W.O.W. FACTOR
Words Of Wisdom for Wisconsin FPS Coaches & Students

Writing Criteria

Criteria are good tools for judging how well your solutions "measure up" to help solve your Underlying Problem (UP). Criteria are based on your UP, and there are three main types as shown in the chart below. The examples given for each type relate to the underlying problem in the yellow box at the top.

*Many students at our school perform poorly in their academic subjects for a variety of reasons. Therefore, in what ways might we **provide more successful learning opportunities for low-achieving Harrison Middle School students** in 2023 and beyond, in order to increase their abilities to succeed in life?*

TYPE	DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
Generic	These criteria are so broad/ general, they can be *used with any topic or UP*.	• Which solution will cost the least? • Which solution will last the longest? • Which solution is easiest to implement? • Which solution can be implemented most quickly? • Which solution will be acceptable for the most people?
Modified	These are *generic criteria with added words that are specific to the Future Scene* (e.g., important stakeholders, events, or processes).	• Which solution will cost the least <u>for Harrison Middle School</u>? • Which solution will be easiest <u>for teachers</u> to implement? • Which solution will be most acceptable <u>to Harrison's low-achieving students</u>?
Advanced	These criteria are ***very specific to the UP,*** so much so that they would most likely not apply to other UPs or topics. One should be based on the KVP, and one should be based on the purpose. Other types are shown in the examples.	• Which solution will provide the most successful learning opportunities? (*based on the KVP*) • Which solution will best increase low-achieving students' abilities to succeed in life? (*based on the purpose*) • Which solution will fit in best with the existing curriculum? (*very specific to the UP*) • Since budgets have been cut, which solution will cost the least? (*generic idea logically justified with relevant FS information*) • Since close, trusting relationships with adults creates a climate that supports academic growth, which solution will develop the closest relationships between Harrison students and teachers? (*specific to topic based on relevant research*)

Some Final Tips On Criteria

- **Having trouble thinking of criteria beyond the KVP and Purpose?**
    - Think about two or three of the solutions you feel are among the best. Ask yourself why those solutions are good ones. If you can answer that question, you may have some ideas for criteria.
    - Ask yourself, "What are several ways we will know if the solution is working?" "How can we measure the impact that solving the KVP will have on the Future Scene?" The answers may give you some criteria ideas.
    - Think about the research from the topic. Are there some specific vocabulary words or subtopics you might be able to use in criteria?
- Use generic criteria only as a last resort, and if you must use them, try to modify them by adding specifics from the Future Scene.
- Try to avoid cost. In the real world, the cost of a solution is always important. However, if you use cost, as one of your five criteria, you will often end up with the cheapest solution, not the one that will best solve the problem. Use cost only as a last resort. A better place to address ideas for paying for the solution is in your Step 6 Action Plan.

Using the Grid

- Look at all the solutions you wrote up in Step 3 and choose what you think are the best 8.
- Write each in a short phrase on the grid with the number of each solution from Step 3.
- Use one criterion at a time to rank order your solutions from 8-1. The number 8 goes to the solution that meets the criterion best; 1 meets it least. Be sure to use each number (1-8) only once in a column.
- Have at least two people add to find the total score for each solution.
- If you add up the totals, you should get 180. This is a good check to be sure you have done the grid correctly. If the totals don't add up to 180, there is an error. Check to see if you used two of the same number, or simply added one solution's total incorrectly.
- If there is a tie for the highest total, you must break it and tell us how you did. Some suggestions for breaking a tie:
    - Add a sixth criterion and use it to evaluate just the two tied ideas.
    - If you have a strong feeling one of the tied ideas is better than the other, recheck your rankings to see if you might want to make any changes, but be careful! If you change points, be sure you still have 1-8 in that column and that your totals are correct.
    - Decide which criterion is most important and weight it (double all points so they are 2-16), then add your totals again. If you do this, write "X2" at the top of that criterion.
- Don't waste too much time arguing over each ranking. Do think about how the solution ideas fit the criteria, but try to reach agreement as quickly as you can. Compromise!