Discussion of the Results of the Site Visit Surveys 2015-16
November 2016

Introduction
This agenda item presents the data collected after the 2015-16 site visit from the site visit team leads. This data is presented to help inform future training of consultants, team leads, and site visit team members.

Results from Site Visit Team Lead
After each accreditation visit, the Commission consultant assigned to the visit sends a link to a survey monkey to 1) the institution that was reviewed, 2) site visit team lead, and 3) site visit team members. In addition, consultants are also surveyed. The Commission staff is currently in the process of analyzing the results of the surveys to help inform future site visit staffing, training efforts, and materials development.

Due to limited staff time, this agenda item addresses only the survey responses from site visit team leads. At the next COA meeting, Commission staff will provide information on the survey responses from institutions and team members. Because of the critical role that team leads play in the site visit process, staff felt that this set of surveys was the most critical to review first.

Responsiveness of Consultants to the Team Lead
A total of 31 site visit team leads responded to the survey for a return rate of nearly 80%. The first area we ask team leads to rate is the responsiveness of the site visit consultant. The results were overwhelmingly positive. On a scale of 1-4, the survey ask team leads how consultants did on five different areas pertaining to the site visit. The data is summarized below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsiveness of Consultants</th>
<th>Weak</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Strong</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Timely information</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>3.23%</td>
<td>6.45%</td>
<td>90.32%</td>
<td>3.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicated the process well</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>3.23%</td>
<td>9.68%</td>
<td>87.10%</td>
<td>3.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answered questions, secured additional information</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>3.23%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>96.77%</td>
<td>3.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supported me in facilitating the work of the team</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>3.23%</td>
<td>3.23%</td>
<td>93.55%</td>
<td>3.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worked with team members who needed additional guidance</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>3.23%</td>
<td>6.45%</td>
<td>90.32%</td>
<td>3.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Of those few site visits that were assigned a second site consultant, the second consultant scored equally as high as the first consultant, with 3 out of 4 areas securing a 4.0 score. On timely information being shared, the second consultant scored an average of 3.2.

*Effective Strategies Employed by Team Leads*

When asked what effective strategies the consultants used during the site visits that could be shared with others, some sample responses were as follows:

- Consultant supported the team in every way.
- Great communication throughout, made the entire process seem smooth and manageable. Guidance on the process of determining findings, contact with Division director when extra guidance was needed.
- Consultant was very positive and reinforced this with all of the visit.
- Consultant is always so wonderful to her teams. She carefully reads each portion of our report and gives us measured feedback while allowing us to have our own voice and perceptions. She is so well-versed in the standards that it is always helpful as we maneuver through the recommendation and see where we might need more information. It made the process so smooth and gave us enough time.
- Consultants were both very good about responding immediately to any question or concerns raised by the team. And they both worked effectively with the NCATE team lead.
- Providing sentence frames, sentence starters when we were stuck on wording parts of the report.
- She supported a collaborative work environment and provided information as team members had a need.
- Our consultant used clear communication patterns and shared resources and samples to support the coordinator of the institution. She also responded quickly to emails and was always there for support.
• Consultant was very clear in her communication both before and during the site visit. This was not the easiest visit but consultant was instrumental in making sure that both the team and the program staff were supported in their efforts and felt comfortable in the process. I can’t thank her enough for tremendous leadership and guidance.
• Consultant was incredibly organized. She also had the foresight to have us do as many quality interviews as soon as possible so that we had plenty of time to gather information to see where we might need more information. It made the process so smooth and gave us enough time to start writing the report to see what else we might still need.

Evaluation of the team

The site visit team lead was also asked to evaluate the team in five areas: 1) completing preparatory work prior to arriving at site visit, 2) functioning as a team, 3) gathering and reporting information, 4) deliberating and coming to standard findings, 5) and writing the report. The data is summarized below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Area</th>
<th>Weak</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Strong</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completing preparatory work prior to arriving at site visit</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functioning as a team, collaborating</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gathering and reporting information</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliberating and coming to standards findings</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>76.7</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing the Report</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Upon reflection, how would you evaluate the work of the site team in:

- writing the report?
- deliberating and coming to standards findings?
- gathering and reporting information?
- functioning as a team, collaborating?
- completing preparatory work prior to arriving at the visit?
Identifying New Leaders and Struggling Team Members

In looking to grow the Commission’s leadership pool in the future for site visits, the question was asked whether there were any individuals serving on the teams that show potential to be a team lead. Approximately 75% of team leads responded yes. Twenty one of the 31 respondents gave us names of individuals who had served on their team that could be tapped for team lead positions in the future.

The team leads were also asked whether there were some members who struggled or who appeared to struggle. This information is extremely valuable to future training as well as staffing of site visits. 27.6 percent of team leads responded yes and offer specific examples. Samples include:

- Team member seemed to be having difficulty setting aside his own notions of how programs should work (based on his personal employment experience) from how the institutions under review organized and operated its programs.
- Team member tends to be focused on certain issues and has a very hard time letting these issues go. She can be rigid in her thinking. She can also be too forceful in her interviews with stakeholders.
- I was surprised to learn during the site visit that team member had not been BIR trained and that this was her first visit. As a result, I was unclear how much she knew about her role for program sampling late into the visit. While no direct fault of hers, the lack of training and previous experience became evident.
- Team member struggles with the writing of the team report.
- Team member had a lot of interest in details beyond what was needed; this slowed some of the discussion and writing process.
- Team member struggled some with keeping up the pace, and the writing seemed difficult/tedious for her. Both consultants had to bring her back to the language of the standards on multiple occasions.

Utilization of Effective Practice as a Team Lead

The Commission asked team leads whether they had employed any particularly effective practices with their teams. Over 86% of the team leads offered examples of particularly effective practices. Some of the responses include the following:

- I think having open and regular communication facilitates my team working well together.
- The two phone calls were very important and productive. All of the forms that were sent by our consultant were also helpful.
- Electronic organization of questions by stakeholder groups. Allowed for easy collection toward the report writing.
- Also monitoring stress levels, providing encouraging feedback, reminding them of what a great job they are doing.
- I emailed my team with mini-tasks frequently prior to the two week out conference call. By the time we talked to one another, we already had a draft of the questions we’d ask.
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our call, I sent a preliminary working report to my team and we collaboratively wrote our standards sections before the site visit started. Because of our frequent communication and technological collaboration, we were able to write the report on site in a truncated amount of time from what is considered the norm on a site visit. We even went out to dinner on night two!

- Having the time to talk candidly with the consultant without the other team members present was helpful. I had the opportunity to voice concerns before hitting the ground running.
- Frequent check-in meetings to see how members were progressing.
- I just tried to be supportive and encouraging. I shared some ideas for framing interview questions and managing time as well as the report preparation.

Identification of What They Would Do Differently

In addition to asking about effective practice, the survey asked team leads what they would do differently next time. Many of the results are included below:

- I think that I may personally contact new members who are added to the team at the last minute. I e-mailed them, but I think a zoom meeting would be helpful for their orientation to the team and the work ahead of us.
- Would have our first phone call a little earlier in the process. Work a little harder to have the interview schedule from the site to the team earlier.
- Because it included CTE, I would have worked to understand these standards a little more before the site visit.
- It was frustrating to have the team members change before the visit. It made it difficult to work together to prepare for the visit. I did not feel that team members came to the review with good knowledge of the program which would have occurred if we had been able to confer around the documentation provided prior to arriving at the site visit.
- Delve deeper into team members’ knowledge and experience in order to better facilitate report writing.
- Providing reading tasks in smaller chunks or provide samples of writing if I see someone isn’t getting started in advance.
- I don't know that I'd do anything quite differently, but a few thoughts come to mind about this year's visit. It was interesting for me to have a consultant on hand for my first few times being a team lead, then not have one on site - though readily available as needed via phone and email, and then have a consultant again. It was fine having one on site, but this year's visit was smooth so I didn't have much for the consultant to do. I hope in the future I can stick to my timelines for communicating with my team. I think I've done a decent job of being in touch, but when the rest of work life is crazy I want to make sure my team feels supported.
- Next time as team lead, I would encourage more accountability in pre-visit writing activities. I would also do more check in calls and emails prior to the visit.
- This visit was unique in that the consultant and I had both worked closely with the LEA to ensure we were "good to go", but the LEA still had some dropped balls. The only thing I would do differently is ask more pointed questions/not accept general "We are sooooo ready for the team!" responses because, despite all our work and clear communication, somewhere
someone on the LEA team wasn't 100% ready. . .all turned out just fine and the consultant was wonderful during this "surprise", but it put undue stress on my team. So no more accepting, "We are all good!' I will ask, "Explain the concise steps you have taken and exactly how many people you expect at each interview session."

- More time on site visit schedule at pre-visit--this may have taken less interim communication if we spent more time on it while we were together; follow up email on agreed changes before they send revised schedule
- Nothing, I felt that this was a great process. It was wonderful having so much done before the visit.
- I would like to make sure more of the writing is done beforehand. Also, I think I made some assumptions about the way and quality with which documents should be prepared by the program. Assuming they would have been better prepared than they were, created some difficulties for the team. In a lesser quality program, this would have impacted the team's work in a negative way.
- I am not sure what I would do differently. This experience was pretty easy with an enthusiastic and focused team and an institution that did everything they needed to do to make the process run smoothly. There were just two programs to sample and I did common standards with one other team member. Bob Loux was amazing and made the experience very easy and enjoyable.
- I would have interacted with the institution even before the 2 month out to make sure the response to the Common Standards was adequate.
- Institution had several key staff changes right before visit - some way to provide them with more direct assistance from me as team lead - talk them through some things they just couldn't get a handle on (interview system/set-up) until team was there.
- It was difficult for the coordinator to get the interview schedules ready on time and there was not quite enough time to write...I would push a little harder on her to get those done early enough for changes if needed
- As a lead, I would have liked to have seen the interview schedule earlier. In hindsight, I think we could have had fewer students and more people in other roles.
- I think that I would attend the 2 month out meeting in person rather than by phone. I would have had a clearer picture of the district and program context going into the visit if I had.
- I ended up writing more of report than initially planned to help out one team member and I think I should plan that from beginning just to make the process move more smoothly as there is enough time for lead to do so.
- Ensure that more prewriting is completed by all team members prior to arrival at the site.
- If I were to lead another site visit, this experience will feed my confidence level. I think that it is daunting to be the lead especially when it is your first go-round. I was definitely second-guessing myself at every turn and doing a lot of reading to make sure I wasn’t letting action items slip by that I was supposed to be doing. This experience will help. The BIR website was crucial to assisting me in remembering all of the components of a site visit. When we only do something once per year, it’s easy to forget the details.
- Nothing. It was GREAT!
Summary and Next Steps
The COA is asked to discuss these findings and recommendations from team leads and to provide some guidance for consideration in team lead selection, recruitment, training, as well as the selection, recruitment, and training for site visit team members.