

5-Step Guide for Data Facilitation

Objective: Drive actionable change through informed conversations around data, with a primary focus on improving postsecondary-going measures for students of color.

Preparation

1. Familiarize yourself with the provided public data sets:
 - a. [Washington State Report Card](#)
 - b. [High School Graduate Outcomes](#)
 - c. [FAFSA Completion Portal](#)
2. Note down any immediate observations or patterns that stand out. This will help you guide the discussion.

Step 1: Opening Remarks at School Meeting

1. Begin by clearly communicating the goals of the meeting.
2. Explain the importance of examining the data to drive practice change and better solutions for students, especially students of color.
3. The publicly-available data linked above does **not** surface root causes—that information comes from student/staff surveys and listening sessions, but the publicly available data gives us a good starting point for understanding patterns.

Step 2: Engaging with Data

1. Display the datasets one by one and guide participants through the following set of questions:
 - a. What are surprises in the data? (Elicit unexpected findings that might need further exploration)
 - b. What are some strengths you see in the data? (Highlight positive trends or areas of improvement)
 - c. What are some areas that need to improve? (Pinpoint areas of concern or those that need urgent attention)
2. If you believe the team is ready to go deeper, you can guide the team through the following set of questions:
 - a. What similarities are you seeing in the data? (Seek patterns or consistent trends)
 - b. What outliers are you seeing in the data? (Identify data points that deviate from the overall pattern)
 - c. What questions do you have about the data? (Encourage curiosity and digging deeper)

Step 3: Brainstorming and Action Plans

1. Brainstorming Interventions
 - a. Begin this phase by creating an open environment for sharing. Remind participants that no idea is too small or too unconventional.
2. Guiding Questions:
 - a. For the identified strengths
 - i. How can we replicate the success of these strengths in other areas within the school and/or other racial groups, etc.?
 - ii. What resources or practices are currently being used that could benefit other students with similar challenges?
 - iii. Are there ways to enhance or amplify these strengths further?
 - b. For areas needing improvement
 - i. What are potential barriers causing this challenge?
 - ii. Are there any existing programs or initiatives that could be tweaked to address this issue?
 - iii. What new initiatives could we consider?
 - iv. Are there successful examples from other districts or states that we could adapt and implement?"
 - c. Setting Goals
 - i. As a team, set a smart goal, using the goal setting tool (for FAFSA completion and direct postsecondary enrollment), that can guide your action planning.
 - d. Creating Action Plans
 - i. Which of the brainstormed interventions can be implemented in the short term vs. the long term?
 - ii. What resources (time, people power, financial) would be required to implement these interventions?
 - iii. Who will be the responsible parties or leaders for each action item?
 - iv. How will we measure the success of each intervention? What metrics or data should we use?
 - v. Are there potential obstacles or challenges we should be aware of before implementing? How can we mitigate these?
 - vi. How will we communicate and collaborate across teams or schools to ensure a consistent approach?

Encourage teams to prioritize interventions based on feasibility, impact, and resources available. It can be helpful to use a matrix or ranking system to visualize and decide on priorities. As a facilitator, you can lead teams through a structured thought process, moving from broad brainstorming to the creation of specific, actionable, and measurable plans.

Step 4: Concluding Remarks

1. Summarize the key findings from the discussion and reinforce the importance of acting on the insights gained.
2. Thank everyone for their participation and reiterate the importance of continuous data engagement for the betterment of student outcomes.

Step 5: Post-Meeting Actions

1. Document the discussion's main points, suggested interventions, and action plans.
2. Share these with all participants and relevant stakeholders to ensure accountability and follow-through.
3. Schedule a follow-up meeting to review the progress made on the action plans and evaluate the outcomes.

Tips for Effective Facilitation

- Maintain a neutral stance. The goal is to encourage open discussion, not drive a personal agenda.
- Encourage participation from everyone.
- Stay focused on the goal: improving postsecondary-going outcomes for students of color.
- If disagreements arise, guide the conversation back to the data.
- Regularly reinforce the importance of data-driven decisions.