Is *your* PLC High-Performing?

A Self-Reflection Rubric of 7 important characteristics developed by Daniel R. Venables

Dimension	High-Functioning	Solidly-Functioning	Marginally Functional	Dysfunctional
PLC LEADERSHIP	Facilitator trained specifically to be a PLC Facilitator (e.g., *Grapple Institute* graduate, CFG training, etc); skilled in leading other adults in the work.	Facilitator trained in a general way to facilitate teachers/adult learners.	Defacto facilitator is the Department Chair or Grade-Level Lead Teacher	There is no designated facilitator.
ADMIN SUPPORT	Administration clearly prioritizes PLC work in actions, decisions, and the allocation of time and financial resources.	Administration vocalizes support for PLC work and demonstrates this in some actions and decisions.	Administrative support for PLCs started out strong but has taken a distant back seat to everything else going on with teachers.	There is little, if any, administrative support for PLCs. "Words Only" support.
LEVEL OF TRUST	High trust, willingness to take risks & be vulnerable; respectful, open disagreements are welcomed. Interdependent (teacher) success is typical.	Some willingness to take risks and be vulnerable; disagreements allowed, some interdependence precedes teacher success.	Few teachers willing to be vulnerable, take risks; team decisions are partially decided, silent members go along with dominant voices; actions in classrooms do not reflect shared agreements or decisions of PLC.	This is a group of teachers who largely function independently. There is no synergy among members. Teacher success is independent of the PLC.
DEPTH OF DISCOURSE	Substantive conversations re: teaching & learning are routine. Members are reflective and thoughtful in their contributions.	Pockets of deep, meaningful discussion occur; most discussions stay in comfort zones; real opinions are rarely discussed.	Almost all discussions stay on the surface, careful not to speak truth that might cause friction.	All discussions concerning teaching and learning stay in the comfort zone, careful not to offend and to keep harmony above all else - even at the risk of not doing what is best for students.

DEGREE OF BUY-IN	Every member has not only bought into the concept of authentic PLCs, but is an ambassador of the cause, knowing what it can do for student learning.	Most members understand the positive impact PLCs can make, but remain healthily skeptical about implementation.	The nays outnumber the yays but all are at least reluctantly willing to try implementing practices of authentic PLCs. Skepticism presides over acceptance, but with a willingness to try. Negative *Parking Lot* 'meetings.'	Significant Buy-Out among members (even for the facilitator, if there is one). Perfunctory engagement w/tasks of the PLC. Both passive and aggressive dissension are commonplace. Members see PLC meeting time as detracting from their individual planning. Very negative *Parking Lot* 'meetings.'
FOCUS OF MEETINGS	The heart of all meetings boils down to improving student learning by way of improving teacher practices. Planning is driven by asking *What is the best way to teach this?*	Some meeting is spent deciding *how* to best teach individual standards and designing instruction accordingly. Follow-up implementation and discussions are routine.	Most meeting time is spent discussing the *what* and *when* with almost no talk about *how*. Teachers use the *Default Lesson* (last year's) without question or challenge.	Meetings may begin discussing teaching and learning but are soon highjacked by any topic raised by any member. Very little productive work is accomplished.
QUALITY OF COLLABORATION	Members work interdependently to produce the best possible lessons, assessments, etc for student learning. Disagreements are embraced; egos are not. *Every* member benefits from *every* meeting. Meetings are without exception *relevant*, *meaningful*, and *productive*.	Members work together, for the most part. The atmosphere of the meetings is more cordial than collegial. There is some hesitancy for members to speak up or say what they're thinking. Meetings are usually productive, with varying degrees of member benefit.	A few dominant members rule the meetings. Decisions are not made by consensus; silence by some members is mistaken to be agreement. Tasks are often "quilted" together with each member completing a sub-task which is usually accepted by the team without question. Meetings are rarely productive.	Meetings are all over the place. Dominant members push their agenda on the rest and go unchallenged. When the team "agrees" to do something for the next meeting, nearly half of the members fail to do it, without consequence. If any member's instruction gets better as a result of a meeting, it's more by accident than design.

Notes:
👉 Placement in any category is temporary. Individuals and even entire teams may "move" in either direction (of the rubric).

👉 Categories described represent *most* of the team - not a few vocal individuals on the team. Be careful not to place too much credence in the vocal few who may or may not represent the team as a whole.