

Lesson Plan: Understanding Root Causes for Nontraditional Completion

Purpose: Participants will practice using the Root Causes document to search for effective practices that address specific issues. Participants will gain an understanding of the relationship between the root causes and effective practices for program completion by students preparing for careers which are nontraditional for gender.

Participants: groups of 1 to 4 teachers, counselors, administrators or other individuals who might need to use the 'Root Causes' document and/or who would benefit from understanding the relationship mentioned above.

Time: varies; 10-30 minutes.

Supplies:

1 color effective practices answer key.

1 copy of the Sheets/Lufkin 'Root Causes' document.

Additionally, *each* group of participants will need:

- 1 Root Causes Information Sheet;
- 1 set of 18 'stickers', cut;
- 1 Effective Practices Worksheet;
- 1 black & white effective practices answer key;
- 1 copy of the Nontraditional Completion section of the Sheets/Lufkin 'Root Causes' doc.

Suggested Outline:

1. **Discuss** with participants why we would be interested in understanding the causes of completion/lack of completion of programs by students nontraditional for gender within that program.

By understanding the root causes of completion/lack of completion, we can better address the issues applicable to our students, making efforts more efficient and effective. Additionally, by knowing what issues will be addressed, effective practices for addressing these issues can then be researched (done later in this activity).

2. **Distribute** Root Causes Information Sheet; as a large group, briefly **review** the root causes for low numbers of students completing programs which are nontraditional for their gender. Presenter may choose to read to participants, have participants 'round-robin' read, or just ask students to look over the sheet. If time permits, **ask** participants to share thoughts/feelings/questions regarding information. Have any of them seen these root causes 'in action'? Anyone disagree with some of the root causes?

3. **Hand out** Effective Practices worksheet & sticker sets. **Introduce** the idea that research has already been started on the effective practices to address these issues. **Assign** each group one or two root causes to solve first. (No group should be assigned to "loose screws" as that is a root cause that is outside of an educator's control).

4. **Challenge** participants to complete the worksheet in 5 minutes—following the directions on the worksheet.
- Participants should first work to find the effective practices which address the root cause(s) they have been assigned.
 - Stress that neither the effective practices, nor the root causes represented are a final list, simply the items researched for this ‘root causes’ document. Participants should look for the BEST answer.
 - You may wish to give the hint that the root causes document will be VERY helpful when completing this activity.
5. **Pass out** black and white answer keys to groups. And have participants **compare** their answers to those on the key. **Share** examples and evidence from the Sheets/Lufkin ‘Root Causes’ document. **Discuss** results.

Were there some root causes/effective practices combinations not addressed on the answer key that you feel strongly about?

Which of these effective practices do you already employ?

Which of these effective practices could you employ?

What assistance would you need in order to employ these effective practices?

6. **Ask** for feedback on the difficulty of ‘researching’ effective practices for their assigned root causes. Participants should respond that the ‘research’ was relatively easy—they simply needed to look down the ‘root causes’ column of the Effective Practices section of the document, then follow the row over to see what effective practice could address the root cause. **Highlight** that the relationship between the root causes and the effective practices has been researched and shown to be successful; by using these suggested effective practices, resources can be used more efficiently and effectively. Additionally, because of the ease of use of this document, there should be ‘no excuses’ to not consider researched practices when planning for future programs.