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Using Vignettes to Improve Staff Knowledge about Program Quality

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**Costly &
Time consuming**



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Quality Standards for Expanded Learning in California:

Creating and Implementing a Shared Vision of Quality

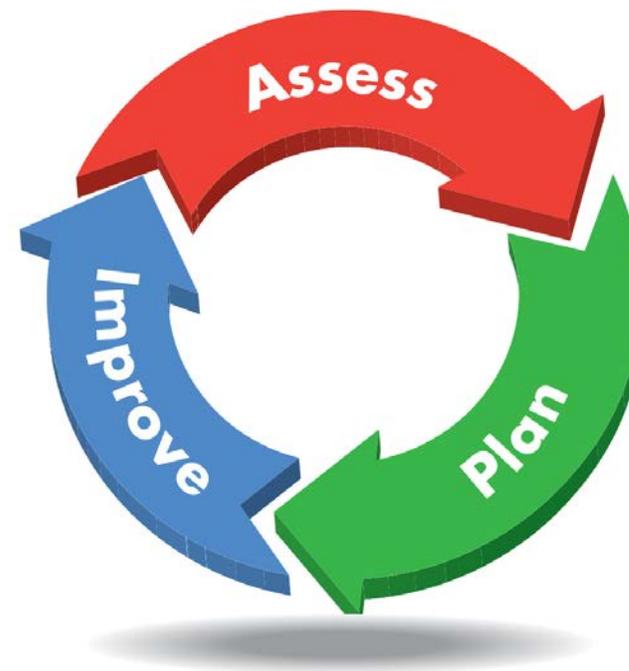


“This bold initiative provides a road map for improving expanded learning throughout California.”

– Tom Torlakson
Superintendent of Public Instruction

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Informed by Expanded learning stakeholders and practitioners, and produced in collaboration between the California Department of Education, After School Division, and the California AfterSchool Network.



Continuous quality improvement cycle



VIGNETTES!

Reading

Lectures

Presentations

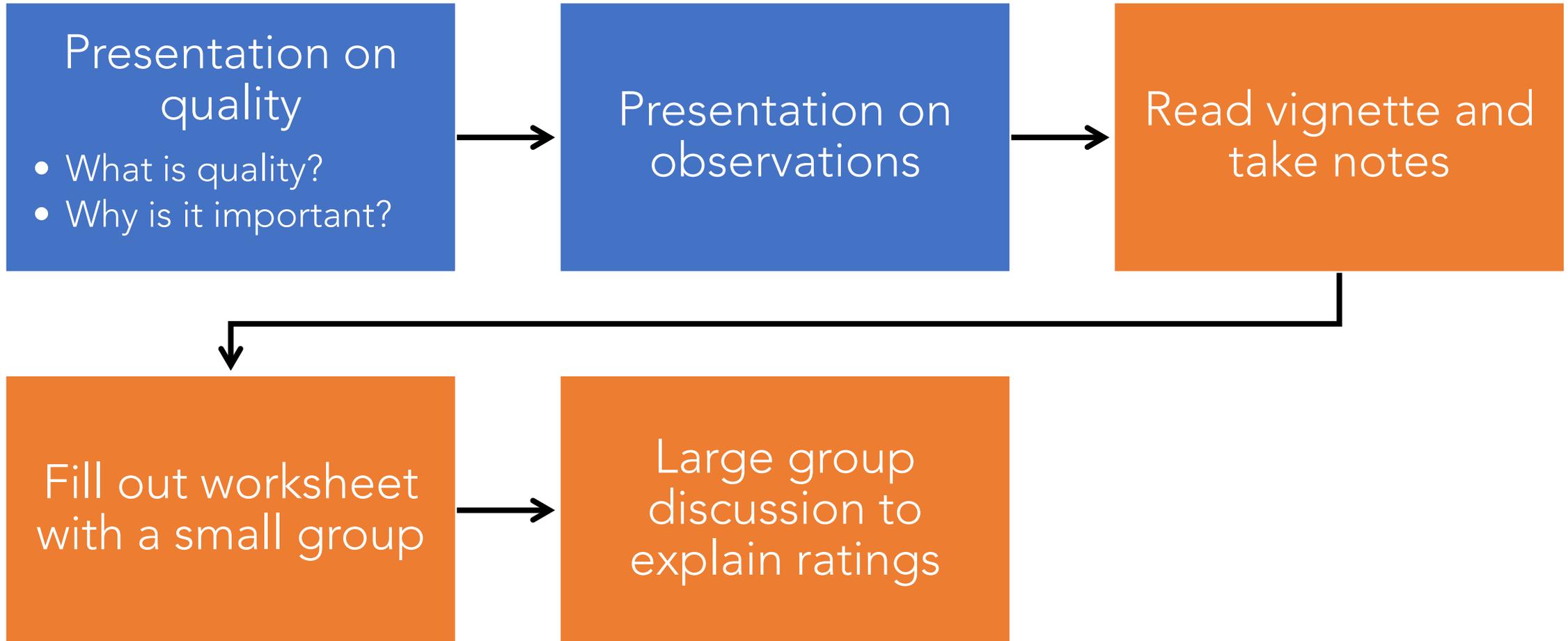
Demonstrations



Vignettes

- short, descriptive literary sketches, scenarios, or stories
- Used as a research methodology in a wide range of fields
 - Bradbury-Jones, Taylor, & Herber, 2014
- Designed based on multiple years' experience observing their programs
- Designed around the CDE quality standards
- One quality standard was low quality, the rest were moderate or high quality
- Also had activity worksheets

Vignette Observation Trainings



Low Capacity Program Staff

High Capacity Program Staff

Budding Evaluators

Site coordinators

- mostly college students or graduates

Accountability-driven

Low evaluative thinking

Little experience working directly in an evaluation

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Budding Evaluators

First and second year graduate students with 0-2 years evaluation training

Quality-driven

Highest evaluative thinking

Range of experiences working directly in an evaluation, but mostly higher than program staff

Low Capacity Program Staff

High Capacity Program Staff

Budding Evaluators

Activity Description	1. Safe and Supportive Environment	Rating + Evidence:
Space Appropriate? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <i>If no, why?</i>	Staff practices:	
Distractions which interfere? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <i>If yes, what?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respectful and warm towards students Building and maintaining trusting, nurturing, and supportive relationships 	
Resources Sufficient? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <i>If no, youth w/o productively engaged?</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High expectations for behavior and achievement Actively encourage positive youth interactions 	
Developmentally Appropriate? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <i>If no, why?</i>	Student responses:	
What was the intended goal of the activity? Was this explicitly stated by the staff?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek positive relationships with staff and treat staff with respect Positive youth interactions 	
	2. Active and Engaged Learning	Rating + Evidence:
Describe the structure of the activity. What happened? What did the staff and students do?	Staff practices:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activity is hands-on and cognitively challenging Activity has a clear purpose Staff provide youth opportunities to talk about what they are doing and thinking 	
	Student responses:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth are busy and engaged in the activity Youth discuss the activity Youth appear to be enjoying the activity 	
Strengths	3. Skill Building	Rating + Evidence:
What are at least 2 <u>strengths</u> you observed at this site?	Staff practices:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activity involves teaching a new skill or building on previously learned skills Provides skill instruction, including demonstration or modeling of skills Monitor student progress and provide feedback Encourage higher levels of performance Ask open-ended questions to the group to extend student learning <i>HW:</i> Provide youth with structured, developmentally appropriate academic activities if they have no homework 	
	Student responses:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students ask questions to extend their own learning Students strive for higher levels of performance 	
Areas of Improvement	4. Youth Voice and Leadership	Rating + Evidence:
What are at least 2 <u>areas of improvement</u> you observed at this site?	Staff practices:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide opportunities for youth to make at least one choice on <i>what</i> they will do and <i>how</i> they will do it Actively encourage youth input, feedback, and opinions, and incorporate it into session plans Provide youth opportunities to take on leadership roles as mentors or group leaders regardless of age Provide youth opportunities to work cooperatively as a team or group 	
	Student responses:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth seek out leadership opportunities Youth provide feedback both to each other and to staff 	
Recommendations		
What are at least 2 <u>actionable recommendations</u> you would provide to staff at this site?		

0=Low Quality
Needs Much Improvement

1=Moderate Quality
Some Improvement Needed

2=High Quality
Little Improvement Needed

Low Capacity Program Staff

High Capacity Program Staff

Budding Evaluators

Activity Description	1. Safe and Supportive Environment		Notes and Specific Examples
Space Appropriate? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <i>If no, why?</i>	1. Staff are respectful and warm towards students		
Distractions which interfere? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <i>If yes, what?</i>	2. Staff build and maintain trusting, nurturing, and supportive relationships with students		
Resources Sufficient? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <i>If no, youth w/o productively engaged? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N</i>	3. Staff have high expectations for behavior and achievement		
Developmentally Appropriate? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <i>If no, why?</i>	4. Staff actively encourage positive youth interactions		
What was the intended goal of the activity? Was this explicitly stated by the staff?	5. Students seek positive relationships with staff and treat staff with respect		
Describe the structure of the activity. What happened? What did the staff and students do?	6. Students interact positively with one another		
	2. Active and Engaged Learning		
	1. Activity is hands-on and cognitively engaging		
	2. Activity has a clear purpose		
	3. Staff provide youth opportunities to talk about what they are doing and thinking		
	4. Youth are busy and engaged in the activity		
	5. Youth discuss the activity		
	6. Youth appear to be enjoying the activity		
	3. Skill Building		
What are at least 2 <u>strengths</u> you observed at this site?	1. Activity involves teaching a new skill or building on previously learned skills		
	2. Staff provides skill instruction, including demonstration or modeling of skills		
	3. Staff monitor student progress and provide feedback		
	4. Staff encourage higher levels of performance		
	5. Staff ask open-ended questions to the group to extend student learning		
	6. Students ask questions to extend their own learning		
	7. Students strive for higher levels of performance		
	8. <i>HW:</i> Staff provide youth with structured, developmentally appropriate academic activities if they have no homework		
	4. Youth Voice and Leadership		
What are at least 2 <u>areas of improvement</u> you observed at this site?	1. Staff provide opportunities for youth to make at least one choice on <i>what</i> they will do and <i>how</i> they will do it		
	2. Staff actively encourage youth input, feedback, and opinions, and incorporate it into session plans		
	3. Staff provide youth opportunities to take on leadership roles as mentors or group leaders regardless of age		
	4. Staff provide youth opportunities to work cooperatively as a team or group		
	5. Youth seek out leadership opportunities		
	6. Youth provide feedback both to each other and to staff		

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Low Capacity Program Staff

Most staff disengaged throughout the process (*Just another thing I have to do...*)

Low implementation of the quality observations in their work

High Capacity Program Staff

Budding Evaluators

Low Capacity Program Staff

Most staff disengaged throughout the process (*Just another thing I have to do...*)

Low implementation of the quality observations in their work

High Capacity Program Staff

Highly engaged in the process

Higher implementation of the quality observations in their work

Many staff said the vignette training was very helpful in learning about quality and subsequently used the observation rating tool to observe their staff

Budding Evaluators

Low Capacity Program Staff

Most staff disengaged throughout the process (*Just another thing I have to do...*)

Low implementation of the quality observations in their work

High Capacity Program Staff

Highly engaged in the process

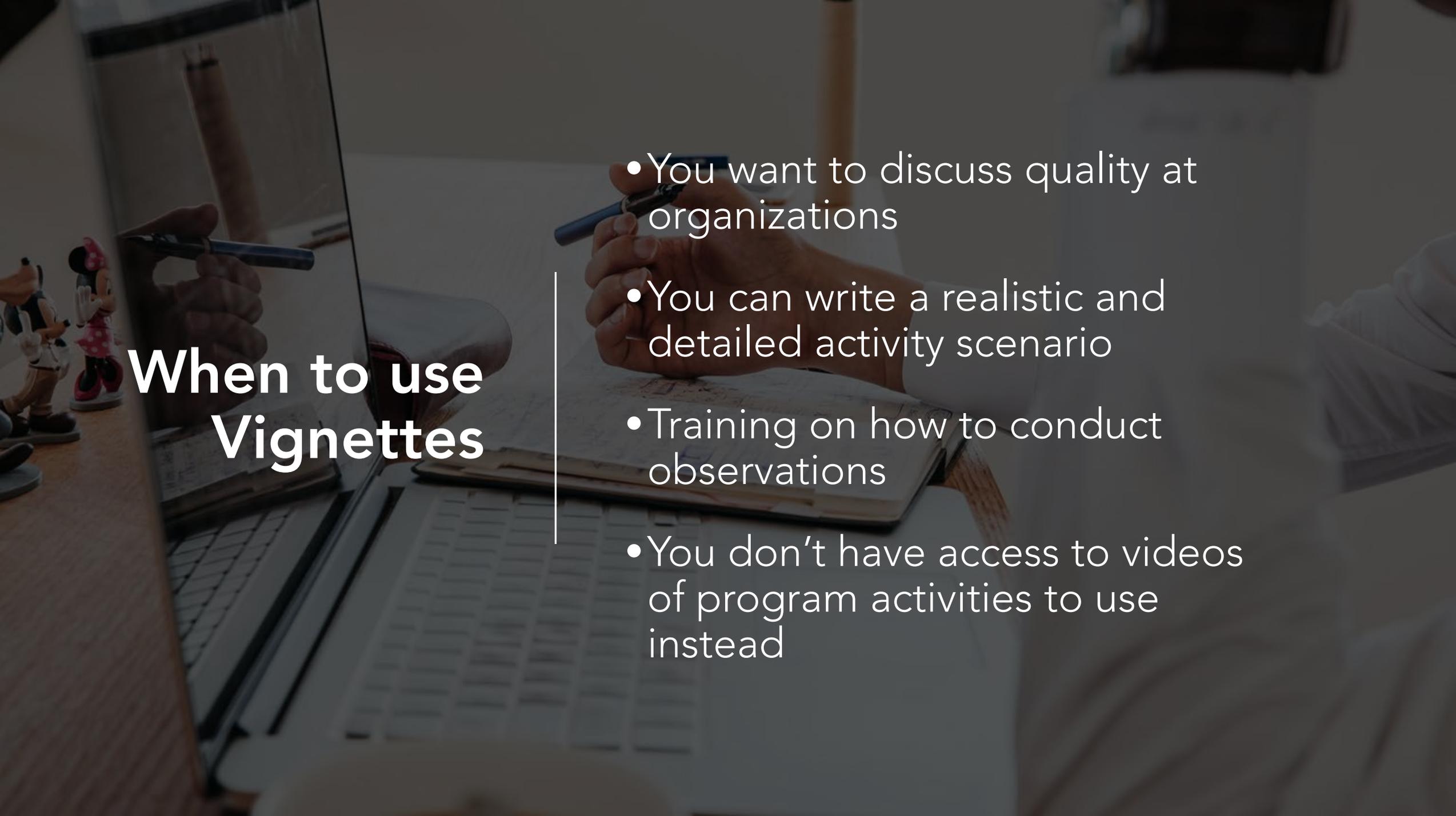
Higher implementation of the quality observations in their work

Many staff said the vignette training was very helpful in learning about quality and subsequently used the observation rating tool to observe their staff

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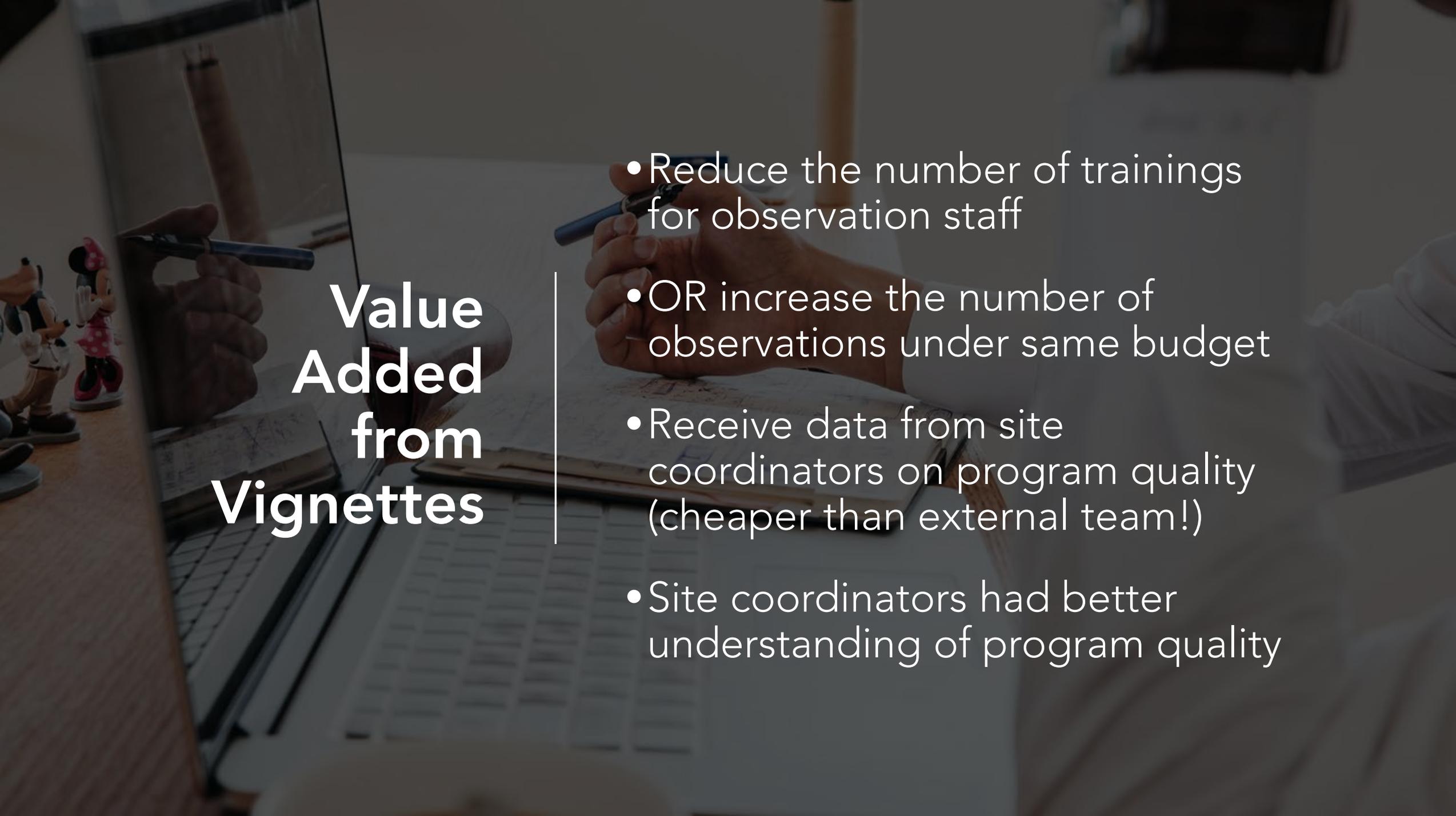
Highly engaged in the process

The vignette training helped inexperienced evaluators learn about the program processes, but not so much about observation processes. Still need more support to be better prepared for their first site observation.



When to use Vignettes

- You want to discuss quality at organizations
- You can write a realistic and detailed activity scenario
- Training on how to conduct observations
- You don't have access to videos of program activities to use instead



Value Added from Vignettes

- Reduce the number of trainings for observation staff
- OR increase the number of observations under same budget
- Receive data from site coordinators on program quality (cheaper than external team!)
- Site coordinators had better understanding of program quality

Questions?



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