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2014-1-BE02-KA201-000432

Protocol Reference Number: 59

Developed by: Catholic Education Flanders

Title

Compass protocol

Sources

Sue Horan, June, 2007, School Reform Initiative website:
http://schoolreforminitiative.org/doc/compass_points.pdf

Purpose of the protocol

This is a group building activity, not to be done at the first time that a group meets each other but still rather in the beginning of the group forming process.

Similar to the Myers-Briggs Personality Inventory, this exercise uses a set of preferences which relate not to individual but to group behaviours, helping us to understand how preferences affect our group work.

The protocol also stimulates mutual understanding of people's learning process and attitude in given circumstances.

Materials

Prepare 4 chart board (or equivalent) cards with written N, E, S, W put in the different directions N, E, S and W; please try to do that adequately - look at the position of the sun at a given moment.

Time

25-50 min, depending on to what extend the facilitator organizes the discussions.

Roles

Facilitator, whole group, then 4 groups

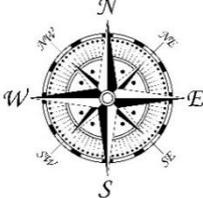
Process

The room is set up with 4 signs on each wall – North, South, East, and West.

If the group is small, then it might be necessary to rearrange the protocol in such a way that still all different behaviours can be explained to one another.

1. The facilitator gives an overall introduction of the protocol:
 - a. What are the goals;
 - b. What is the process.
2. The facilitator briefly characterises the 4 directions, as follows: (he has additional information here below - see below: 'Compass Points Explanations Expanded')



	<p>North Acting — “Let’s do it”; likes to act, try things, plunge in</p>	
<p>West Paying attention to detail — likes to know the who, what, when, where and why before acting</p>		<p>East Speculating — likes to look at the big picture and the possibilities before acting</p>
	<p>South Caring — likes to know that everyone’s feelings have been taken into consideration and that their voices have been heard before acting</p>	

3. Participants are invited to go to the direction that corresponds best to their personal style. No one is only one direction, but everyone can choose one as their predominant one.

4. The groups get 15 minutes so that each group can answer the following questions:

- What are the strengths of your style? (4 adjectives) (*write that in ‘your box’*)
- What are the limitations of your style? (4 adjectives) (*write that in ‘your box’*)
- What style do you find most difficult to work with and why? (*write that in ‘the corresponding box’*)
- What do people from each of the other directions or styles need to know about you so you can work together effectively? (*write that in ‘the corresponding boxes’*)
- What do you value about the other 3 styles? (*write that in ‘the corresponding boxes’*)

When complete, each group will report back to the whole group.

Optional 1: in smaller groups the answers to 1-5 could be given individually in the boxes on paper (see last page) after which an exchange of the papers can take place. Discussion and feedback are also possible in that way.

Optional 2: The facilitator can hand out the more extended information below on a separate sheet.

5. The facilitator organises a plenary by raising the following issues:

- Short round of answers given by each group.
- Note the distribution among the directions: what might it mean?
- What is the best combination for a group to have? Does it matter?
- How can one avoid being driven crazy by another direction?
- How might one use this exercise with others? In the class? With students?

6. The facilitator gives feedback at the very end of the protocol, by reflecting on the different personal styles that can be present in a group, and how to approach it as an added value.

References

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Exemplification

By the use of this protocol:

- This is usable in many situations, and many time settings;
- It is advisable to have at least a group of 10 persons to make it really active, else it becomes more an abstract discussion on virtual people;
- People react very positive on this protocol: it makes sense and is very recognizable. The obligatory choice for ONLY ONE direction always provokes discussions;
- Maybe it is possible to position people in intermediate places to indicate more precisely where they find they belong.

If going deeper into discussion it can take more time, but discussions can be very clarifying to one another. (in a team of people that know each other already)

Teachers found this protocol very interesting because it allows to recognize the way of working of each community and how we interact with other with different ways of working.

Participants also recognized the importance of working with the added value, shared experiences and the potential of each one, according to their style.



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Compass Points explanation expanded (developed by Sue Horan, June 2007)

North

- You take charge.
- You run the daily operation.
- You have lists of things to do and you need to get started and get them done.
- You get assignments in early.
- You don't have to ask questions to begin your work or assignment.
- You drive the work and get it done.
- You teach our children a complete curriculum.
- You will stitch the mosaic together and do the work.

East

- You have the big picture, the frame that needs to be filled in.
- You need to see the final product and will work with the end in mind.
- You believe in working backwards, understanding by design.
- You don't get a project started until you are clear about the final product.
- You teach our children the big concepts.
- You know what the mosaic looks like in the end.

West

- You ask the hard questions.
- You live by inquiry.
- You challenge us to identify the details.
- You don't start a project until you are clear about the details.
- You make our picture more complete.
- You lead by inquiry and engage in thoughtful discourse.
- You make us think and teach detailed concepts to our children.
- You fill in the details of the mosaic.

South

- You take in the information, slow us down, and make sure everyone has voice and is heard.
- You include everyone, and make sure the human side is nurtured.
- You take care of us and bring up our affective domain.
- You make sure the emotional side of our work is heard.
- You make sure we are all included.
- You teach our children with strong relationships and care.
- You add beauty to the mosaic, make sure everyone participates in the creation, and keep us all