

Educator: Beginning of Year Goals and Planning

What Priority Practice will be the focus of your PLC's continuous improvement process?

This year, I will focus on the Priority Practice of **Student Questioning & Inquiry**. Specifically, I want to experiment with using **Motivational Interviewing (MI) questions** in student counseling sessions to encourage students to identify their own goals and strategies. To be honest, I've been hesitant about this because it feels different from the direct guidance I usually give—but I recognize that building students' own critical thinking is essential.

Describe your current practice specific to the Priority Practice identified above.

Currently, my approach is often directive. When a student comes to me with an academic, behavioral, or emotional concern, I usually listen carefully and then suggest strategies or solutions. While this sometimes works, I notice that students don't always follow through. I suspect it's because the strategies are "mine," not theirs. I rarely use open-ended questioning structures that help students generate their own ideas, so this is a shift for me.

What is your learning plan to improve upon your practice described above? What specific learning activities will you participate in? What resources will you need (Examples of learning activities/resources)

Goal Statement: *By May 2026, at least 60% of the students I work with in counseling sessions will demonstrate growth in setting and articulating their own goals, as measured by session notes and student self-reflections.*

Learning Plan:

- I will implement **Motivational Interviewing (MI) questions** in at least two student sessions per week.
- I will start small, practicing core MI prompts such as: *"What would you like to see different about your situation?"* and *"What's one step you could take toward that?"*
- In PLC meetings, I will share examples of student responses and reflect with colleagues on how the questioning changed the session.
- I will seek feedback from a colleague who has experience with MI techniques to refine my approach.

Learning Materials/Resources:

- Motivational Interviewing in Schools: Conversations to Improve Behavior and Learning (book resource)
- PLC time for role-play practice with colleagues
- A simple tracking template for noting student goal-setting in my counseling log

In addition to student feedback, what evidence will you use to reflect, monitor, and adjust your goal? (Examples of sources of evidence)

- Student Feedback: After sessions, I'll ask students to reflect (*"Whose idea was the strategy you're trying?" "Did it feel like your plan?"*).
- Counseling Notes: I'll document how often students generate their own strategies or goals versus when I provide them.
- PLC Review: Share anonymized case notes and look for patterns in student ownership of strategies.
- Self-Reflection: Record brief notes after sessions on how comfortable I felt using MI questions and how students responded.