**Experiment C – Exploring Solutions.**

As school leaders, we need to respond to problems by providing a solution. However, when problems are complex, we face challenges in providing solutions.

* There is no ‘correct’ solution.
* It is not possible to guarantee the outcome of the solution.
* The solution to the problem will have consequences. These consequences might be positive or negative.

In this experiment, we are going to ask you to practice applying a solution.

**Preparation for your IDS Meeting: Please complete before your IDS session.**

1: You need to check that the problem you are encountering is a complex, or ‘complex’, problem. Use the sheet below to help you.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Describe the problem (100 words maximum): | |
|  |  |
|  | Tick |
| Are there some parts of the problem which make it different/unique to other similar problems? |  |
| Could other people describe this problem differently? |  |
| Is this problem linked to another problem? |  |
| Is it difficult to know what is the ‘right’ thing to do? |  |
| Is it difficult to predict what will happen if you try to solve the problem? |  |
| Could trying to solve the problem lead to consequences which you then have to fix/ resolve? |  |
| Are there some parts of the problem which make it different/unique to other similar problems? |  |

If you have not met the criteria for a complex problem, go back to 1 and repeat the exercise until all the ‘ticks’ are present.

2: You should repeat the steps which you undertook for Experiment B. These steps involved utilizing the ladder of inference with your colleagues to ensure you have a shared understanding of the problem.

3: You now need to answer the following questions:

1. How would you and your colleagues decide what to do about the problem?
2. What would you and your colleagues try to do to understand the potential effects of any solution (if anything)?
3. What would you and your colleagues do to monitor and assess the impact of any solution (if anything)?

You should review this work with your coach during your IDS session.

**Post-IDS Work.**

We would like you to take the following three steps. You can use the complex problem outlined above or a different problem.

1: We would like you to have a meeting with your colleagues. In this meeting, you should outline the possible solutions to the problem. Try to identify at least 3 solutions. For each solution, as a team you should agree

1. Is this the time to act – do we need to wait for more information?
2. What is the solution?
3. What is the effect that you are anticipating?

2: For each potential solution, you and your team should identify the potential positive and negative consequences of the solution:

1. To the problem itself (How could the solution make the problem worse or better)?
2. What other problems might arise from applying this solution?
3. On other activities within the school?
4. On the people involved?

You can use this information to decide what solution/s might be most appropriate.

3: You should prepare how you intend to monitor the solution/s that you seek to apply:

1. What can you do to determine if any of the consequences outlined in step 2 are happening?
   1. What information will you need?
   2. How will you collect that information?
   3. Over what time period will you study the consequences of your solution/s?
2. What can you do to ensure that you are regularly talking to your colleagues about the problem so that you are identifying consequences which you might have missed?

4: After the agree time period set out above, you should prepare the following reflection for your next coaching session

1. How did step 1 and 2 help you and your team to determine a solution to the problem?
2. How did monitoring and reviewing the consequences help
   1. in helping to resolve the problem
   2. In managing the school?