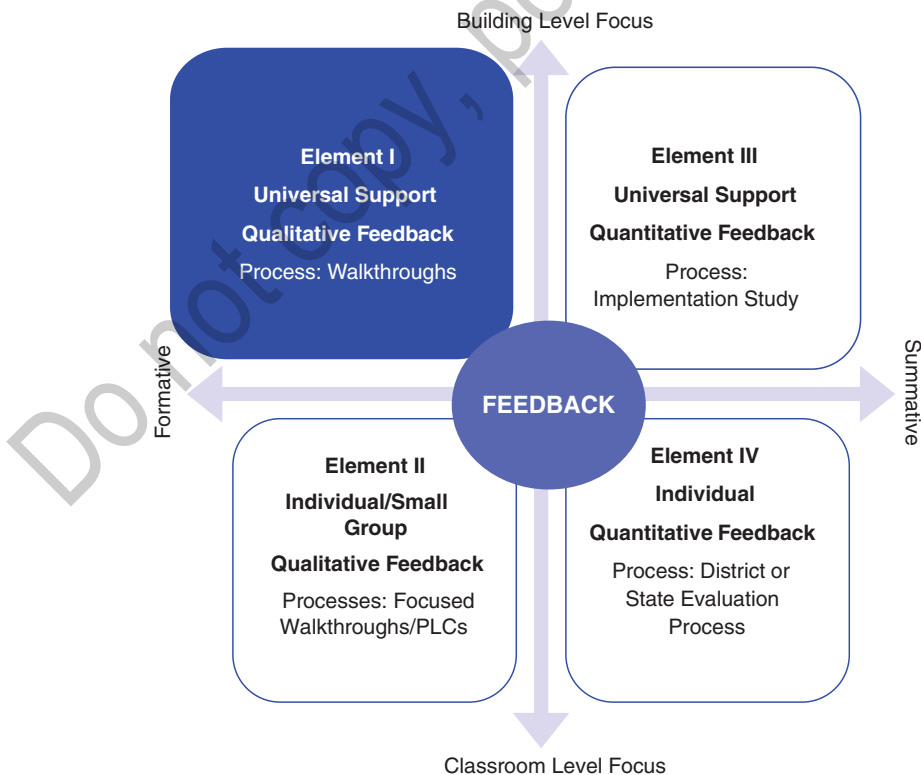


CHAPTER 2

ELEMENT I

Universal Support With Qualitative Feedback

“A gardener isn’t satisfied when only a few plants bloom and neither should the school leader be when only a handful of teachers are effective.”



What Keeps Us Up at Night: *Have you ever felt overwhelmed with how much improvement your school needs to make? You spent a lot of time with your staff developing a school improvement plan and now wonder how to put it into action? How do the practices get operationalized so student achievement is impacted? How do you help all staff feel a unity of purpose?*

The research is clear. When schools organize themselves around a small number of shared goals and work collectively toward those goals, teachers will see a dramatic increase in student achievement (Elmore, 2004; Fullan, 2014). This sounds simple, but in reality, it can be extremely challenging, especially if a leader has the wrong mindset regarding supervision. A gardener isn't satisfied when only a few plants bloom and neither should the school leader be when only a handful of teachers are effective. Achieving a bountiful harvest requires attention to the entire system. *All* individuals in the system must develop a shared depth of understanding about the purpose and nature of teaching and learning, what Fullan and Quinn (2016) call coherence. To put it another way, schools aren't going to improve if efforts are focused on "fixing" one teacher at a time.

Coherence is a natural byproduct of differentiated supervision. This is because central to this model is alignment of supervision to a clearly articulated school improvement and professional development plan. These processes allow leaders and their teams to identify what is most important and concentrate all efforts on these essentials. The practices in Element I help leaders shift the focus of their observations from broad generic standards or practices to focusing on specific feedback aligned to schoolwide goals and strategies.

CLARIFYING THE MODEL

Focus: School

The focus in this element is monitoring how the school is improving overall, so the primary process used is the general walkthrough. The general walkthrough is an organized unannounced visit through the school's learning areas to observe teaching and learning, specifically the strategies outlined in the school improvement plan. The general walkthrough allows the leader to observe whether or not professional learning is being implemented and more importantly if it is making a difference for students. The general walkthrough, when used as described here, provides formative data that helps the leader determine next steps in the improvement journey.

The general walkthrough we recommend has four fundamental steps that distinguish this process from other methods: focus, look & talk, reflection, and feedback.

Look fors are clear statements that describe an observable teaching or learning behavior, strategy, outcome, product, or procedures (Mooney & Mausbach, 2008).

Focus: Before a leader sets foot in a classroom to conduct a general walk-through, there needs to be a shared understanding of expectations. Both the teachers and leaders require a common language and agreed-upon definitions for walkthroughs to be effective. There-

fore, collaboratively developing look fors aligned to the school improvement plan is the first step.

The use of look fors assists teachers and administrators in focusing on specific teaching and learning aspects. They bridge the gap between learning and implementation because they help teachers understand the target. A more detailed discussion on look fors can be found later in this chapter.

Look & Talk: Once the look fors are firmly in place, the leader needs to let the staff know which ones are the focus of the walkthrough and then set out and spend 5–10 minutes in the classrooms. Two critical practices characterize the general walkthrough. The first is reviewing samples of student work posted in hallways and work folders. The second practice is to talk to students. One of the main purposes of the general walkthrough is to ensure that the strategies in the school improvement plan are being implemented at high levels *and* are resulting in changes in student achievement. Examining student work and talking to students is the only way to determine effectiveness. Hattie's (2009) mantra “know thy impact” is central to this process. The focal point of these observations is to look for learning.

Looking at the outputs (student learning) rather than inputs (teacher behavior) makes this a student-centered process and is more palatable to teachers. Because the general walkthrough is not an announced visit, it is difficult to hit every classroom at that exact moment when the teacher is engaged in using the strategies, so it is imperative to take time to talk to students and examine work. Gardeners know the plants are growing by examining the plants, we have to do the same in schools. We have to talk to our students and look at their work. Common questions to ask students when in classrooms include the following:

- What did you learn by completing this assignment that you didn't know before?
- What does your teacher want you to learn by doing this lesson?
- What have you learned this year that is helping you be a better reader or writer?
- How does this lesson connect to what you learned yesterday?
- How do you know when you have done quality work?

Reflect: Once the walkthrough is complete, the principal needs to take time to reflect on what was seen. A busy principal rarely has time to do this

immediately after completing a general walkthrough, so it is recommended to have some method of collecting information from the visit. It is easy to voice record on a smartphone what was observed or use the timeless notepad on a clipboard. The key is to document enough information so that rich reflection can occur. (We describe one method, the feedback log, later in this chapter.) During reflection the principal needs to be able to identify what was observed that “hit the mark” (matched the look fors), determine how many classrooms demonstrated the look fors, and identify next steps by looking at trends and patterns across classrooms.

Be Wary of Checklists for Element I

We do not advocate using checklists as a documentation method in this element. Checklists promote compliance as they are focused on whether or not the practice is present; they can't discern whether or not the practice will make a difference, nor do they lend themselves to effective feedback. When Ann's boys were taking driver's education, they had a 16-point checklist they needed to complete before starting the car. While this helped them get the car started properly, it was no guarantee that they would be able to navigate the roads successfully. A checklist may be useful in Element III, but due to focus on qualitative feedback, look fors are the better tool. Figure 2.1 outlines the difference between checklists and look fors.

FIGURE 2.1 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CHECKLISTS AND LOOK FORS

	CHECKLIST	LOOK FORS
Purpose	To determine whether or not a step or concept is in place	Clearly state in observable terms what the teaching practice, process, behavior, and strategy look like and sound like when implemented so that teachers develop a shared understanding
Development	Typically focus on a generic set of instructional practices	Look fors are based on the school improvement and professional development plan, and are developed collaboratively after a staff has engaged in learning
Feedback Focus	Focused on quantifiable results, such as whether or not the item was observed or present	Validates practice through describing what was observed that matched look fors and why that matters, also promotes reflection
Example of Feedback	“When I observed in your class today, 7 out of 10 students were completing the task assigned.”	“During your focus lesson, I observed how you used a think aloud to share examples and counterexamples. This is so useful for students especially when they are just learning a new math concept. This really helps them create mental pictures in their minds. How do you think your think aloud will change as you move to more abstract concepts?”

Source: Adapted from *Leading Student-Centered Coaching* (Sweeney & Mausbach, 2018).

Give Feedback: Feedback is required after *every* general walkthrough. If feedback isn't present, it is not a walkthrough; it is walking around. The key to feedback is to validate and teach. Using examples of teaching and learning taken from the classrooms provides concrete examples for teachers and helps them see

Note This: Marshall (2013) is a strong advocate for face-to-face feedback, and we feel this is an effective method but not always doable in large schools, thus, leaders need to identify methods and techniques that work the best for them.

that strategies can be successful in their context. We have found that it is important to provide whole staff, small group, and individual feedback. *Whole staff feedback* is typically included in the weekly message to staff and includes pictures of what was observed during the week that aligns with look fors. *Small group feedback* is provided during PLCs and will be discussed in Chapter 3. *Individual feedback* occurs after a general walkthrough via an email or sticky

note left in the teacher's room. Using a combination of whole staff, small group (via PLCs), and individual methods ensures that feedback will be given.

The key is to make sure that feedback is given after *each* walkthrough and is qualitative, validating work that matches look fors, or noticing close approximations and promoting reflection. Figure 2.2 provides an example of feedback from a general walkthrough. The first row provides an example of feedback that describes and validates practices that match the look for. The second example in Figure 2.2 is used when practices observed don't exactly match the look for but are a close approximation. Again, the tone is positive and is designed to help teachers take the next steps in improving practice around the look for. The last row provides an example of reflective questions based on the look for that promotes thinking.

Assessment: Formative

Feedback Focus: Look Fors

This element's focus on building level change requires frequent doses of qualitative feedback to both individual teachers *and* the entire school. Feedback is narrative in form and is drawn from mutually defined look fors. As previously stated, the use of collaboratively developed look fors unify a school by helping create shared meaning and a common focus. Look fors establish standards for what the strategies in the school improvement plan will look and sound like when fully implemented. Without look fors, leaders can fall into the trap of thinking staff are resistant to change when the reality is they don't know or understand what they are being asked to implement. Look fors provide the clarity needed to help all staff achieve success and promote transparency which helps create a vibrant culture.

Look fors are an essential tool in the differentiated supervision model and are essential to the work in both Elements I and II. However, like any tool, if used improperly they are ineffective. Four key principles are fundamental

FIGURE 2.2 FEEDBACK EXAMPLE AFTER A GENERAL WALKTHROUGH

	EXAMPLE	WHAT THIS DOES	WHY IT MATTERS
<p>Validate When observation shows <i>alignment</i> to look fors</p>	<p>This week I was focusing on our look for “teachers use deep questions (Level 4 DOK) to determine student understanding.” For example, one set of students was being asked to respond in writing to a series of important quotes from the novel they are reading. They had to describe the significance of the quote and what it implied about the character—very high-level activities. By using writing as a thinking strategy, this teacher can get a clear sense of EACH student’s level of connection with the text without using lower level DOK questions.</p>	<p>Is specific and validates good practices</p>	<p>Raises level of awareness and promotes likelihood will occur again</p>
<p><i>Notice Close Approximation</i> When observations show <i>close approximation</i> to look fors</p>	<p>This week I was focusing on our look for “teachers use deep questions (Level 4 DOK) to determine student understanding.” I heard questions like, “Who was the protagonist?” “What is the theme?” These are building blocks for students. We need to remember that students need to know key ideas and details. Our ultimate goal is to get students to understand the author’s meaning. Let’s continue to focus on prompts that push kids to higher levels of thinking through our questioning by asking questions like, “What are significant quotes in the text that convey the author’s purpose?” or “Choose three quotes that develop a theme.”</p>	<p>Compliment and encourage by noticing close approximations</p>	<p>Pushes the goals of the school improvement and professional development (PD) plan</p>
<p>When observation shows <i>misalignment</i> to look fors Promote Reflection</p>	<p>This week I was focusing on our look for “teachers use deep questions (Level 4 DOK) to determine student understanding.” This week I noticed a higher volume of open-ended questions being asked of students such as “How would you compare . . . ?” or “What do these two examples have in common?” Good examples of DOK 2 levels. How do these types of questions compare to the questions you are asking? How would you modify them to up the level of thinking for students?</p>	<p>Causes staff to reflect on areas of growth</p>	<p>Causes staff to reflect about their own practice, nudges teachers/school in the direction you want them to go</p>

to ensuring that look fors provide support to teachers and leverage achievement (Mausbach & Morrison, 2016).

Look fors are as follows:

1. *Collaboratively developed by all staff.* The purpose of having a set of look fors is to help staff understand what the strategies in the plan will look like when they are in place. In a heightened sense of urgency to get them developed, a leader may be tempted to develop the list and hand out or worse use some developed by another school. It is both the process and the product that matter.
2. *Directly connected to the school improvement plan.* One of the primary purposes of look fors is to operationalize the school improvement plan. Thus, look fors must describe the strategies in the plan. Effective school improvement plans provide focus for a school and aligned look fors are essential for intense focus.

However, there will never be a perfect list of look fors. Develop a list and continue to provide professional learning support, but remember deep meaning will occur as staff implement—learning is the work (Fullan, 2009).

3. *Connected to and build from teachers' current knowledge.* One of the biggest benefits of developing look fors is that the process deepens teachers' understanding of the initiative being implemented. This happens by engaging staff in learning around the initiative

before developing the list. Without providing time for learning, the look fors may not be detailed or useful enough to provide feedback.

4. *Observable.* Look fors must be something that can be seen or heard and provide evidence of strategy implementation. They help a leader focus observations so meaningful feedback can be provided. Figure 2.3 illustrates the difference between look fors that promote clarity and those that do not.

FIGURE 2.3 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WELL-CRAFTED AND POORLY CRAFTED LOOK FORS

WELL-CRAFTED LOOK FOR	POORLY CRAFTED LOOK FOR
Students know the purpose for learning and can articulate thinking strategies	Evidence of rigor and relevance
Teachers will ask questions, cues, and prompts during group work to inform next steps in instruction	Differentiate instruction
Teachers will model restorative language to acknowledge personal needs and interests (e.g., <i>I feel, I see you feeling, let's work together</i> , mentions of empathy dig opportunities)	Use restorative language

WHY IT WORKS

Facilitates Goal Setting

Picture those classrooms where teachers have clear and specific learning targets that guide their teaching. Students know what these are, and the entire classroom is working toward meeting these outcomes. The term well-oiled machine comes to mind when you spend time in these environments. Schools where teachers are clear about the building goals and benchmarks and the entire staff is working together through learning and collaboration also operate like a well-oiled machine. Just as learners struggle in classrooms that are chaotic, so do teachers in schools that lack clear and focused plans.

Goal setting as a leadership practice has an impact on student outcomes because it focuses and coordinates the work of adults around learning and achievement (Robinson, 2011). Clear goals help remove the noise found in many schools around competing agendas. It forces decisions about what is most important at the current moment in time. Being clear about the end game (goals) and how you are going to get there (strategies) is pivotal because it allows a leader to say no to competing initiatives and sets the stage for focused feedback. Armed with a skinny plan, a leader can focus efforts and help all staff work collectively toward mutually defined goals.

Improves Clarity

A coherent instructional program benefits both teachers and students. Students achieve at higher rates in schools with coherence (Fullan & Quinn, 2016; Newmann, Smith, Allensworth, & Bryk, 2001), and teachers develop stronger collaborative teams when they have a common approach to teaching and learning (Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Luppescu, & Easton, 2010). Achieving this coherence is not an easy task and requires a leader to pay particular attention to clarity in both communication and practice. Clarity necessitates a laser-like focus on creating a culture rich in inquiry, dialogue, and action around commonly defined practices. Common language is essential when defining practices, but doesn't always lead to common understanding (Dewitt, 2021). Understanding occurs when the practices are clearly defined *and* there is a continuous loop of dialogue around the impact from implementation attempts. Multiple opportunities to examine the impact of instructional practices, question their efficiency and effectiveness, and discuss implications are part of the learning journey. This can only happen when staff has clarity around what it is they are trying to do.

The differentiated supervision model promotes clarity by utilizing collaboratively defined look fors and providing ample doses of feedback that promote dialogue and reflection. The practices found in this element are designed to

help ensure that all staff have ownership in where the school is headed and how they will get there. Connecting the school improvement and professional development plan to look for and actionable feedback provides teachers with the necessary clarity and support needed to help students grow.

Builds Instructional Leadership

The last few decades have provided insight on the distinct ways principals can impact student learning. Robinson (2011) found “leading teacher learning and development” as having a 0.84 effect size on student achievement. A 0.40 effect size, the degree of impact a particular influence has on learning, reflects a year’s progress, so 0.84 is significant. Focusing on learning experiences that improve teacher proficiency makes sense since the quality of the teacher has a direct impact on student achievement (Marzano, 2003). It is more productive, in terms of student growth, for a leader to devote their attention to planning, participating, and engaging in dialogue around teacher learning than spending inordinate amounts of time communicating and measuring performance standards, practices central to traditional modes of supervision. Timperley (2011) found that principals who focus on cultivating habits of mind were more successful than colleagues who spend time trying to meet individual teacher needs. Creating conditions for growth requires less weed pulling (focus on individual supervision) and more fertilizer (effective professional learning for all staff).

Moving an entire school forward requires the principal to act as a lead learner, focusing the building on a small number of specific goals for students while organizing learning that allows teachers to collectively learn from each other on how best to meet student needs. In doing this, the principal promotes what Fullan (2019) calls culture-based accountability, “individual and collective responsibility that becomes embedded into the values, behavior, and actions of people in the situation. . . . People in the culture embrace a focus on continuous improvement as something they have to do and prove to themselves and others” (p. 75). This requires the leader to “walk the talk” by collaborating with teachers to create a focused school improvement and PD plan and then work alongside staff as they learn and grow, signature practices in this element. The emphasis on focusing, organizing, clarifying, and participating in learning opportunities firmly places the principal in the role of lead learner, creating a culture of continuous improvement and growth.

MAKING IT HAPPEN

Infrastructure: Build Teams

So many times the term “buy-in” surfaces when talking about getting staff to engage in reform efforts. True engagement, however, requires a deeper level of commitment; it requires ownership. Leaders can’t force this type of

commitment, rather their influence lies in the environment they create (Senge, 2006). Staff are unable to own initiatives if they aren't a part of the process. This process requires principals to walk a fine line between getting bogged down taking an inordinate amount of time to develop the plan versus having staff simply “sign off” on the documents. Leaders navigate this by creating an infrastructure that allows all staff to systematically provide input and review progress on an ongoing basis.

The concept of a leadership team isn't new to schools; however, these teams typically address a variety of issues throughout the school. Tapping into a leadership team enables the principal to get relevant input from teachers. In this way, school improvement and professional learning are a priority and, in turn, create a guiding vision for staff.

Teachers should be able to select a goal area and work with that team. It is the principal's role to ensure that all staff members are represented on teams. For example, if a teacher is interested in math, she would serve on the team that is spearheading the work in this goal area. A member from each goal team would also serve on the overall school leadership team. This ensures that information developed and reviewed during team meetings can be shared throughout the school. The key is to have a structure and then to put the issues of school improvement as the focus of the agenda.

Note This: According to Mausbach and Morrison (2016), the number of leadership teams will vary depending on the size of the school, but as a rule of thumb, all instructional staff need to be engaged in school improvement planning.

Develop a Layered Professional Development Plan

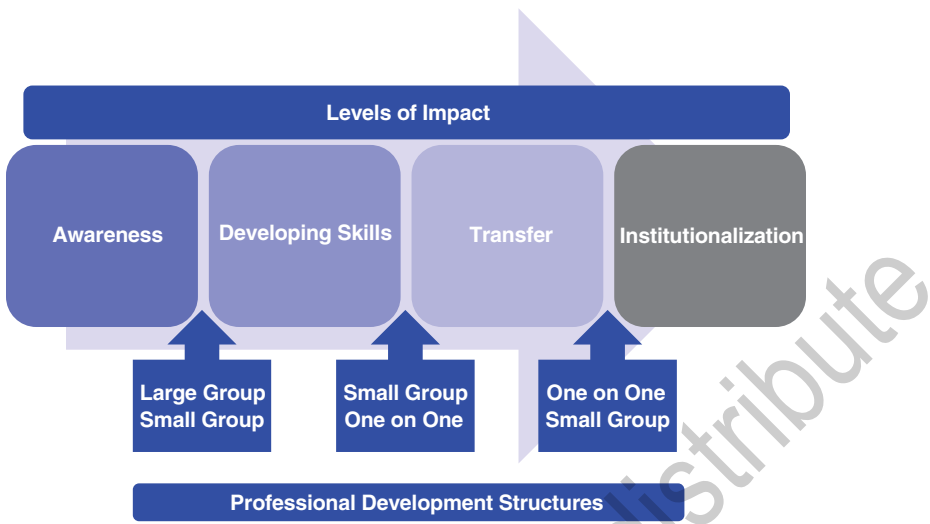
Joyce and Showers's (1980) seminal work on professional development (PD) structures that result in deep levels of implementation serves as the guidepost for organizing professional learning. As Figure 2.4 illustrates, the levels of support people need as they move from awareness to institutionalization of new practices must shift. Support needs to come in layers, meaning we have to give teachers opportunities to learn in large groups, small groups, and one-on-one simultaneously. Thus, we have to schedule and plan for these opportunities. The vehicle for doing this is the PD plan.

The PD plan includes two components: staff outcomes and the long-range plan.

Staff Outcomes

The outcomes section is simply identifying what staff will know and be able to do by the end of the school year. This list is generated from the strategies and action steps found in the school improvement plan. For example, if a strategy under the achievement goal is to utilize formative

FIGURE 2.4 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRUCTURES



Source: Reprinted with permission from *School Leadership Through the Seasons* (Mausbach & Morrision, 2016).

assessments and one of the action steps is to implement questions, cues, and prompts, then one of the outcomes for staff would be that they could effectively use these questioning techniques to guide instruction. Developing a list of staff learning outcomes based on strategies and action steps helps to identify if the school improvement plan makes sense and is achievable. Professional development will feel fragmented and meaningless, like the flavor of the month, if it isn't derived from the school improvement plan. Figure 2.5 provides an example of this section of the PD plan. Creating a list of outcomes makes the work ahead clearly visible and helps to determine if the plan needs to be pared down.

FIGURE 2.5 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN EXAMPLE: STAFF OUTCOMES

By the end of the year, our staff will be able to know/do the following:

OUTCOMES	GOAL/STRATEGY
Write quality learning targets to guide daily lessons both in academics and mindfulness (good work habits)	Goal 1-Strategy 1 Goal 2-Strategy 2
Implement effective mini lessons	Goal 1-Strategy 1
Embed checks for understanding strategies into instructional practice (mini lessons)	Goal 1-Strategy 1
Utilize a problem-solving model around restorative practice	Goal 2-Strategy 2

Long-Range Plan

A detailed long-range plan comprises the second and most lengthy component of the PD plan. The PD plan is fluid, and as principals gather evidence of strategy implementation, observe in classrooms, and analyze student work, adjustments will be made. However, without a tentative long-range (1 year) plan for professional growth, the learning of teachers can fall prey to the dreaded “activity” trap, treating PD as a series of events that are loosely coupled, lack relevance, and have little hope of impacting teaching and learning. This section of the plan identifies topics for large and small group learning *every* week of the school year. Having this in hand at the beginning of the school year helps the leader not waste any valuable time and also serves as a connector for one-on-one learning that may occur through coaching cycles and principal feedback. See Appendix B for an example of a school improvement and PD plan.

Utilize Look Fors

Look fors are an effective tool in the differentiated supervision model, but only when utilized. Like the handy Swiss Army knife, look fors are multi-functional, providing leaders with two important mechanisms: a process for leveraging effective feedback and a method of assessing staff learning. Becoming skilled in using this tool is central to the work of the school leader in this model.

Use look fors to leverage feedback. Look fors are an effective supervision tool because they help the leader provide bite-sized chunks of meaningful feedback to teachers. Unlike complicated checklists and rubrics that entail every aspect of teaching imaginable, look fors distill a teaching strategy into clear and complete statements that describe what will be seen or heard when implemented. This provides a descriptive target and allows the leader to focus on one piece of feedback at a time.

Giving less feedback, more often, maximizes teacher development (Brambrick-Santoyo, 2012).

Look fors that lead to rich qualitative feedback require leaders to pay attention to how they are developed. The key to the development process is to make sure that all staff have the opportunity to contribute to and collaborate on the looks fors. Development of an initial look for list doesn't have to be a time-consuming process, and perfection isn't the goal. The goal is clarity and shared understanding. Utilizing the guiding questions found in Figure 2.6 is helpful in ensuring look fors are descriptive enough to be useful. Appendix C provides an example of a protocol for developing look fors with staff.

FIGURE 2.6 GUIDING QUESTIONS WHEN DEVELOPING LOOK FORS

- Is the look for more than one or two words?
- Is the look for a complete thought or sentence?
- Is the look for something you could *see or hear* if you walked into a classroom?
- Is the look for written in plain language that a non-educator could understand?

Once the collaboratively developed look fors are in place, the principal uses them to provide feedback after the general walkthrough. The general walkthrough is the vehicle to determine if the school improvement plan is being implemented, at what levels, and to identify what support staff need next in order to get to deeper levels of implementation. Using collaboratively developed look fors around strategies identified in the school improvement plan ensures that the general walkthrough isn't an inspection or "gotcha." The staff knows what the principal is looking for and knows that feedback will validate the teaching and learning practices found in the look fors. The purpose of feedback is to lift all staff. This doesn't happen by pointing out deficits, rather growth occurs when practices that are aligned with look fors are validated. Figure 2.3 provided examples of this type of feedback, aligned to look fors.

Treat the look for process as a formative measure of staff learning. Utilizing feedback to monitor student learning and adjust instruction has been well established as an effective practice that deepens learning (0.66 effect size according to Hattie, 2019). Creating these same conditions when organizing adult learning can be challenging and is why using collaboratively developed looks fors is such a critical practice. Spending time discussing, identifying, and articulating what a strategy looks like in practice surfaces the collective understanding of staff. The dialogue necessary to create look fors helps the leader discern what aspects of the initiative are understood and where there may be misconceptions. Determining the shared understanding of the staff allows the leader to make adjustments to professional learning. In other words, it provides the leader with a method to formatively assess staff and then respond in a way that helps them continue to learn and grow.

Consider the following example from a school that was trying to implement restorative practices. The left-hand column in Figure 2.7 outlines the set of look fors developed in September after the staff had engaged in learning in the summer and fall. Upon reflection on the conversations during the development process and the resulting look fors, the leader realized that staff's understanding was superficial and without a deeper dive they would never be able to adjust their practice. Armed with this understanding, the leader decided that staff would need more tangible

strategies in order to use restorative practices and see the benefits. Thus, the leader decided to dig into Ross Greene’s (2014) problem-solving model with a focus on using empathy digs. After several months of learning and using empathy digs, staff came back together and developed the revised version found in the right-hand column of Figure 2.7. This version not only showed evidence of how much the staff had deepened their understanding, but also provided the leader with direction for staff learning in the upcoming year.

FIGURE 2.7 RESTORATIVE PRACTICES LOOK FORs

	INITIAL VERSION: FALL	REVISED VERSION: SPRING
Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers show respect by using the appropriate tone of voice. Teachers identify behaviors that disrupt the educational process in a calm way, and use modeling to encourage positive behavior. Teachers engage with students in a manner that acknowledges their personal needs and interests. Teachers model active listening skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers will use restorative language when working with students to solve problems (<i>I feel, I see you feeling, Let’s work together, etc.</i>). Teachers will start the problem-solving process with students by gathering information from the students’ perspective about the problem they are working to solve (empathy dig). Teachers will use students’ interests and needs to promote positive relationships.
Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students express their thoughts and feelings using school-appropriate language. Students reflect (verbally or in writing) on how their choices impact others. Students actively engage in the learning process by participating in instruction and independently beginning tasks. Students practice preventative strategies for avoiding/managing conflict. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students express their thoughts and feelings using school-appropriate language. Students will be able to explain, either verbally or in writing, how their choices help or harm themselves and others. Students will be able to reference and utilize tools (peace corners, anchor charts, visual cues, mindfulness breaks) within the classroom.
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Room arrangements allow for collaboration. Space is dedicated to allow for restorative conversations (safe space). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Morning circles will be used to build social-emotional skills. Anchor charts that promote social and emotional problem-solving strategies will be displayed. Space dedicated for restorative conversations.

Organize Feedback

One of the benefits of the differentiated supervision model for leaders is that they develop a rich sense of teachers' practices due to the frequency of observations. A benefit for teachers is that they receive feedback after every observation. Over the course of a year, this generates a treasure trove of information. However, this knowledge is useful only when it can be easily retrieved. Capturing what was observed and the subsequent feedback given provides valuable insights into patterns and trends in teachers' growth. A system for easily accessing this data is required. We advocate for simple solutions we call the feedback journal and walk-through summary.

Feedback Journal

The feedback journal is a spreadsheet that tracks observations and feedback by teachers. Each teacher has a tab in the spreadsheet. Basic information is included on this form: dates and times the teacher was observed, a brief description of what was observed, and a summary of the feedback (reinforcement, refinement, reflective questions). Each observation is captured on a separate line on the teacher's sheet. Figure 2.8 provides an example of a feedback log. Notice the teacher names on the bottom tabs; the example shows Mrs. N's data.

The feedback journal is a tool for the principal. It is a place to capture observations and corresponding feedback so leaders can discern what is improving over time and what isn't. It is difficult to determine appropriate levels of support without this big picture look. This tool helps leaders determine next steps based on ongoing evidence from the teacher's practice. Capturing this valuable information in a straightforward manner promotes reflection and helps the leader identify how best to meet the teacher's individual needs.

Walkthrough Summary

In addition to the feedback log, we have found another important tool in organizing and utilizing information from observations, the walkthrough summary. The walkthrough summary provides a "birds-eye view" of the entire school, providing valuable information about the current reality of the building. Figure 2.9 provides an example of the walkthrough summary tool. This form includes who was observed and the focus of the walkthrough based on look fors. Each week the teachers are observed and are categorized as strong, approaching, and need support.

This provides two very valuable pieces of information. First, it identifies if there is a teacher in need of more assistance. Instead of waiting for the teacher to continue to struggle, leaders can begin to provide support immediately. Second, it helps the leader gauge how much more professional

FIGURE 2.8 FEEDBACK JOURNAL EXAMPLE

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Date of Observation	Time	Content Area	Brief Description of What was Observed	Feedback to Reinforce	Feedback to Refine	Reflective Question	Other Notes
9/17/2021	10:00	number talk	Students were around the white board in the back of the room. The problem was number patterns. Students stated their strategy in the solving the number problem. Mrs. Nagel wrote student name and strategy on the	Students feel comfortable with solving and sharing their thinking around the problem. You captured their learning well.	Using a lot of funnel questions, need to think about how to ask more focused questions	Do you think your questioning leads students to a certain strategy?	Mrs. N and I discussed what her purpose of her talk was. She said she was trying to get students to recognize math facts. So we discussed questions the difference in questions leading to a certain
9/28/2021	10:10	number talk	Student were really ready to answer, they were giving the thumb signal and wanted to share out. Great atmosphere for students so willing to share out.	Great learning environment,	Planning the problems so they help students use a variety of strategies for solving	Where do you get your problems? Are you doing a Problem Solving String or random problems?	We talked about where she is getting the number from. Going back to the book and do the string strategy. Capturing the learning on a Anchor chart students may reference.
			students were in various groups around the room working on various tasks. Each group had something	Students were in various groups - working in partners or individually on		I noticed you were working with what I would call the upper group and your partner	Mr. N and I discussed how in our PLC we were discussing how to push our top students even when discussing learning progressions - not to think of scaffolding the lesson for the middle kids how to take tasks and make them more challenging more work for those students but more rigorous

FIGURE 2.9 WALKTHROUGH SUMMARY TOOL

KEY							
Strong/At Standard							
Approaching							
Need Support							
WEEK	AUG. 7	SEPT. 3	SEPT. 13	SEPT. 20	SEPT. 27	OCT. 4	OCT. 11
Observation Focus	Clear Learning Targets & Success Criteria				Think Aloud/Modeling		
Teachers Observed at Green	Naughton, Jones, Smith, King, Peterson	Long, McGee, McPherson, Harvey, Donohue, Flanagan	Homer, Lemon, Fey, Grafton, Cash, Griffin				
Teachers Observed at Yellow	Miller, Anderson, J. Smith	Crouch, Frazier, Howells	Humble, Lowe				
Teachers Observed at Red	Piedmont		Grass				

learning is needed in a particular area and who needs it the most. This allows the principal to pinpoint small group learning as well as utilize those teachers at green to help model and support their peers.

EQUITY CHECK

“When staff is clear on what quality looks like for all, they can more easily make adjustments when learning isn’t as predicted.”

An equitable school is one where each student gets what they need to succeed. Creating this requires recognizing the nuanced relationship between equal and equitable. As Smith, Frey, Pumpian, and Fisher (2017) adeptly describe it, “In an equal school situation, we build staircases that learners can ascend to higher levels of achievement; in an equitable one, we make sure to build ramps alongside those staircases” (p. 2). The staircases and ramps work best when there is clarity on the destination. Agreeing on the fundamental learning experiences for all students creates shared understanding making it easier to construct scaffolds when needed. Clear school goals and strategies coupled with collaboratively developed look fors lay a foundation of equity. When staff is clear on what quality looks like for all, they can more easily make adjustments when learning isn’t as

predicted. The practices in this element make certain that school improvement and supervision processes are aligned in support of teacher and student learning.

FROM THE FIELD

At Issue: Gail worked with her leadership team and staff to develop a focused school improvement and PD plan. She realized that to meet the goals set she needed to monitor the plan and attend to the needs of all classrooms. It was time to focus on the work.

Gail's team identified ambitious goals to raise proficiency in reading and math by 15% and meet expected growth targets. The strategy in the school improvement plan was to implement learning targets and success criteria within a framework of Gradual Release of Responsibility (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983). A focused PD plan was developed that included a series of learning opportunities designed to increase staff's knowledge and use of learning targets and success criteria. Staff engaged in weekly professional learning for the first month of school to develop initial shared meaning on learning targets and success criteria. Once staff had foundational knowledge, Gail engaged the entire staff in developing look fors.

Gail had a staff of 80 teachers, so she developed a plan to monitor progress by conducting general walkthroughs using feedback cycles that allowed her to get into every classroom at least once every 3 weeks. Using her staff blog, Gail provided weekly feedback sharing examples of implementation based on look fors. There were weeks that she shared strong examples and others where she noticed only close approximations. Every blog included an opportunity for teachers to reflect on their practice. She used this opportunity to provide building-wide feedback to her staff that validated practice and provided a specific model for what it could look and sound like in teachers' classrooms. Gail was consistent; she went through the feedback loops and stayed diligent in sharing building feedback. Because the goals were ambitious, Gail made sure to take a tone that encouraged staff. As the year progressed, teachers began to reflect on their practice and develop confidence utilizing the school improvement strategies and action steps. Staff were heard to say things like, "I have really grown this year as an educator. I think that is due to all the feedback and focused learning we have done," and "The high expectations and clear feedback have made an impact on my classroom practice."

When assessments were given, the achievement needle moved, and eventually, as predicted, the goals were inching closer to becoming a reality. Teachers found that success was the best stress relief and celebrated their accomplishments together.



Key Takeaways

“A rising tide lifts all boats,” a quote made popular by John F. Kennedy, is the mantra of this element. Raising student achievement in a school requires attention to all the boats in the harbor. To implement this, be sure of the following:

- The general walkthrough and qualitative feedback provide direction so all teachers can work together toward a common goal.
- There is a layered PD plan aligned to the school improvement focus.
- Collaboratively defined look fors provide clarity so teachers know exactly what strategies “looks like and sounds like” when implemented.
- Ongoing feedback is provided weekly to ensure that all teachers see strong models to improve practice.

A garden flourishes when the gardener has a bird’s-eye view of all the plants and is able to monitor growth. High quality PD and look fors sprinkled in with regular doses of qualitative feedback till the soil for improvement. Tending to the entire system ensures that sustainable growth becomes a reality.

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WHERE ARE YOU NOW?

Creating a culture of growth happens when a leader’s mindset is focused on helping others develop their talents. Specific knowledge and skills are needed for this to come to fruition. Rate yourself on the statements below and identify ways you can move along the continuum.



Knowledge	I understand the professional development staff needs in order to enact strategies in the school improvement plan. This is evidenced by a list of professional learning staff outcomes for the year and a detailed plan for achieving them.
	I understand the benefits of large group, small group, and individual learning and have organized professional learning to provide opportunities for all three.
Skills	Look fors were developed in collaboration with all staff and are used to provide feedback to staff.
	I connect the school improvement plan to the work in the other elements.
	Feedback includes a rationale (the why) for the practices that were validated.
Follow Through	I share weekly feedback with staff that validates the look fors observed during general walkthroughs. Feedback describes what was observed and why it is important in helping students succeed.
	I have a method for documenting feedback so I can frequently review to look for patterns and trends across the school.