

Leading and Learning During the Self Study



Shape the Environment

to make it healthy and fertile

- Break down silos
- Build shared vision
- Empower and enable
- Create an atmosphere of safety and security

Guide the Process

to leverage learning

- Promote team learning
- Stretch for creative tension
- Challenge mental models
- Dig into systems thinking

Acknowledge All the Outcomes

to validate the effort

- Follow through with the tangibles
- Celebrate the achievements
- Get in touch with the emotions

Capture the Opportunities

to keep momentum going

- Use the SS in strategic planning
- Use the SS to fuel transformation
- Use the SS to build a learning infrastructure



The accreditation process can make your school smarter:
It can *Learn* through the self-study.



You can increase the intelligence of your organization, helping it to become more *Reflective, Adaptive, and Generative*.



But it's not easy and it doesn't happen on its own.
Learning requires *Leadership*:
Attention focused by *Intention*.

Leading and Learning During the Self Study

Shape The Environment <small>(to make it healthy and fertile)</small>	Break down silos	Get people who don't typically work together talking to each other. This promotes awareness, empathy, and sows the seeds of systems thinking.
	Build shared vision	Create common understanding and purpose to focus everyone in the same direction. This increases the potential for coordinated effort and coherent outcomes.
	Empower and enable	Ensure teams have the agency to make decisions and choose direction. Avoid micromanagement to "get out of the way" and allow others to lead. This builds commitment and a sense of professional responsibility.
	Create safety and security	Encourage teams to discuss "elephants in the room" and "sacred cows" without fear of criticism or reprisal. This allows teams to paint a more accurate picture of the current situation and to feel free to think out of the box and take chances instead of playing it safe or searching for what they think leadership wants them to say.
Guide The Process <small>(to leverage learning)</small>	Promote team learning	Expect that teams meet in person and facilitate the practices of dialog and discussion. Encourage teams to work collaboratively and not to split up the work then compile it. Support them with frameworks for collective intelligence.
	Stretch for creative tension	Help teams create an accurate and honest picture of the present and a compelling shared vision of the desired future. Leverage the tension between the two to drive creativity and innovation.
	Challenge mental models	Ask team members to reflect critically on their preconceptions and don't accept "we've always done it that way" as a reason to not consider change.
	Dig into systems thinking	Strive to look beyond symptomatic problems and short-term fixes to search for deeper systemic challenges. Move through awareness of systems into true systems thinking by identifying feedback loops and realizing how changes affect things over time.
Acknowledge All The Outcomes <small>(to validate the effort)</small>	Follow through with the tangibles	There is an expectation that plans and priorities will be acted upon and changes will occur. Make sure the self-study doesn't wind up "on the shelf" after the visit is over. Make sure people see that plans and priorities are being executed.
	Celebrate the achievements	Set aside time for celebration and recognition of the work done to accomplish the self study. Acknowledging the achievements of individuals and the school as a whole is critical to providing validation for the time and effort spent to create the self study. This promotes commitment and a sense of accomplishment that can extend learning beyond the process itself.
	Get in touch with the emotions	The self study can induce a number of emotions, both positive and negative. Anxiety, discomfort, affirmation, and appreciation can define the arc of an emotional journey for teams and members. Don't shy away from open and honest discussion of the influence these emotions can have on outcomes.
Capture The Opportunities <small>(to keep momentum going)</small>	Use the SS in strategic planning	The self study is ideally suited for operational strategic planning. Use the plans, priorities, and visiting team recommendations as they are intended: to support ongoing improvement. Strive beyond compliance toward excellence.
	Use the SS to fuel transformation	Leverage the reflective nature of the self study and the reinforcement of the visiting team recommendations to drive transformative change. These works provide evidence, justification, and encouragement for change leaders.
	Use the SS to build a learning infrastructure	Continuous improvement is supported by an institutionalized culture of learning. The framework provided by the accreditation process can be applied, extended, and embedded within the day to day work of the school thereby creating enduring pathways for organizational learning.