

TOP TIPS

For Leading STAR Learning Walks (SLWs)

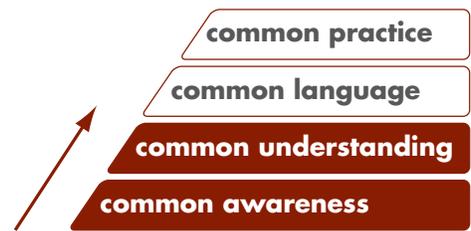
Whether you are leading SLWs for 10, 20, or 30 minutes; off campus or on campus; live or video; or reflecting on one of your own lessons you taught or are going to teach; the debrief process is essentially the same. The purpose of this Tip Sheet is to provide keys to leading a successful observation and debrief.

Top Twenty Tips for Leading the STAR Process

1. Always be clear about why you are conducting a STAR Learning Walk
2. Make sure the focus on the Learning Walk is clear to all staff
3. Make sure focused SLWs are driven by SMART Goals
4. Refer often to the SMART Goal quantitative measure that you are trying to reach
5. As a result of conducting SLWs, you should be ready to share what you learned
6. As a result of conducting SLWs, you should apply your learning in your own lessons (ASAP)
7. Keep STAR materials clearly visible when conducting Focused SLWs
8. Administrators should conduct Focused SLWs every week
9. Administrators should share weekly what they are learning from the SLWs (Monday Memo)
10. Provide opportunity for leadership team members to conduct Focused SLWs every month
11. When facilitating/leading SLWs, conduct debriefs in pairs
12. Principals should let others share first during the debrief, to encourage maximum dialogue
13. Start off campus and/or with volunteers until you are sure the school is at the Common Understanding stage of development
14. When conducting a series of SLWs, keep the amount of time in the classroom consistent
15. Remember, you are not going in to a classroom to see PTL; you are going in to determine if you see PTL
16. If you follow the STAR Process, you can learn as much (or more) when you do not mark the continuum all the way to the right
17. At the moment you determine where you would mark the continuum, write why you marked it all the way to the right, or what else you needed to see to mark it further to the right (write down what you say)
18. Mark the continuum; don't score the teacher
19. When a teacher asked for feedback after a STAR observation, share what you are learning from your many SLWs and how you are trying to apply your learning to your own teaching
20. After an observation, be appreciative; not complimentary

STAR Debrief 101: What Did I See; What About Me?

- What did I see?
- What are some examples?
- Where would we mark this on the continuum?
- How could our focus indicators have shown up more?
- What can I apply to my own classroom?



Annotated Sample Debrief:

After exiting the room, immediately find an appropriate location for the debrief... huddle up.

"Before we get started on the debrief, take 30 seconds to review your notes and to decide which strategies you saw. Be ready to share examples."

"OK, let's get started. Pair up with one other person, and talk about what strategies you saw."

"What bullets did you see while we were in the room?" (open-ended). If the open-ended prompt does not work, read each line and determine if you saw that strategy at all: "Yes" or "No" (closed-ended)

Either way, after someone lists a strategy they saw, they should provide an example. ***"I saw sufficient wait time. After the teacher wrote the question on the board, she gave them 1 minute to reflect quietly in their journals before responding in the group."*** If someone does not offer an example, then their partner should say, ***"What was an example of that?"*** Partners should chime in and add samples as well. Keep writing in your notes as you play off of each other's comments.

After you have discussed all the manifested strategies, determine as a pair, where you would mark the Indicator/Component on the Continuum. ***"Now, that we have heard ourselves talk about this, where do you think we should mark it on the Continuum... left, middle, or toward the right?"***

If you mark the Continuum to the Right, say, ***"I think this Indicator/Component was clearly observable because ___."***

Regardless of where you mark it on the Continuum, we want to brainstorm several ways our focus Indicators/Component could show up even more. Say, ***"How could it show up more in this context?"*** Note, we are NOT saying, ***"How should it have shown up more?"*** or ***"What should the teacher have done differently?"*** We are simply exploring ways it could have shown up, so when we are teaching we can be ready to ask ourselves the same question in the middle of class.

In some cases the Indicators you are looking for will not be manifested during the observation period. Once it is clear that few or none of the strategies showed up, quickly say, ***"OK, it sounds like we are leaning toward the left on the continuum: We just didn't see it today? Is that correct?"*** ***"OK, good. Given this context, how could it have shown up?"***

After brainstorming for a short period of time say, ***"What are you thinking about in your own teaching?"*** ***"What are some ways you can make sure it shows up in our own classroom?"***

Pitfalls to Avoid

- Do not start the debrief as a whole group. Even if there are only four participants, start in pairs.
- Avoid judgmental comments: "Wow, that was a great class!"
- After the observation, here is a starter sure to go wrong: "What did you guys think about that?"
- Avoid using the term should: "What should she have done differently?"
- Do not score the teacher; mark the continuum, "I scored him low on this one."
- "I scored her high on this one."