



Building on Bright Spots

“What’s working, and how can we do more of it?” Sounds simple, doesn’t it?

Yet, in the real world, this obvious question is almost never asked.

Instead, the question we ask is more problem focused:

“What’s broken, and how do we fix it?”

*—Chip & Dan Heath, *Switch* (2010)*

Norms:

- Be kind, helpful and specific
- Embrace “Yes and...”
- Share the air (i.e. step up, step back)
- Resist the urge to deviate from the protocol

Continue to the next page for the protocol...

SUCCESS ANALYSIS PROTOCOL

Purpose - To:

- engage colleagues in collaborative analysis of cases from practice in order to understand the circumstances and actions that make them successful ones
- apply this understanding to future practice

Details - In small groups of 3 - 4, participants will need chart paper, markers, and note pads. Each group will need a timekeeper who keeps the rounds moving.

Steps:

1. Preparing a case (5 min) - Each participant reflects and writes a short case describing one area where they are finding success in their work. Possible questions to explore include:

- Is there a moment or specific project sample that stands out that you feel proud of? Why?*
- How did you work as an individual and a group member when you felt most successful?*
- Why do you feel that this particular project is successful?*

The case should include specific details concerning the participants involvement - what did **YOU** do to make it successful? What did you do to engage **OTHERS** as collaborators and leaders? It can also account for other factors (conditions, attitudes, actions, collaborations, etc.) that made it a success.

2. Sharing (3 min) - In small groups, the first person shares his or her case of successful practice. Others take notes.

3. Analysis and Discussion (7 min) - The group reflects on the success, asking clarifying questions if needed. Participants offer insights into what specifically contributed to success – what the presenter specifically did that contributed to the success and what other factors may have been involved. The presenter is encouraged to participate and is prodded through questioning.

4. Repeating the Pattern. Repeat steps 2 and 3 for each member of the group.

5. Compilation (10 min) - The group compiles on chart paper a list of specific successful behaviors and underlying principles that seem characteristic of the cases presented. What conditions, attitudes, actions, etc. made this success possible?

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**6. Gallery Walk & Discussion (10 minutes)** - The facilitator initiates a gallery walk and discussion framed around the questions: What do these lists have in common? What underlying principles stand out for you? Were there any surprises? For example, groups will post their posters around the room and “gallery walk” to read all the lists and talk about the principles.

**7. Debriefing (5 min)** - The facilitator leads a debrief on the experience, focusing the following: How might we apply what we learned through this protocol to other aspects of our work? How might teachers or students use this protocol or a variation of it to reflect on their work?

*Adapted from The Power of Protocols by Joe McDonald et. al.*