



Youth PQA Program Self-Assessment *Crash Course*



DAVID P. WEIKART
**CENTER FOR YOUTH
PROGRAM QUALITY**

A joint venture between the Forum and High/Scope.

“No man was ever so much
deceived by another as by
himself.”

- Fulke Greville

Youth Program Quality Intervention (YPQI)

ASSESS

Conduct SA
(YPQI Team)

Conduct EA
(External assessor)

[Collect other data]

PLAN

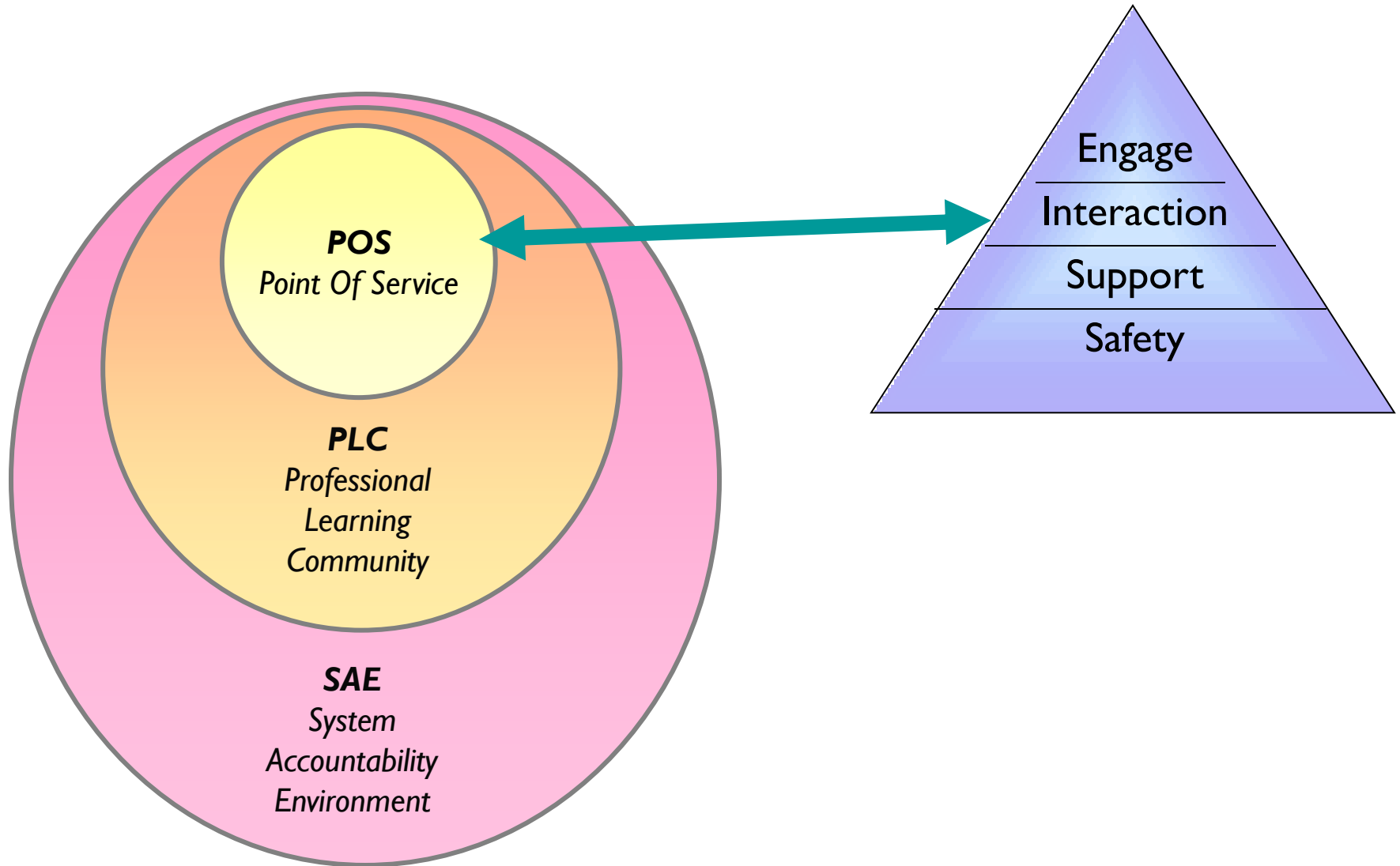
**Create
improvement plan**
(YPQI Team)

IMPROVE

**Carry out
improvement plan**
(Mgr coaches; Stf
do)

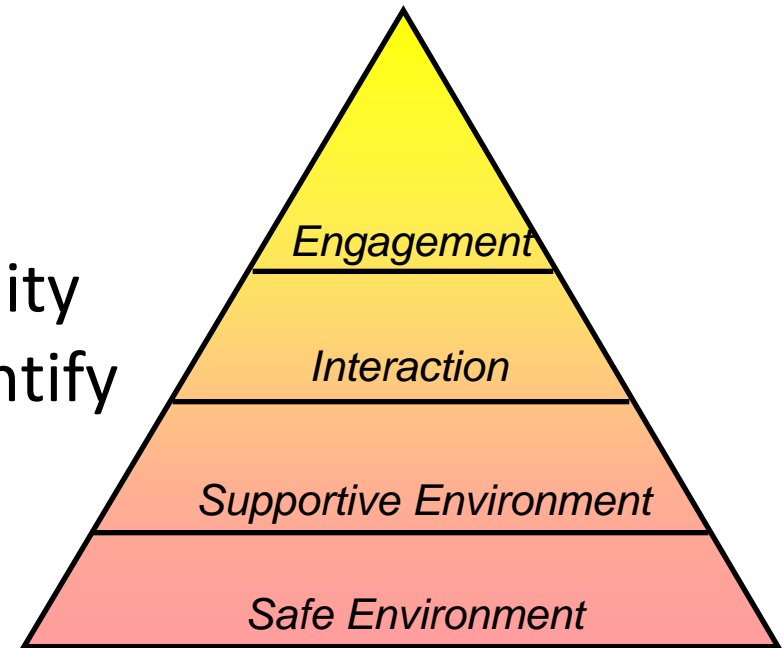
(repeat)

Framing POS Performance in Multi-Level Context



What Is the Youth PQA?

1. A **validated** instrument designed to assess the quality of youth programs and identify staff training needs.
2. A set of items that measures youth access to **key developmental experiences**.
3. A tool that produces scores that can be used for comparison and assessment of **progress over time**.



Structure of the Youth PQA

Form B

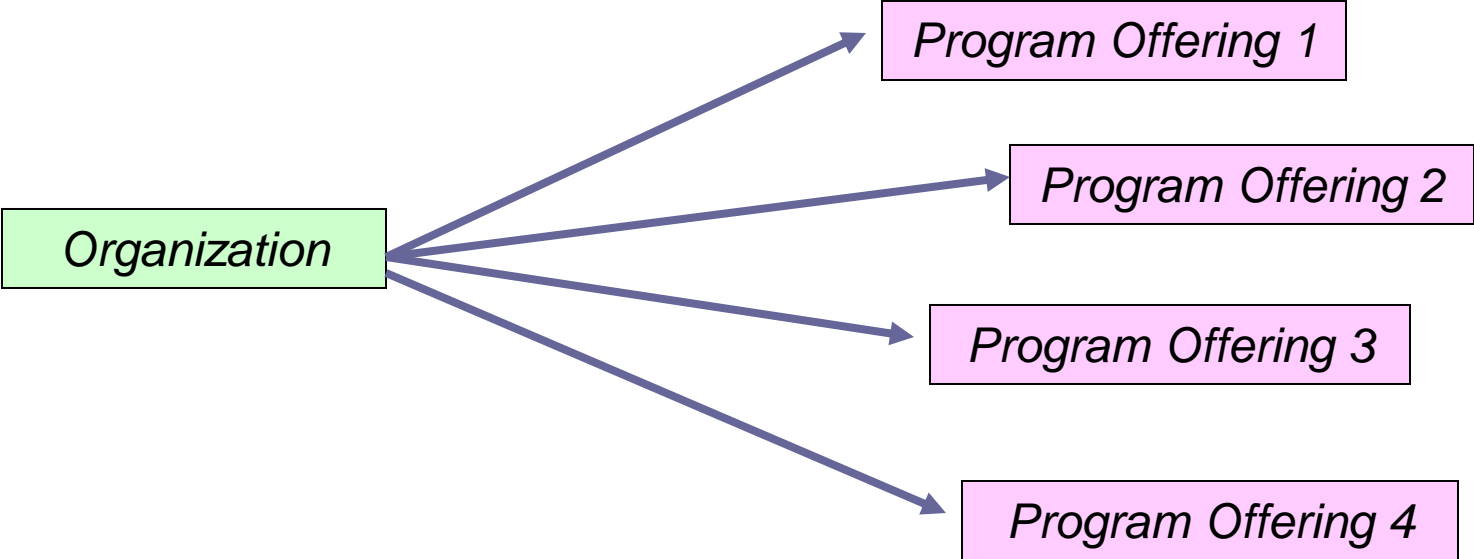
Organizational Interview

*Ask questions, write, score
(2 hours)*

Form A

Observation

Watch, write, score (3 hours)



Sample Rubric

“domain”

“anecdotal evidence”

“scale”

III. Interaction

III-L. Youth have opportunities to develop a sense of belonging.

Note: **Structured** refers to the quality of being intentional, planned, and/or named; it does not refer to informal conversation.

Items

1 Youth have no opportunities to get to know each other (beyond self-selected pairs or small cliques).

3 Youth have informal opportunities to get to know each other (e.g., youth engage in informal conversations before, during, or after session).

5 Youth have structured opportunities to get to know each other (e.g., there are team-building activities, introductions, personal updates, welcomes of new group members, icebreakers, and a variety of groupings for activities)

Supporting Evidence

The staff started the session by facilitating 2 icebreakers (all of my neighbors and 2 truths and a lie)

“item row”

- The Youth PQA consists of
2 Forms (Form A & Form B); **7** Domains (4 in A, 3 in B)
30 items (18 in A, 12 in B); **103** item rows (60 in A, 43 in B)

Self-Assessment Methodology

STEP 1 **Select the team,
which includes frontline staff**

STEP 2 **Plan the data collection**
When will data be collected? How long will staff watch each other? Who watches whom? How many times?

STEP 3 **Collect data (Observe and take notes)**
Each staff should collect several pages of notes and begin to identify anecdotes that fit in items.

STEP 4 **Have a scoring meeting**
Go through Form A, indicator by indicator. Select an anecdote for each indicator and agree on a score for that indicator. Try to be honest—self-assessment is only as useful as you make it; if you're not honest, you're wasting your time. If you choose to use Form B, simply discuss each indicator and come to consensus on a score.

STEP 5 **Enter & report data**
Type indicator scores into the Scores Reporter to generate an automatic report, or generate your own.

STEP 3: Collect data (Weak Anecdotes)

1. There was some reflection.
2. Youth got to choose where the furniture went.

What makes these anecdotes weak?

How would you re-word these anecdotes to make them more effective?

STEP 3: Collect data (Stronger Anecdotes)

- With 10 minutes left, staff distributed index cards and asked youth to “write one thing you liked about today’s session and one thing you would have changed.” She then collected the cards.
- As youth and staff were setting up folding chairs for movie night, staff said, “How do you think we should set these up so people can see and still get to the bathroom?”

Note-Taking Guidelines

Effective

- Objective as possible
- Rich detail in snapshot form
- Focus on interactions between
 - Staff and youth
 - Youth and youth
 - Youth and environment
- Allow time for interactions to reach completion
- State the outcome of interactions
- Who, what, when, where
- Quotes: what youth and staff say
- Lists of materials
- What you see in the room
- Anecdote can stand alone

Ineffective

- Subjective terms such as ‘good’ or ‘bad’
- Rater’s opinions
- Assumptions about internal states: *she felt angry; he did not get it*
- Anecdotes are too vague; lack detail
- Lacking facts: what you see and hear
- Summary in the place of quotes
- Raters repeat what the indicator says
- For a 3 involving some positive and some negative, raters have one but not the other
- Anecdote does not fit the indicator
- Anecdote could support more than one score

STEP 4: Your Scoring Meeting

- Start at the beginning of Form A, and go indicator by indicator.
- Carefully read the three levels of an indicator row and determine who has evidence that fits. You must have evidence for every score you give.
- Based on your evidence, score the indicator row: Choose the number (1, 3, or 5) that best matches your evidence and enter it in the box.
- To compute Item scores, add up the indicator scores and divide by the number of indicators.

Create a Program Improvement Plan

1. Set Goals
2. Measure Success
3. Set Steps Toward Reaching Goals
4. Ask for Support



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