

Problem of Practice Handout



* Clarifying questions:

Time allotted	Procedure
5 minutes	1. The <u>presenting leader</u> gives an overview of the dilemma and frames a focus question for the <u>consulting group</u> to consider. The framing of this question, as well as the quality of the presenter's reflection on the dilemma being discussed, are key features of this protocol.
5 minutes	2. The Consultancy group asks <u>clarifying*</u> questions of the presenter — that is, questions that have <i>brief, factual</i> answers.
7 minutes	3. The group asks <u>probing**</u> questions of the presenter. These questions should be worded so that they help the presenter clarify and expand his/her thinking about the dilemma. The presenter may respond to the group's questions, but there is <u>no discussion</u> by the consulting group of the presenter's responses.
-----	4. <i>The presenting leader steps back from the consulting group to avoid the temptation to become part of the consulting group's conversation. The presenting leader is silent during the next 15 minutes! This can be the hardest part of the protocol to adhere to, as the presenter may hear things they want to jump in to clarify. Yet having the presenter stay silent is one of the most important elements of the protocol.</i>
15 minutes	5. The consulting group reflects on what they heard and engages in a discussion of the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What assumptions does the presenting leader seem to be making? • What questions does the dilemma raise for us? (These questions should not be veiled suggestions for action, but true ponderings.) <p><i>CAUTION: It can be tempting for the consulting group to jump straight into suggesting actions the presenting leader might consider taking. However, it is often <u>much more valuable</u> to work to define the issues more thoroughly and objectively, providing the presenting leader with new ways to think about their dilemma</i></p> <p>The presenting leader takes notes while listening</p>
5 minutes	6. The presenting leader reflects on what they heard and on what they are now thinking. They "return" to the consultancy, sharing anything that particularly resonated for them during any part of the process.
5 minutes	CLOSING: The team will have a brief conversation about the group's observation of the Consultancy process. In what ways did the protocol affect your understanding of the dilemma? How could you use this model in the future?

* Clarifying questions

- Can be answered briefly (often with simply a "yes" or "no")
- Are informational
- Help the presenter clarify the dilemma so that there is a clear presentation to the Consultancy group

** Probing questions

- Requires depth of thought
- Helps get to the heart of the dilemma