

Unit 1, Activity 1: Discover personal assumptions

Purpose	To assess your own assumptions and actions about the practice of shaping a vision; discuss how personal attitudes and experiences relate to the principal's actions, behaviors, and choices observed in the film clip; determine implications of those assumptions for yourself and others.
Time	75 minutes
Required roles	Participants; facilitator

Personal assumptions, actions, and practices

Approximate time: 20 minutes

Independently, read each assumption, and use codes to indicate your level of agreement with each statement. For each assumption, then identify potential implications for the role of school principal. Upon completion, share your thoughts and answer questions below in small groups.

* = Strongly Agree

? = Uncertain

! = Strongly Disagree

+ = Somewhat Agree

- = Somewhat Disagree

Assumptions	Code	Implications for principals
1. Every student deserves effective teaching every day.		
2. The capacity of educators to invent solutions to educational problems is a powerful untapped resource.		
3. A school's vision is essential to achieving school goals for students.		
4. The success of educators' daily work depends on effective professional learning.		
5. Shared responsibility and collaborative learning combine to improve student results.		
6. School is the center of change.		
7. Vision that aligns school system, school, and individual goals exponentially increases results for educators and students.		
8. Effective professional learning requires collaboration among educators.		

Group discussion

Approximate time: 25 minutes

The facilitator will organize small groups and guide them through a round-robin session to share thoughts about ratings and respond to each of the questions below.

1. Review your responses in the chart on page 1. Note the assumption below with which you agree most strongly and the assumption with which you most strongly disagree. Share why you agree and why you disagree.

2. Next, review your responses to "Implications" in the chart on page 1. Make note of the implications for the assumptions you just highlighted. Discuss those implications within your small group.

I most strongly **agree** with the following assumption:

Why I agree:

Implications:

I most strongly **disagree** with the following assumption:

Why I disagree:

Implications:

3. Finally, below write how you, as a principal, will model behaviors for others as you act on these assumptions. Discuss each within your small group.

Discussion about the film clip

Approximate time: 25 minutes

After you have identified your own assumptions, aspirations, actions, and practices, look again at those in the film clip, [“Shaping a Vision of Academic Success for All Students.”](#)

In small groups, share thoughts, reactions, and interpretations using questions below to guide discussions. Be prepared to debrief salient points discussed with the larger group.

1. How do visionary leaders challenge the status quo?

2. Tresa is a novice principal and Kerry is a veteran. How might different levels of experience affect principals' abilities to enact change within their schools?

Individual reflection

Approximate time: 5 minutes

Following the larger group debrief, independently respond to the following reflection questions.

1. In preparing to serve as a school principal, think about the complexities of shaping a vision. Using what you learned from reading about and observing Tresa and Kerry, how will you approach shaping a vision for academic success?

2. What would you do similarly? Differently?