The Solution Focused School

Creating opportunities for competency in students, teachers and parents



"You cannot solve a problem with the same kind of thinking that created it."

-Albert Einstein

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Solution Focused Process

1. Best hopes:
   Ask: How do you wish things were for you?
   Or: What are your best hopes for our time?

2. Preferred Future:
   What will be happening when a small part of your hopes/wish begins to occur?
   What else will be happening? X10

3. Exceptions:
   Tell me times when a little of these hopes/wishes has happened before. What was different in any way about those times? How did that make a difference for you?

Solution-Focused Parent Conference

Date:_____Student:_____

Attendees:_____

1. Identify the best hopes for everyone present: The teacher opens by expressing appreciation to those attending the meeting, then starts the conversation: *"What are your best hopes for our meeting today?"*

Parent:_____
_____

Student:_____
_____

Teacher:_____
_____

"On a scale of 1 to 10, with '1' being not successful and '10' being completely successful, where is the student in regard to what we want to achieve?"

Parent:_____Student:_____ Teacher:_____

2. Develop a preferred future: The teacher thanks the parent and student for their responses and asks, *"What will _____be doing in the classroom over the next week so that the score increases, and things improve for_____?"*

Parent:_____
_____

Student:_____
_____

Teacher:_____
_____

3. Identify exceptions: The teacher asks about times when the goals in the previous answers have occurred in school or at home: *"When is this happening or when has it happened slightly already, in other classrooms, grades, or situations at school or even outside of school?"*

Parent:_____
_____

Student:_____
_____

Teacher:_____
_____

The teacher, parent, and student then decide which exceptions can be used and adapted in the classroom and at home for the next few weeks.

Classroom strategies: (for teacher and student)

_____

Curriculum addition based on exceptions:

_____

Home strategies:

_____

The teacher restates the rating scores from the beginning of the conversation and asks the parent and student what rating they hope the student will achieve by the end of the next week.

Parent:_____Student:_____ Teacher:_____

Summary: The teacher asks the parent and student, *"What was helpful for you today in this conversation?"*

Parent:_____
_____

Student:_____
_____

Next meeting date:_____ Time:_____

Exception Findings: After the Parent Conference

Date:_____

Student:_____ Grade:_____

The documentation on this page is *only* for exceptions—times, situations, or activities when the student begins to be more successful in the classroom.

Week 1 Exceptions: List activities, situations, or assignments:

1._____
2._____
3._____
4._____
5._____

Weekly score: Student:_____ Teacher:_____

Week 2 Exceptions: List activities, situations, or assignments:

1._____
2._____
3._____
4._____
5._____

Weekly score: Student:_____ Teacher:_____

Week 3 Exceptions: List activities, situations, or assignments:

1._____
2._____
3._____
4._____
5._____

Weekly score: Student:_____ Teacher:_____

Exception Observations to Prepare for a Team Meeting

Student: _____Teacher:_____

Dear Teacher,

There will be a solution-focused conversation for _____on _____at in room_____ at_____o'clock. . Your presence is requested because you are an important member in the student's academic life. The meeting will not last longer than thirty minutes.

Prior to the meeting, please notice times when this student is slightly successful in your classroom. Note the kinds of lessons, activities, behavioral interventions, motivational strategies, or other methods that help the student to be slightly more successful. These times when the student is more successful should be listed below. Please list at least five exceptions below and bring the list to the meeting.

Thank you.

_____

Exceptions:

1._____

2._____

3._____

4._____

5._____

Solution-Focused Team, Parent and Student Meeting

Date:_____

Student:_____ Grade:_____

Primary teacher: _____Team:_____

Attendees:_____

_____

1. Identify best hopes of everyone present: The leader opens by expressing appreciation to those attending the meeting, then starts the conversation: *"What are your best hopes for our meeting today?"*

(It is common for attendees to answer by saying what they do *not* want. Help those who respond in this way to develop a more workable goal by asking, "What do you want to happen instead?")

_____

_____

_____

On a scale of 1-10, with 1 meaning not successful and a 10 meaning completely successful, where is the student:

Parent:_____ Student:_____ Teachers (take average score):_____

2. Develop a preferred future : The leader thanks the parent and student for their responses and asks:

"What will the student be doing in the classroom(or other context) over the next three weeks so that the score increases and our concern decreases?"

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. Identify exceptions: The leader asks about the exceptions that everyone present was asked to document: *"Looking at your Exceptions Observation Sheet, when is this happening or when has it happened slightly already?*

_____

_____

_____
_____

To Parent/Student: When have things been better in other classrooms, grades, or situations at school or even outside of school?"

_____
_____
_____

The leader asks the student, teachers, parent, and staff members who are present to decide which exceptions can be used and adapted in the classroom and at home for the next few weeks.

Classroom strategies: (teachers and student)

_____
_____
_____

Curriculum addition based on exceptions:

_____
_____

Home strategies:

_____
_____
_____

The leader restates the scores from the beginning of the conversation and asks the participants what rating they hope the student will achieve by the next meeting.

Parent:_____ Student:_____ Teachers:_____

Summary: The teacher asks the parent and student, *"What was helpful for you today in this conversation?"*

_____
_____

Next meeting date:_____ Time:_____

Exception Findings: The Team Meeting

Date:_____

Student:_____Grade:_____

The documentation on this page is *only* for exceptions—times, situations, or activities when the student begins to be more successful in the classroom.

Week 1 Exceptions: List activities, situations, assignments:

1._____
2._____
3._____
4._____
5._____

Weekly score: Student:_____ Teacher:_____

Week 2 Exceptions: List activities, situations, or assignments:

1._____
2._____
3._____
4._____
5._____

Weekly score: Student:_____ Teacher:_____

Week 3 Exceptions: List activities, situations, or assignments:

1._____
2._____
3._____
4._____
5._____

Weekly score: Student:_____ Teacher:_____

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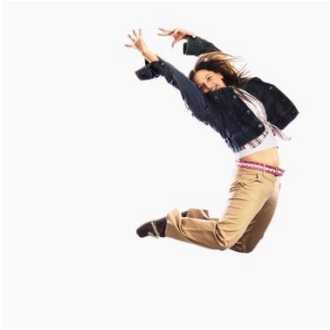
You know how to stay on top of things!



I can’t believe what I am seeing!



I can’t believe it! How did you DO that?



You amaze me.

Linda Metcalf, M.Ed., Ph.D., is a former middle school teacher, a certified school counselor, a licensed professional counselor supervisor, and a licensed marriage and family therapist supervisor in the State of Texas. She is a Professor in the Graduate Counseling Programs at Texas Wesleyan University, where she developed a solution-focused school counseling program for graduate students. She is an international presenter who has taught the solution-focused approach to educators and clinicians across the United States, Canada, Japan, China, Singapore, Thailand, Australia, Norway, The Netherlands, Scotland, England, and Germany. She is the author of numerous professional articles and eleven books which have been translated into many languages:

Counseling Toward Solutions

Teaching Toward Solutions

Parenting Toward Solutions

Solution Focused RTI

A Field Guide to the Solution Focused School

Solution-focused Group Therapy

How to Say It to Get into the College of Your Choice

Marriage and Family Therapy, A Practice Oriented Approach

Solution-focused Narrative Therapy

The Art of Solution-Focused Therapy (co-authored with Elliott Connie)

The Solution Focused School Climate

Other Resources:

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