

# Power of Protocols

Structured facilitation tools for promoting participation, ensuring equity and building trust.

Summary from the *Power of Protocols* by McDonald, Mohr, Dichter, & McDonald.

What is a protocol?	<p>A technique for achieving voluntary regulation within a contingent environment.</p> <p>Protocols enhance the effectiveness of groups and organizations.</p> <p>They expand participation within a group.</p> <p>Protocols help us imagine alternatives to ordinary habits of working together, learning and leading.</p>
Why use protocols?	<p><u>Rationale #1: We must educate ourselves</u></p> <p>Protocols provide the structure to engage in open and honest conversation that supports inquiry, dialogue, and reflection, which leads to collective problem solving.</p> <p><u>Rationale #2: Explore Student Work</u></p> <p>Protocols allow us to become students of our students by deliberately examining student work.</p> <p>Images of student work are captured and as a group explored together to see what they mean.</p> <p><u>Rationale #3: Protocol Based Learning</u></p> <p>Protocols force transparency by structuring talking and listening, describing and judging and proposing and giving feedback.</p> <p><u>Rationale #4: Professional Communities of Practice</u></p> <p>Protocols provide the structure for a PLC to consult with colleagues and make changes in order to make the work more effective.</p>

What is important for me to know as a facilitator?

Use of protocols ensures that a PLC knows how to:

- Gather colleagues together for a purpose
- Establish effective ground rules
- Enforce ground rules
- Enable colleagues to share freely
- Help them attend to one another's perspective, and
- Help the group make a collective commitment to group choices.

Facilitating protocols involves macro planning. Thinking through the what, when and how to open and close a meeting.

Facilitating protocols also involves micro planning. Be sure to

- explicitly share with participants the steps of the protocol by naming it, listing the steps and providing a rationale for use,
- initiate each step and intervene when something goes wrong, and
- monitor time carefully.

The authors also encourage

- lots of cross-use
- lots of improvisation, and
- lots of adaptation.

Where can I learn more about protocols?

McDonald, J., Mannheimer Zydney, J., Dichter, A. & McDonald, E. (2012). *Going Online with Protocols: New Tools for Teaching and Learning*. New York and London, Teachers College, Columbia University

McDonald, J., Mohr, N., Dichter, A., & McDonald E. (2007). *The Power of Protocols: An Educator's Guide to Better Practice, Second Edition*. New York and London, Teachers College, Columbia University.

The authors have provided free abbreviated protocols at [www.tcpress.com](http://www.tcpress.com). They encourage reading the book first. The book supplies valuable facilitator tips and is highly recommended.

National School Reform Faculty. Retrieve protocols at [www.nsrffharmony.org/protocol/a-z.html](http://www.nsrffharmony.org/protocol/a-z.html)

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