PROBLEM-SOLVING ACTIVITY

Purpose

This data driven activity is designed to get the group involved in thinking through a problem before jumping to solutions. This activity will hopefully result in getting the group in analyzing data. By starting with intuition and suppositions, the object is to get the groups opinions out on the table. When opinions and ideas are expressed, there is a better chance for the group to use the information gained from this activity at a later date. (The first three steps in the problem-solving process are *key* and the focus of this activity.)

Audience

Professional Learning Community

Time

One hour

Material

Chart pad paper, masking tape, tacks, and markers.
Handouts for each participant: problem-solving cycle questions.
Data Sheets for specific content areas.

Process

Make sure each person has a copy of the handout and that you are prepared to help groups identify their problem(s) in objective terms. You will need about one hour to get through the first three steps, if getting the data analysis is your focus.

Start out with guidelines or ground rules of acceptable and unacceptable behavior, and how they will be monitored. Make sure it is a "safe" room for threat-free, honest, open discussion.

Use the data available to have the PLC clearly identify a problem to be solved, stated in objective terms.

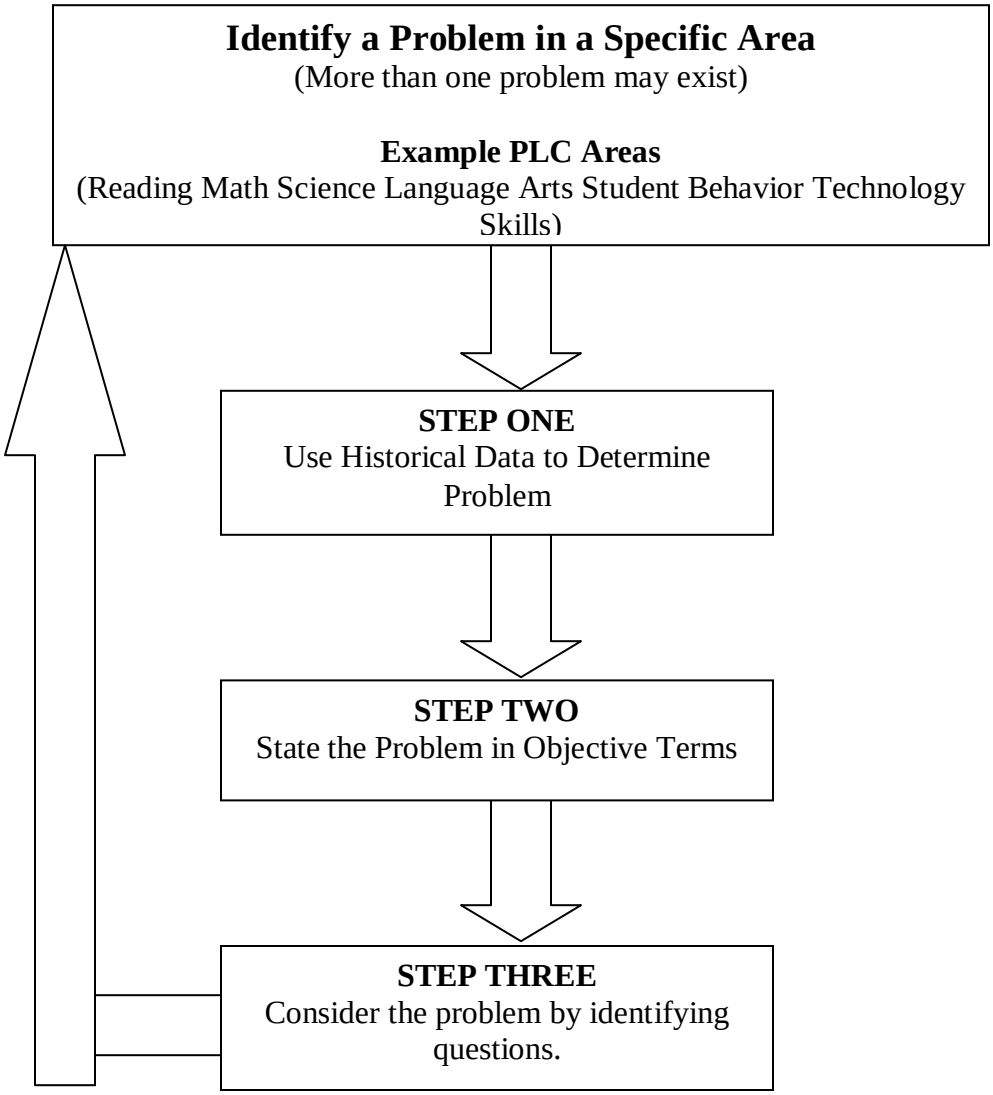
For example after looking at historical data it has been determined that , *Not all students are reading at grade level by grade seven*, as opposed to, *40 percent of our students are not capable of reading by grade eight*. The problem should let you find the data.

Brainstorm hunches and hypotheses about why the problem exists

Considering the problem, identify questions that need to be answered with data to find out more about the problem

For each question, determine the data that need to be gathered to answer the question. This list becomes the data analysis. Eye-balling this list, one can see that for the most part, the data will fall into the four categories of demographics, student learning, perceptions, and school processes.

Gather and analyze the data.


Identify a Problem in a Specific Area
(More than one problem may exist)
Example PLC Areas
(Reading Math Science Language Arts Student Behavior Technology Skills)
STEP ONE
Use Historical Data to Determine Problem
STEP TWO
State the Problem in Objective Terms
STEP THREE
Consider the problem by identifying questions.

Identify the problem:

List hunches and hypotheses about why the problem exists.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

What questions do you need to answer to know more about the problem, and what data do you need to gather?

Questions	Data Needed

Identify the problem:

List hunches and hypotheses about why the problem exists.

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2.

3.

4.

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