



'How-to' Guide INSTRUCTIONAL ROUNDS

Developing
common
understandings
of effective
teaching and
learning

WHAT ARE INSTRUCTIONAL ROUNDS?

- a group of leaders and/or teachers visiting multiple classrooms at their own or another school
- focused on instructional practices linked to school/region/state-wide improvement strategies
- aims to share practice and support scaling systemic improvements of teaching and learning

WHAT ACTIONS ARE INVOLVED?

PHASE 1



School identifies a 'problem of practice' as the focus for the observations

- often presented as a question to frame data gathering

PHASE 2

Observation groups collect data related to the identified 'problem of practice'

- groups of 3-5 teachers
- typically facilitated by a school leader
- visit a range of classrooms to locate evidence (15-20 minutes per classroom)
- observers make detailed, non-judgemental notes



PHASE 3



Groups debrief after observations using agreed protocols

- groups identify patterns, wonderings, recommendations across the school related to the 'problem of practice'
- build a picture of teaching and learning throughout the school, not just of individual classrooms



PHASE 4

Groups make recommendations for next stage of work

- revisit the 'problem of practice' in light of patterns observed
- make recommendations to address the 'problem of practice' based on the evidence gathered
- be specific – make recommendations for the next week, next month, even the next year – phrase as options for the school to decide their next action (which will later be reported back to the group)



WHY INSTRUCTIONAL ROUNDS?

- focus on school-wide rather than individual improvement
- supports scaling of interventions to address an identified 'problem of practice'
- help separate the practice from the person

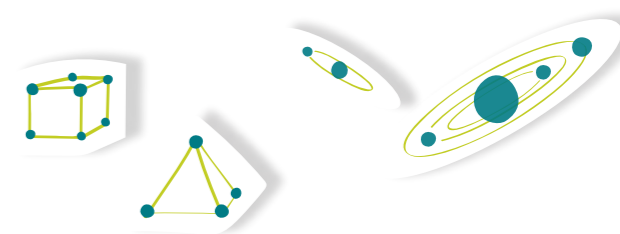


WHAT ARE THE KEY ELEMENTS?

- shared understanding of purpose and process
- alignment with school-wide improvement focus
- groups are unobtrusive observers in the classrooms visited
- notes taken focus on specific actions observed, not judgements of practice or general ideas and information
- debriefs are discussions of practice, not evaluations of the observed teachers' practice
- feedback is not provided to individual teachers unless specifically requested

WHAT DO I NEED TO CONSIDER?

- in a diverse group of observers there may not be a shared, common understanding of effective practices
 - > allow time for this to occur/be established prior to observing classes
- external visitors can be perceived as evaluative
 - > ensure that the purpose of the visit is clear and maintain the school-wide improvement focus
- observed teachers may not receive individual feedback for improvement
 - > communicate with staff prior to observation whether individuals will receive feedback and provide opportunities for staff to debrief



Where can I find out more?

Instructional rounds in education: A network approach to improving teaching and learning (City, Elmore, Fiarman & Teitel, 2009)

Making the Most of Instructional Rounds (Marzano, 2011)

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