



Center for Leadership & Educational Equity

The Tuning Protocol: Tuning a Plan for Large Groups

Developed in the field by educators.

When you tune a plan you have two basic components: a set of goals and a set of activities sequenced in a way that you believe will help the people you work with to meet those goals. The general objective is to get feedback from your colleagues about the degree to which the activities you structure seem likely to get your group to these goals. The plan is “in tune” when the goals and activities are most in alignment.

Time

Approximately 1 hour

Roles

Presenter

Participants (seated in small groups of 4-5)

Small Group Facilitator (who also participates)

Large Group Facilitator

1. Presentation to the Large Group (10 minutes)

- Context for plan
- Goals that drive the plan
- Focusing question for feedback

NOTE: This question should be a more specific version of the general objective above. Participants are silent.

2. Clarifying Questions from the Large Group (5 minutes)

- Clarifying questions are matters of fact. Save substantive issues for later. The facilitator is responsible for making sure that clarifying questions are really clarifying.

3. Examination of the Plan (7 minutes)

- Participants read the plan, taking notes on where the plan seems “in tune” with the stated goals and where there might be problems.

4. Pause to Reflect on Feedback (2-3 minutes)

5. Feedback in Small Groups (15-20 minutes)

- Participants talk to each other about the presenter's plan (as if the presenter is not in the room), beginning with the ways the plan seems likely to meet the goals, continuing with possible disconnects and problems, and perhaps ending with one or two probing questions for further reflection on the part of the presenter. These don't need to be in tight sequence, but participants should always begin with some positive feedback.
- The Presenter may walk around the room and listen in on groups, but remains silent and doesn't answer questions or engage in back and forth conversation.
- Facilitator may need to remind participants of presenter's focusing question.
- Recorder takes notes on the warm and cool feedback.
- The group chooses one item of warm feedback and one item of cool feedback to share in the large group.

6. Sharing Feedback in the Large Group (5-10 minutes)

- Each group shares one item of warm feedback (in a round). When the first round has been completed, each group shares one item of cool feedback (again, in a round, and going in the opposite direction).

7. Reflection (10 minutes)

- Presenter talks about what they have learned from the participants' feedback. This is NOT a time to defend oneself (this is for the presenter and defending isn't necessary), but a time to explore further interesting ideas that came out of the feedback section.

At any point the presenter may open the conversation to the entire group (or not).

8. Debrief (5 minutes)

- Facilitator-led open discussion of this tuning experience, either in small groups or in the large group.