Coaching for Change

Glossary of Terms for Equity-Minded Coaching Domains and Practices

by Community College Research Initiatives

This glossary features terms used in the *Rubric for Equity-Minded Coaching Domains and Practices* as well as the *Equity-Minded Coaching "DOs and "DON'Ts"* document. **The sources for the excerpted and paraphrased definitions are cited in the endnotes.**

TERMS & DEFINITIONS

Asset-Based Frame: Positions students in terms of their diverse strengths within and across a variety of sociocultural contexts, rather than privileging only the strengths of the dominant culture or economic class.[1]

Adaptive Challenges and Solutions: Challenges that are characterized by complex organizational variables and problems that are hard to define or articulate. Solutions that are not readily available and require new learning and changes within the organization's culture. [2]

Cognitive Conflict (also known as Cognitive Dissonance): The discomfort one feels when internal beliefs, values, or behaviors contradict one another. An example of this would be when a practitioner values equity, but is provided with evidence that suggests their practice is contributing to inequitable outcomes. This discomfort stems from cognitive dissonance theory, which posits that cognitive consistency is a primary human need and that inconsistency can create psychological distress.[3]

Cognitive Frameworks: The rules of reasoning that govern how individuals interpret situations and how they design and implement their actions.[4] Bensimon and Kezar argue that diversity, deficit, and equity are three important and distinct frames that influence perceptions, discussions, and decision making related to equity outcomes.[5]

Culture of Inquiry: Collecting, exploring, and scrutinizing information collectively, collaboratively and iteratively in order to understand its meaning and implications for practice.[6]

Critical Analysis of Practice or Policy: A framework that acknowledges the design and implementation of institutional policy and practice as a political and value-laden process.[7] Critical analysis requires practitioners to assess reform practices and policies by examining who benefits and who loses through implementation. Critical analysis frames and tools offer the opportunity for institutions to understand the ways in which everyday policies and practices may perpetuate racial, socioeconomic, and gender inequity.[8]

Critical Reflective Practice: An iterative learning process that involves observation, interpretation, and intervention. The learning process engages professionals in understanding their individual practice through the lens of social justice and transformational change.[9]

Data Context: Dimensions that enable or constrain access to data, processes concerning data, and organizational norms that guide data interaction. Leadership, power, and authority play an important role in all of these dimensions.[10]

Data-Informed Decision Making: A set of expectations and practices through which data is routinely examined to determine the relationship between organizational activities and desired organization outcomes.[11]

Data Use: An interpretive process that involves noticing or recognizing data, finding meaning in it, and constructing implications for action.[12]

Deficit-Based Frames: Ways of thinking that perpetuate perceptions of people of color as inherently inferior in status, intelligence, and standing to white people by focusing on failure as a result of the dispositions of people of color while minimizing or ignoring the systemic factors that determine access to educational opportunities and resources.[13]

Discrimination: Actions, attitudes, and perceptions that result in the unequal treatment of members of various groups based on race, gender, social class, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion, and other categories.[14]

Discussion Protocol: A set of guidelines and expectations used to structure conversations or learning experiences in ways that use that collaboration time efficiently, purposefully, and productively. Protocols can also be selected or designed to ensure that group processes are democratic, inclusive, and center upon agreed values and norms.[15]

Diversity: The representation of individuals and groups according to socially constructed norms and characteristics. Diversity embraces the notion that individuals are members of groups that have different histories, backgrounds, and experiences that need to be considered in improving education.[16]

Double-Loop Learning: The process of questioning the thinking that drives actions, starting with root causes or underlying assumptions.[17] Single-loop learning is often applied to technical issues and routines within the organization, and double-loop learning is applied for more complex activities, which are not technical or fall outside of existing organizational norms.

Equity: Acknowledging the systemic structures that were created to disadvantage people based on their race, gender, sexual orientation, and other valued diverse realities. Equity moves toward dismantling systemic barriers against people based on their identities and backgrounds to provide just and fair access, opportunities, and outcomes, recognizing that racial equity is foundational to social justice.[18]

Equity-Mindedness Framework: A framework that prioritizes reflection on and awareness of how organizational structures, policies, symbols, cultural norms, and practices that appear to be race-neutral may, in fact, negatively affect individuals and groups of people.[19]

Equity Effort Assessment: A process that categorizes proposed institutional activities into five equity asset types: structures, programs, personnel, practices, and policies. The activities are categorized into each category based on the type of solution proposed, intervention targets, resources allocated, and level of institutionalization.[20]

Equity Scorecard: A resource tool developed and administered by the Center for Urban Education. The scorecard is both a process and a data tool. The process engages individuals from different departments and divisions as a team in examining campus data, practices, and policies. The tool, or scorecard, is generated near the conclusion of the process, when the team captures the results of its investigations.[21]

Inclusion: Envelops the notion of diversity but goes beyond diversity by recognizing that representation is important but insufficient to advance student success for underserved populations. Inclusion is about authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision/policymaking in a way that shares power.[22]

Institutional Racism: The policies and practices within and across institutions that, intentionally or not, produce outcomes that chronically favor or put a racial group at a disadvantage.[23]

Models of Diversity: Distinct organizational paradigms that shape the beliefs, patterns, and assumptions that produce policies, programs, initiatives, and structures designed to achieve diversity-related goals and objectives. Williams defines the dominant models that have evolved in higher education as the Affirmative Action and Equity Model, the Multicultural Model, the Academic Diversity Model, and the Inclusive Excellence Model.[24]

Organizational Learning: A learning process that takes place between individuals and groups at various levels within the organization. Through organizational learning, whole organizations or their components adapt to changing environments by generating and selectively adopting organizational routines.[25]

Racial Equity: The condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted one's outcomes or success.[26]

Racial and Ethnic Identity: An individual's awareness and experience of being a member of a racial and ethnic group; the racial and ethnic categories that an individual chooses to describe him or herself based on such factors as biological heritage, physical appearance, cultural affiliation, early socialization, and personal experience.[27]

Retrenchment: The ways in which racial equity progresses via passage of legislation, court rulings, and other formal mechanisms is very often challenged, neutralized, or undermined.[28]

Second Order Change: A process through which the means as well as the ends of the systems are considered in seeking solutions. This involves new ways of doing things, changing values and goals, and structural changes in the organization.[29]

Structural Racism: A system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms work in various, often reinforcing ways to perpetuate racial group inequity. It identifies dimensions of our history and culture that have allowed privileges associated with "whiteness" and disadvantages associated with "color" to endure and adapt over time. Structural racism is not something that a few people or institutions choose to practice but rather a feature of the social, economic, and political systems in which we all exist. Structural racism is the most profound and pervasive form of racism—all other forms of racism emerge from structural racism.[30]

Systems Thinking: A method of analysis that connects seemingly disparate elements of a complex system to better understand how connections and interrelatedness impact change within context and over time.[31]

Technical Challenges and Solutions: Contexts often characterized by distinct organizational variables and a clearly defined problem. Solutions are often focused on achieving organizational efficiency and target existing practices, policies, and structures.[32]

Endnotes

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