

Identifying Purpose: Exercise

What is driving your daily action?

Everyday, as educators, we are pulled toward actions and decisions that are not aligned to our vision of student success. Increasing our self awareness about those pressures - and when we succumb to them - is a valuable exercise to help us stay aligned to vision.

This exercise is meant to help you think about how different motivations lead to very different actions in the classroom. How often are your daily actions driven by some of these other pressures? How would your daily actions be different if they were aligned to your collectively developed, locally rooted, globally informed vision of student success?

Instructions

We have identified five common factors that shape the behavior of teachers. Note: This list is far from complete; feel free to edit or add your own when doing this activity.

Go through the various situations on the left hand of the table. For each situation, think back over the last week or month to bring to mind a concrete example. Reflect on that moment and consider what was most motivating you at that time - referring to the various prompts along the top. Try to recollect what you were thinking and feeling at the time, and be as honest with yourself as you can. Then take a moment to put an 'X' in the column that most reflected your motivation, and if possible add a few short notes to express how it felt. Go through all the prompts, and then go through the reflection questions at the end.

Note: *If possible, find a partner to do this at the same time as you, and afterward share with each other what came up for you, and brainstorm any strategies that might help you to shift your motivation.*

	I aim to teach like the best teacher I ever had	I aim to ensure every student gets a certain score on an assessment	I aim to please my principal, teacher coach, or organization	I aim to master teaching skills and get a good rubric score	I aim to survive to the end of the day	I aim to... [use this to capture other motivations]
When planning my lessons...						
When delivering my lessons...						

When something happens in the class that disrupts my lesson plan...						
When evaluating student progress in my class...						

When talking to the parents of my students...						
When engaging with other teachers in my school...						

When speaking to my school leadership team...						
When I am feeling particularly under stress...						

When I am feeling particularly confident...						
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Reflection Questions

- Looking through the table, do you notice any patterns?
- Which motivations are most often drawing you away from your vision? Why do you think that is?
- Do you think other teachers in your school would answer these questions in the same way? Why or why not?
- Did you have examples where it was particularly hard to acknowledge to yourself what was really motivating you? Why do you think that was?
- In each case, what would help you to shift your motivations to be more aligned with your vision?
- What would it look and feel like, in each case, if you were motivated by your vision rather than these other factors?