Experience Based Case Discussion

A reflective practice process

Phase I: Understanding the experience

1) Telling the story
2) Acknowledging feelings and clarifying facts
3) Framing the question (What do you want the group to help you think about?)

Phase II: Exploring and sharing the collective knowledge and experience of the group

4) Strengths and capacities (What's working? How does it happen?)
5) Possible interpretations (Why might it look this way?)
6) Developing questions (What do you need to know more about?)

Phase III: Summarize discussion and identify possible next steps

7) Summary of information (facilitator)
8) Possible Next steps
9) Share group learning experience

Roles and Responsibilities

Integrating case discussion into your program routine requires consistent time together, a commitment to trust and security within the group, and the desire to reflect on the work at all levels of the organization.

Resources you will need:

- Time: We recommend allowing at least 45- 60 minutes for the process.
- Place: Carry out the discussion in a safe, private setting, where staff can avoid distractions and interruptions.
- Participants: Consider limiting the discussion to 10 members. If the team is larger, you may wish to do two simultaneous groups.

- Group rules: Developing and agreeing on group rules promotes feelings of trust and consistency within teams. For example, agreeing that staff will resist side talking and completing paper work while others are speaking, supports the purpose of the discussion and demonstrates respect.

- Facilitator, Presenter, Note Taker and team members.

The Facilitator is responsible for:

  - Guiding the process and supporting the group to attend to all three phases.
  - Facilitating a sense of closure in the time allotted
  - Encouraging a trusting and reflective atmosphere through respectful questioning, curiosity, and appropriate sharing of perceptions and experiences.
  - Pointing out strengths, and summarizing conversations to support individuals in the process of self-reflection.
  - Helping the group stay on track by bringing the conversation back to the focus of the main question
  - Allowing the process to flow in a circular pattern B any phase can and should be revisited as needed during the conversation.

The Note Taker is responsible for:

- Writing notes visible to the group

- Documenting the following (clarify when needed):

    1) Main question of the presenter
    2) Strengths
    3) Interpretations
    4) Questions
    5) Next Steps

- Supporting the facilitator’s role

- Giving the notes to the person presenting the case

The Presenter is responsible for:

- Thinking about what they want from the discussion. Posing this in the form of a question to the group.

- Including facts, feelings and other pertinent information as necessary to tell the story

- Thoughtfulness about choosing to share personal information. Some have found it helpful to reflect on the following questions, before sharing personal details:

  Is the information I'm about to disclose important to the understanding of the situation?

  What is my motivation for sharing personal information?

- The willingness to examine the situation from multiple perspectives

- Remaining open to new thoughts and ways of thinking.

The group members are responsible for:

- Demonstrating respect for the presenter and other group members.

- Supporting the facilitator's role

- Maintaining an ecological view of the situation and a sense of neutrality

- Refraining from giving advice, staying focused on the question

- Avoiding the tendency to dominate the conversation