elements of teamwork in your staff observations and goal setting
- ✓ Prioritize time for team gatherings
- ✓ Use tools to assess teamwork in your program

How we talk to each other

Discussion	Debate	Dialogue
Present ideas	Succeed or win	Broaden our own perspective
Seek solutions and answers	Look for weakness	Look for shared meaning
Persuade others	Stress disagreement	Find places of agreement
Solve our own and others' problems	Advocate one perspective or opinion	Allow for and invite difference of opinion and experience

Adapted by Tanya Kachwaha 2002 from Huang-Nissan (1999) and Consultant/Trainers Southwest (1992)
<https://teaching.yale-nus.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/sites/25/2016/04/Exploring-the-Differences-Between-Discussion-Debate-and-Dialogue.pdf>



Group Agreements

- Help establish expectations – how will you work together?
 - What things would make this group or workshop work well for you?
 - What makes this a safe and respectful place for us to work in?
 - What would make this group a good space for learning?

VLS Tools

Team Effectiveness Rating Scale

Rate the effectiveness of your team on a scale of 1 to 7 in terms of each of the variables listed below. Below each variable are descriptions of the worst case (rated 1) and the best case (rated 7) for that variable. You can rate your team very low (1), very high (7), or anywhere in between, depending on how you perceive the situation.

1. Clarity of Goals

(1) The team has no set goals.

(7) The team has challenging yet achievable goals which members well understand.
2. Level of Cohesion

(1) Team members have no group loyalty, have no sense of belonging to a team, and tend to exhibit hostility toward each other.

(7) Team members exhibit a strong sense of loyalty to the team, are highly concerned with the performance of the team, and feel responsible for helping each other improve.
3. Level of Sensitivity

(1) Team members are insensitive to the needs and feelings of each other; expressions of feelings are ignored or criticized.

(7) Team members exhibit outstanding sensitivity to each other; feelings are openly expressed and responded to with empathy.
4. Openness of Communications

(1) Team members are guarded and cautious in communicating, listen superficially but inwardly reject what others say, and are afraid to criticize or be criticized.

(7) Team members are open and frank in communicating, reveal to the team what they would be reluctant to expose to others, and can freely express negative reactions without fear of reprisal.
5. Handling Conflict

(1) Conflicts are denied, suppressed, or avoided.

(7) Team members bring conflicts out into the open and work them through.
6. Decision Making

(1) When problems or opportunities arise, decisions are delayed endlessly, and, when made, are never implemented.

(7) Decisions are made on time and implemented fully.
7. Participation

(1) The team leader makes all plans and decisions and orders their implementation.

(7) All team members participate in shaping the decisions and plans for the team.
8. Evaluation

(1) The team does not assess any aspect of its performance.

(7) The team regularly questions the appropriateness of its goals, It evaluates its progress in achieving its goals, the performance of individual team members, and the functioning of the team. Objective feedback is freely and frequently shared.
9. Control

(1) Discipline is imposed totally from above.

(7) Discipline is totally self-imposed; team members are responsible for controlling their own behavior.
10. Use of Member Resources

(1) Team members' knowledge, skills, and experiences are not utilized by the team.

(7) Team members' resources are fully utilized by the team.

Does Your Team Work?

Virtual Lab School



Program Tool

Focused Topics - Using the VLS: Coaching to Enhance Practice - Lesson 5 - Apply

Caregiving Observation & Reflection Tool (CORT)

4.	<div></div> <div>Positive Demeanor</div> <div>Reacts to conflicts, unexpected occurrences, and stressful situations in ways that minimize negative effects on children, staff, and families.</div>	<div>Emerging</div> <div>Overwhelmed by typical expectations and changes.</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Becomes upset with staffing chages, new children in careMakes excuses or blames others</div>	<div>Developing</div> <div>Usually responds with a calm demeanor.</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Generally copes well with the normal workflow and challenges encountered when caring for children</div>	<div>Mastered</div> <div>Consistently responds with a calm demeanor.</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Consistently copes well with the normal workflow and challenges encountered when caring for childrenUses relationships with others to diffuse tense situationsModels healthy adaptation and adjustment (planned visitor had to cancel, talks through feelings and next steps to problem-solve)</div>
5.	<div></div> <div>Professional Communication</div> <div>Communicates with children, families, and coworkers in a collaborative, professional way.</div>	<div>Emerging</div> <div>Does not have a team mindset and minimizes the importance of communication.</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Does not attend to questions or concerns (seems annoyed when a parent asks a</div>	<div>Developing</div> <div>Usually demonstrates effective communication when working with others.</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Gives full attention to others when communicating</div>	<div>Mastered</div> <div>Consistently demonstrates effective communication when working with others.</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Gives full attention to others when communicating and asks questions to learn how to best be helpfulAcknowledges and considers others' perspectives and values when communicating and problem-solving</div>

PRACTICAL EXPERTISE



MGT, *Social Emotional Development*, Lesson 4



NAVIGATING CONFLICT

and Dissent





"The key to effective conflict resolution is managing the conflict—not the emotions of those engaged in the conflict."



Managing Staff Conflict

Know the common sticking points between staff

Regularly schedule time to listen to staff

Address conflict directly

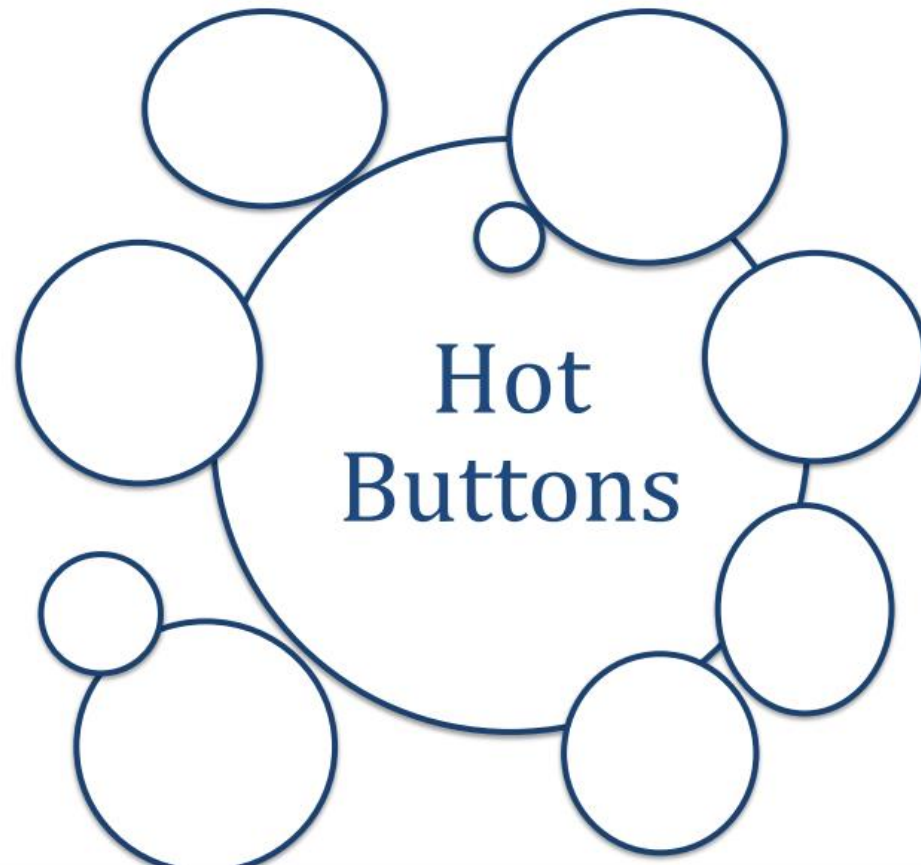
Be transparent with information

Model and help staff walk through the conflict resolution process

Recognize that not all conflict situations require the managers attention

Hot Button Activity

Write a "hot button" issue in each circle.



MGT, Communication & Language Development, Lesson 4

Preparing for Conversation Guide

It can be helpful for you to reflect on how to prepare for and engage staff members in meaningful conversations. These conversations become even more important when there is conflict, disagreement, or tension between you and/or staff members. When you are concerned or nervous about a conversation, use this tool to help you plan ahead. Use the questions to help you think deeply with staff members about the problem and the roles of everyone in mind. You can use these questions to guide a discussion with staff members, or you can complete the questions in advance of a discussion.

Supervisors, trainers, or coaches have received a similar tool in their course designed to help staff members lead conversations with families. You may find it helpful to refer to that guide, as well.

Step 1: Start with the end in mind. Envision the perfect resolution to your problem.

- ☐ What do I really want for myself?
- ☐ What do I really want for the staff member?
- ☐ What do I really want for the program or classroom?

Step 2: Think about where you are right now.

- ☐ What is the problem?
- ☐ What roles have I put myself and the other person into in my mind? Is there a villain, a victim, etc.?
- ☐ How can I change my thinking about those roles?

Step 3: Look at the situation differently

- ☐ What could be motivating the other person? Do they have good intentions? Are they worried about their child's health, safety, or development?
- ☐ What is motivating me? Am I worried about saving face, looking bad, being embarrassed, or getting reprimanded?

—— **CELEBRATING ACHIEVEMENTS** ——

Celebrations



Individual

Classroom

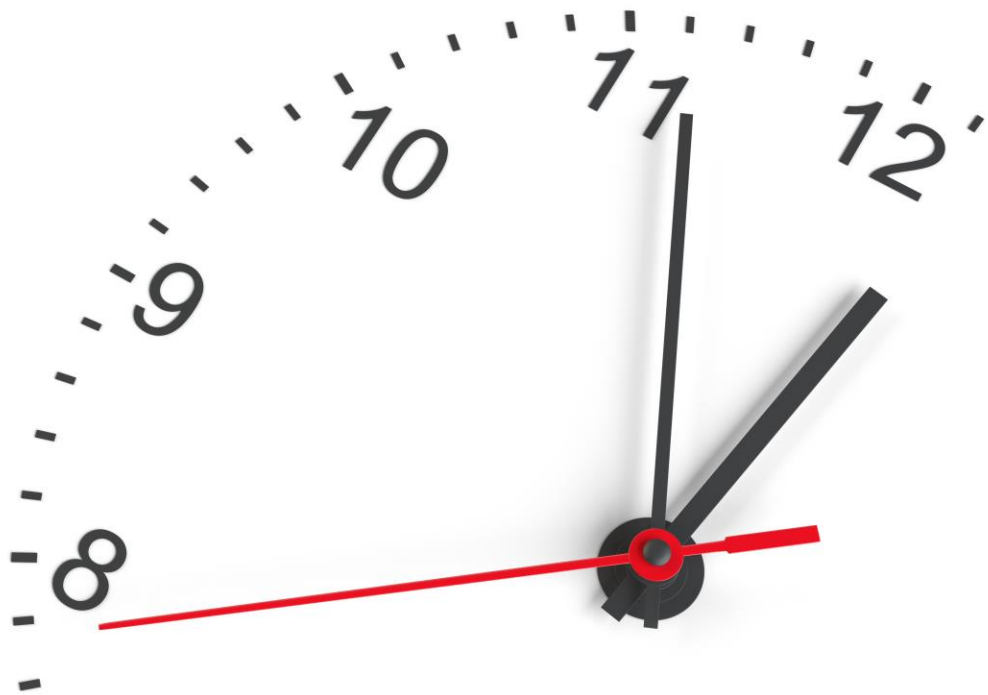
**Whole
program**

Celebrating Staff Members' Success

The environments in which we work can have a significant influence on our well-being and on our level of self-care. Individuals who work in a supportive and caring environment may generally have a better outlook on life and feel better about coming to work every day, even if the work is challenging at times. The following simple ideas can help you celebrate with staff members and reduce stress. Try one new idea each week and reflect on its effect among the staff.

For more ideas, see the Communication & Language Development course.

- Send an email to staff members to let them know you appreciated something they did. You might say, "Carly, I really appreciated how hard you worked on the school-age theater this week. The youth are so excited about the play, and you are making a huge difference."
- Personally congratulate staff members on accomplishments. For example, you might say, "Congratulations on finishing your modules, Saif. It takes a lot of commitment to finish those up, and I see you using what you learned in class."
- Gather materials for small goody bags to recognize staff members. A simple paper lunch sack with a note and a tea bag, hot cocoa mix, or snack bag can make a staff member's day.
- Work with management to design a "spotlight on staff" area on your program's website. Use that space to recognize staff achievements.
- Design a recognition board. Post two or three staff members' photos on the board each month, and post nice comments from their co-workers on the board.



*Investing the time
pays off for you & your program
quality*

Quality skills staff also use
with children

Positive Work Climate



LESS TURNOVER

“



*What new perspective
did I gain today?*

”

Thank you!

Virtual Lab School: <https://www.virtuallabschool.org/live-leadership-sessions>

We value your feedback! As this session ends, you'll be invited to complete a QUICK (less than 3 minutes) anonymous feedback survey – your comments help us grow and plan for next time!

Questions/support: support@virtuallabschool.org