

Leading a Team to Conduct Action Research



Georgia Leadership Institute
for School Improvement

**A Performance-based Learning Module
for Georgia's Educational Leaders**

Related Modules

Related GLISI Modules

Other modules related to this topic include:

- *Leading Team Discussions*
 - *Leading a Team Through Group Decision-making Processes*
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Performance Objective(s)

Given This...	Do This...	To Meet These Criteria...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minimum of 24 hours divided into multiple sessions • Working on your own • A team of 2 to 4 peers • A school setting • Access to the internet • Administrative approval to conduct collaborative action research • Access to data, such as attendance records and test scores, pertaining to your action research project • Materials needed to engage a team in discussion and documentation of ideas, including pens, notepads, a flip chart or whiteboard 	<p>Lead a team to apply collaborative action research in a school setting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The detailed task performance criteria listed in the Performance Checklists in the Topic Practice(s), Final Practice, and Final Assessment • GLISI's criteria for how to work effectively as a team leader/facilitator, listed in the Performance Feedback Form(s) located in the Final Practice and Final Assessment

Module Introduction

Leading a Team to Conduct Action Research

Action research is a type of formalized problem solving in which practitioners collect and use data to assess student performance and investigate potential solutions to problems. Schools that regularly conduct effective action research demonstrate improved achievement over time. Action research provides the information teachers and leaders need to solve problems that are most relevant to their classrooms and schools.

In this module you will:

- Identify issues that make potential action research topics
 - Review scholarly literature related to those issues
 - Conduct action research for the most relevant and viable issue
 - Analyze the results of the research
-

**Key Action
Research
Concepts**

Typical qualitative data collection techniques used in action research include the following: participant observation, interviews, questionnaires, attitude scales, standardized tests, archival documents, journals, audiotapes and videotapes, artifacts, and field notes.

- Triangulation is the collection of information in many ways rather than relying solely on one source. It is also referred to as a "multi-instrument" approach.
- Validity in action research refers to how we know that the data we collect (test scores, for example) accurately gauge what we are trying to measure.
- Reliability refers to the consistency with which our data measures what we are attempting to measure over time.
- Data analysis is an attempt by the teacher researcher to summarize the data that have been collected in a dependable, accurate, reliable, and correct manner. It is the presentation of findings in a way that has an air of undeniability.
- Data interpretation is an attempt by the researcher to find meaning in the data, to answer the question "So what?" Data interpretation focuses on the implications or meanings of the study's findings.

(Source: <http://www.sou.edu/education/ActionResearch/summary.htm>)

**Collaborative
Action Research**

There are many forms and varying levels of action research, such as individual teacher or leader, collaborative, and school wide. This module focuses on collaborative action research, in which you work with peers to improve teaching and learning in one or more classrooms, or across a department or grade level, or at the school level.

Five-step Process

There are many acceptable approaches and variations to action research. In general, action research follows a five-step process:

1. Problem formation
2. Data collection
3. Data analysis
4. Reporting of results
5. Action planning

This module touches on each of these steps throughout topics 1-4.

What Is the Leader's Role?

- Be prepared with the necessary materials and supplies
 - Schedule and communicate meeting times and locations to participants
 - Thank the participants, acknowledging everyone's worthwhile contribution to the group and commitment to future actions
-

Begin With The End in Mind

Research about effective assessment of performance tells us that the learner always performs better when they understand what they should know and be able to do. For this reason, you are encouraged to **review the Final Assessment in its entirety** in order to:

- Understand the knowledge, skills, and behaviors that are being taught and tested in this module
 - Understand the standards (performance criteria) by which your performance will be assessed
 - Gauge your current level of performance against what will be expected of you by the end of the module
 - Prioritize which areas to concentrate on as you work through the module
-

Topic 1: Selecting an Action Research Topic

Selecting an Action Research Topic

Action research begins with the selection of a topic to study. What might seem simple — choosing one of the many issues facing your team or grade level to study — is actually critical to establishing a stable research project that produces useful results.

It is not necessary to have a topic in mind prior to beginning this first step. All you need is an open mind and a desire to seek out ways to improve teaching and learning for your students and peers.

In this topic you will:

- Identify and prioritize issues affecting student learning within your organization
- Analyze potential action research topics for viability

Brainstorming Guidelines

Brainstorming is one of several methods used to identify potential action research topics. Brainstorming is a technique of shared problem solving in which all members of a team spontaneously contribute ideas. Consider the following guidelines when brainstorming:

- A good brainstorming session is most effective when led by an unbiased facilitator who keeps the team focused and on track. Individuals are encouraged to actively participate and all ideas are documented.
 - Set the ground rules, including a time limit, for how ideas will be captured and the rules of engagement for the brainstorming session.
 - There must be no criticizing of ideas. Having fun is to be encouraged.
 - A facilitator should document all ideas and avoid rewording the team members' responses.
-

How Do I Do It?

- Read through the steps in the step-action table (see next page)
 - Study any accompanying examples
 - Complete the practice exercise
 - Share the results with your Performance Coach
-

Step-Action Table

Step	Action
<p>1. Identify existing issues</p>	<p>Brainstorm a list of all existing issues affecting student learning for the group with which you work, such as a grade level or team. Some issues may come from analysis of your students' test scores, changing demographics, or issues related to organizational effectiveness.</p> <p>Focus on the issues that matter the most to you. Take into account all aspects of the issues under consideration, such as relevance, range, and related factors and variables.</p> <p>Examples of issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework completion • Reading comprehension • Appropriate instructional interventions • Math proficiency • Student motivation • Conflict among students • Writing skill deficiencies • Absence of goal setting • Scheduling limitations • Parent involvement and partnerships • Gender equity in the classroom • Integrating available technology into everyday instruction
<p>2. Prioritize the issues</p>	<p>Prioritize the issues based on their affect on student achievement. Give the issues that have a greater impact on student achievement higher priority.</p>

Step	Action
<p>3. Analyze the issues</p>	<p>Analyze the top three issues to determine their appropriateness for potential topics. Use the following questions, as well as others you think of, to facilitate the analysis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the purpose (goal) of the action research project for this issue? • What are the objectives (that lead to the goal)? • How will your class, school system, and/or state initiatives impact the action research project for this issue? • Will the experimental design result in negative achievement that could affect students' school success? • Are the identified issues areas that would be acceptable to parents? • Are resources available to fully apply the research design?
<p>4. Adjust priority</p>	<p>Based on results of the analysis, adjust the priority order of the issues, if needed.</p>
<p>5. Establish the research question(s)</p>	<p>For each issue, establish the question(s) you will attempt to answer through the action research. Use the criteria listed below (Robinson, 2006) to check and clarify your question(s).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does your question capture exactly what you want to know? • Is the question specific enough to be manageable with the resources available? • Is the project likely to gain the necessary approval and cooperation of relevant others? • What is the practical importance of this question? • What is the theoretical importance of this question?

Practice Exercise

Instructions

- Follow the steps in the Step-Action Table for this topic
- Complete the Practice Worksheet and/or forms, listing results that are realistic based on the information in the practice scenario below
- Check your work
- Meet with your Performance Coach to review the results and decide what to do next

Practice Scenario

Imagine you are a fifth grade teacher at Dusty Canyon Elementary School and that you have identified the following five issues affecting your grade level. Work alone or with a partner to prioritize, analyze, and select three of the five issues as potential action research topics. Complete the practice worksheet, listing results that are realistic based on the information provided.

Refer to the topic step-action table as needed. Share the results with your coach.

- Reluctant readers
- Hallway crowding during class changes
- Morning traffic problems in the parking lot during drop off and pick-up
- Application of study skills / inadequate test preparation
- Spelling accuracy and awareness

NOTE: As part of your analysis, consider the following information about Dusty Canyon Elementary School:

- The school lies in a rural, rapidly growing area between two small cities.
- The present school was built in fifteen years ago behind the old school site.
- It serves approximately 850 students in grades K-5. New students are arriving almost daily.

Continued next page

- The faculty consists of two administrators, two counselors, one librarian, art, band, and music teacher, four special education teachers, two physical education teachers, forty-two classroom teachers, a Reading Coach and Resource Teachers. The support staff consists of secretaries, parent trainers, a library clerk, custodians and nutrition workers.
 - The following services and programs are provided: Tutoring, Before and after school program, General Music, Band, Music Technology, Counseling, Speech, Special Education, Physical Education, Library, Reading Initiative, Academic Team, Gifted Program, Outdoor Classroom, Basketball, Baseball, Soccer, and volleyball.
 - In addition, the school sponsors many extracurricular activities, including Fine Arts Festival, Math Derby, Dr. Seuss Week, Bowling Trip, Spelling Bee, Veteran's Day Program, Honors Day.
 - Student performance on standardized tests places the school well above the national average in reading, and slightly above in mathematics and science. However, scores in social studies are consistently low.
 - Roughly 18% of the students qualify for free or reduced lunch.
 - Less than 2% of the students speak English as a second Language.
 - For the past 18 months the school district has been cutting the budget in response to a financial crisis. Planned additions to the school have been delayed, forcing class sizes to swell to their legal limits.
 - The school district has been the focus of controversy. A political action group charged that the curriculum has brought religion into the classroom.
-

Practice Worksheet

Use brainstorming to identify at least five existing issues affecting student learning for the group with which you work.

This step has been completed for you as part of the practice scenario provided.

Prioritize the issues based on their affect on student achievement. Write numbers 1 through 5 in the spaces provided.

_____ Reluctant readers

_____ Hallway crowding during class changes

_____ Morning traffic problems in the parking lot during drop off and pick-up

_____ Application of study skills / inadequate test preparation

_____ Spelling accuracy and awareness

Practice Worksheet

Analyze the issues, adjust the priority, and reword as needed. List the revised issues in priority order in the left column of the table below. For each issue, list the question(s) that will be addressed by the research.

Issue	Question(s)

Topic Practice Performance Checklist

Select one: Performer's self-assessment Performance Coach's observations

Performer's Name: _____

Performance Coach's Name: _____

Date of Performance: _____

Check off each criterion that is observed. If the performance meets criteria with satisfactory quality, mark Yes. If not, mark No and provide feedback (use the back of the page for more space). Enter this performance into your portfolio when **all** items are marked Yes.

Evidence	Criteria	Proficient? Give Feedback.
1. Existing issues have been identified (<i>This step has been completed for you as part of the practice scenario provided.</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/> Issues affect student learning for the specified group (e.g. grade level or team)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
2. Issues are prioritized	<input type="checkbox"/> Numbers 1-5 indicating priority order for all five issues are present <input type="checkbox"/> Issues are re-prioritized and revised (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
3. Research question(s) are established	<input type="checkbox"/> Questions to be addressed by the research are present	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Topic 2: Reviewing Related Literature

Reviewing Related Literature

After you have identified your top three issues affecting student learning, the next step in the action research process is to review literature associated with the issues. The purpose of the literature review is to determine whether each issue has already been the subject of research. If it has, and definite conclusions have been drawn that can be applied to your situation, there is no need to proceed with action research for that issue. If the issue has not been the subject of research, and/or no definite conclusions have been drawn, then the issue is an appropriate candidate for action research.

While conducting the literature review, look for research that addresses your selected issue and attempts to answer your research question(s). Also look for related studies, as well as literature that demonstrates the effectiveness of various methodologies, as they may provide helpful information.

Check the issue against scholarly literature – that is, published research literature. Scholarly literature is your most reliable source of information because it has been reviewed by experts prior to publication.

In this topic you will determine whether conclusions have been drawn for an action research topic based on a review of related information.

What Resources are Required?

You will need access to the Internet to review literature associated with potential research topics.

How Do I Do It?

- Read through the steps in the step-action table (see next page)
 - Study any accompanying examples
 - Complete the practice exercise
 - Share the results with your Performance Coach
-

Step-Action Table

Step	Action	
1. Review scholarly literature for issue 1	Starting with the issue with the highest priority as determined in Topic 1, and based on the purpose and objective(s) of the action research, review the available scholarly literature to determine if any definite conclusions have been drawn. Document your findings.	
	IF...	...THEN
	You discover that this issue has already been the subject of research and definite conclusions have been drawn that answer your question(s).	Proceed to Step 2.
The issue has not been the subject of research and/or no definite conclusions have been drawn that answer your question(s).	Skip to the next topic, Applying Action Research Methodology.	
2. Review scholarly literature for issue 2	Repeat step 1 for the issue with the second highest priority	
	IF...	...THEN
	You discover that this issue has already been the subject of research and definite conclusions have been drawn that answer your question(s).	Proceed to Step 3.
The issue has <u>not</u> been the subject of research and/or no definite conclusions have been drawn that answer your question(s).	Skip to the next topic, Applying Action Research Methodology.	

Step	Action	
3. Review scholarly literature for issue 3	Repeat step 1 for the issue with the third highest priority.	
	IF...	...THEN
	You discover that this issue has already been the subject of research and definite conclusions have been drawn that answer your question(s).	Return to your list of issues from Topic 1. Select and research additional issues until an issue suitable for action research is found.
The issue has not been the subject of research and/or no definite conclusions have been drawn that answer your question(s).	Continue to the next topic, Applying Action Research Methodology.	

Practice Exercise

Instructions

- Follow the steps in the Step-Action Table for this topic
 - Complete the Practice Worksheet and/or forms, listing results that are realistic based on the information in the practice scenario below
 - Check your work
 - Meet with your Performance Coach to review the results and decide what to do next
-

Practice Scenario

Review related literature to determine whether conclusions have been drawn for one or more of the action research topics you prioritized in lesson 1.

Refer to the topic step-action table as needed. Share the results with your coach.

Practice Worksheet

Review scholarly literature for issue 1. Document your findings in the table below.

Priority 1 issue:

Source	Summary	Conclusions

Practice Worksheet

Review scholarly literature for issue 2 (if applicable). Document your findings in the table below.

Priority 2 issue:

Source	Summary	Conclusions

Practice Worksheet

Review scholarly literature for issue 3 (if applicable). Document your findings in the table below.

Priority 3 issue:

Source	Summary	Conclusions

Topic Practice Performance Checklist

Select one: Performer's self-assessment Performance Coach's observations

Performer's Name: _____

Performance Coach's Name: _____

Date of Performance: _____

Check off each criterion that is observed. If the performance meets criteria with satisfactory quality, mark Yes. If not, mark No and provide feedback (use the back of the page for more space). Enter this performance into your portfolio when **all** items are marked Yes.

Evidence	Criteria	Proficient? Give Feedback.
1. Scholarly literature has been reviewed for issue #1	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature reviewed relates to the purpose of the action research	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature reviewed is published research literature (scholarly)	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/> Source is cited	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Summary of research is present	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Conclusions are described	
2. Scholarly literature has been reviewed for issue #2 (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature reviewed relates to the purpose of the action research	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature reviewed is published research literature (scholarly)	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/> Source is cited	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Summary of research is present	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Conclusions are described	
3. Scholarly literature has been reviewed for issue #3 (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature reviewed relates to the purpose of the action research	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature reviewed is published research literature (scholarly)	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/> Source is cited	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Summary of research is present	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Conclusions are described	

Topic 3: Applying Action Research Methodology

Applying Action Research Methodology

Once you have identified and researched an appropriate action research topic, it is time to design and implement the action research.

In this topic you will:

- Design a plan for an action research topic
- Write a synopsis of the action research plan
- Implement an action research plan
- Collect data showing the effects of the intervention

Triangulation of Data

Every effort should be made to gather a wide variety of evidence when collecting data. This approach — collecting multiple forms of overlapping, diverse pieces of evidence and perspectives — is known as triangulation of data (Figure 3.1). Triangulation increases the validity and reliability of the findings and ensures a more accurate picture of the results.

What Resources are Required?

To complete this topic you will need access to data, such as attendance records and test scores, pertaining to your action research project.

Tip(s)

Action research requires the collection of data in order to evaluate the effects of the solution described in the action plan. It is recommended that you use existing archival data sources first before going to conventional data sources. Use inventive sources last. This approach will save time because the depth of information, and associated time investment, is greater for conventional and inventive sources. Refer to the examples listed on the following page for sources of data for action research (Figure 3.2).

How Do I Do It?

- Read through the steps in the step-action table (see next page)
- Study any accompanying examples
- Complete the practice exercise
- Share the results with your Performance Coach

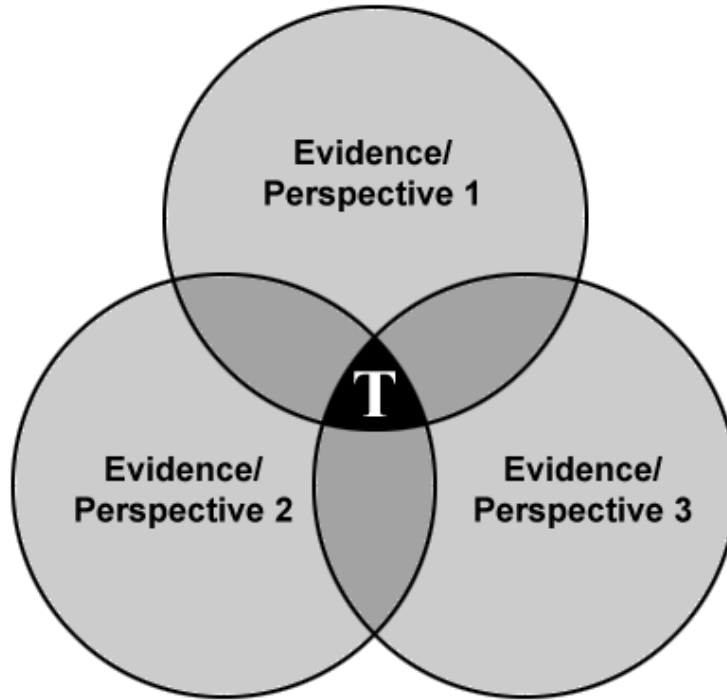


Figure 3.1 Triangulation of Data, also called “Multi-instrument” Approach

Sources of Data for Action Research		
Existing Archival Sources	Conventional Sources	Inventive Sources
Student grades	Surveys	Exhibits
Attendance	Simple interviews	Portfolios
Referrals	Number of books read	Expositions
Standardized test results	Writing samples	Videotapes
	Variety of materials used	
	Observations	
	Journals	

Figure 3.2 From *How to Use Action Research in the Self-Renewing School* (Calhoun 1994)

Step-Action Table

Step	Action						
1. Create an action plan	<p>Create a clearly defined action plan for the research topic that includes the following items/information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project overview (including the project’s purpose — link back to the concern(s) identified in the data) • Detailed description, including the action/intervention that is expected to address the issue and the desired outcome • Method for collecting and evaluating data (qualitative/quantitative, chart and narrative form) • Data collection instruments (ensure triangulation of date, and provide sample instruments) • Ethical considerations • Implementation timeline 						
2. Anticipate problems	<p>Anticipate problems that could emerge as a result of executing the action plan, such as impacts to class schedule or resource availability. Include steps within the action plan that address these potential problems.</p>						
3. Submit a synopsis for approval	<p>Write a one-page synopsis that lists key information about your action research project. Then submit the synopsis to the school administration for approval.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: center;">IF...</th> <th style="text-align: center;">...THEN</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>The project is approved.</td> <td>Proceed to Step 5.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>The project is <u>not</u> approved.</td> <td>Adjust the parameters according to feedback from the administration. Then revise and resubmit the abstract.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	IF...	...THEN	The project is approved.	Proceed to Step 5.	The project is <u>not</u> approved.	Adjust the parameters according to feedback from the administration. Then revise and resubmit the abstract.
IF...	...THEN						
The project is approved.	Proceed to Step 5.						
The project is <u>not</u> approved.	Adjust the parameters according to feedback from the administration. Then revise and resubmit the abstract.						
4. Apply the action plan	<p>Test the action/intervention by executing the action plan. Collect data (evidence) showing the affects of the intervention. Design a table to facilitate the collection of date, such as the sample shown in Figure 3.3 below.</p>						

Study Skill Intervention Data Collection Table				
Student Name or Identifier	BEFORE Study Skills Instruction		AFTER Study Skills Instruction	
	Test preparation method used (study skill)	Test Score	Test preparation method used (study skill)	Test Score
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

Figure 3.3 Sample data collection table

Practice Exercise

Instructions

- Follow the steps in the Step-Action Table for this topic
 - Complete the Practice Worksheet and/or forms, listing results that are realistic based on the information in the practice scenario below
 - Check your work
 - Meet with your Performance Coach to review the results and decide what to do next
-

Practice Scenario

As a continuation of the previous practice scenario:

- Design a plan for an action research topic based on the issue selected in Topic 2
- Write a synopsis of the action research plan
- Implement the action research plan
- Design a table for data collection
- Collect data showing the effects of the intervention

In lieu of submitting the synopsis to the administration for approval, for the purposes of this practice, ask one of your administrators to review your action plan and provide feedback. **NOTE:** Be sure to inform the reviewer that the action research plan is based on a hypothetical scenario.

While implementing the intervention, periodically review the steps of the plan with your coach; incorporate feedback for revision or acceptance.

Refer to the topic step-action table as needed. Share the results with your coach.

Practice Worksheet

Design a plan for an action research topic selected in Topic 2. Record the plan in the template below.

Action Research Project Name:

Project overview (Include the project's purpose — link back to the concern(s) identified in the data):

Detailed description (Include the action/intervention that is expected to address the issue and the desired outcome):

Practice Worksheet

Method for collecting and evaluating data (qualitative/quantitative, chart and narrative form):

Data collection instruments (attach sample instruments):

Ethical considerations (*if applicable*):

Implementation timeline:

Practice Worksheet

Anticipated problems (if applicable):	Strategy for addressing the problem

In lieu of submitting the synopsis to the administration for approval, for the purposes of this practice, ask one of your administrators to review it and provide feedback. Summarize the feedback below in the form of bullet points and incorporate it into your plan as applicable.

Practice Worksheet

Implement the action plan. Summarize the results in the space below.

Topic Practice Performance Checklist

Select one: Performer's self-assessment Performance Coach's observations

Performer's Name: _____

Performance Coach's Name: _____

Date of Performance: _____

*Check off each criterion that is observed. If the performance meets criteria with satisfactory quality, mark Yes. If not, mark No and provide feedback (use the back of the page for more space). Enter this performance into your portfolio when **all** items are marked Yes.*

Evidence	Criteria	Proficient? Give Feedback.
1. Action research plan is present	<input type="checkbox"/> Addresses issue selected in Topic 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
	<input type="checkbox"/> Includes:	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/> Project overview (including purpose)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Detailed description (including action/intervention & desired outcome)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Method for collecting and evaluating data (qualitative/quantitative)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Data collection instruments (ensure triangulation)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Ethical considerations (if applicable)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Implementation timeline	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Anticipated problems and associated strategies (if applicable)	

Topic 3: Applying Action Research Methodology
Leading a Team to Conduct Action Research

Evidence	Criteria	Proficient? Give Feedback.
2. A synopsis of the action research plan is present	<input type="checkbox"/> Limited to 1 page <input type="checkbox"/> Includes key information about the action research project <input type="checkbox"/> Has been approved by the school administration <i>(For the purposes of this practice, feedback from an administrator in lieu of administration approval is acceptable)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
3. Action research plan was implemented	<input type="checkbox"/> Action/intervention was tested <input type="checkbox"/> Data (evidence) showing the effects of the intervention is present <input type="checkbox"/> Date collection table was designed	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Topic 4: Analyzing the Research Results

Analyzing the Research Results

After identifying and selecting an issue, and developing and implementing an action research plan, it is time to analyze the research findings and determine how the results apply to your situation.

In this topic you will:

- Analyze data from collaborative action research
- Draw conclusions based on data analysis from action research
- Create a plan for disseminating the finding of an action research project

What Resources are Required?

Data collected from an action research project

NOTE

This topic is not accompanied by a practice scenario. The steps for analyzing the results of an action research project require the execution of a plan in a real world setting. Therefore, you will have an opportunity to practice the skills presented in this topic in the module's Final Practice.

How Do I Do It?

- Read through the steps in the step-action table (see next page)
 - Study any accompanying examples
 - Complete the practice exercise
 - Share the results with your Performance Coach
-

Step-Action Table

Step	Action
<p>1. Analyze the research data</p>	<p>Analyze the research data systematically for trends and/or patterns. If you are collecting information via surveys, for example, read through the surveys to find patterns in the responses and use rubrics to illustrate the patterns.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go through your data several times. New ideas will occur to you with a fresh perspective. • Quantifiable data can be analyzed without the use of statistics or technical assistance. Other data, such as opinions, attitudes, or checklists, should be summarized in table form or illustrated in a chart. • Take notes as you are sorting through data. This kind of reflection will help you step back and consider the big picture. • Share your findings with a colleague. Do new questions emerge from this discussion?
<p>2. Draw conclusions</p>	<p>Draw conclusions based on the data analysis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What changes occurred as a result of the action/intervention? • What is the relationship between the actions and the changes? • What, if any, external factors impacted the results and to what degree? • Are the effects of the action(s) a basis for further planning and subsequent action? • Identify the main points which appear most frequently and are the most powerful. • How are the findings transferable to other settings?

Step	Action	
3. Evaluate the action/ intervention	Re-evaluate the action/intervention based on the data analysis and conclusions you have drawn about its effectiveness. Ask these questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well does the action/intervention fit the teaching style of teachers who will be employing the strategies, as well as the overall school culture? • How might the students respond to the action/intervention? • How might the parents respond to the action/intervention? • What, if any, additional problems could the action/intervention cause? 	
	IF...	...THEN
	The action/intervention achieved the desired results with little or no negative effects	Proceed to step 4.
	The action/intervention did not achieve the desired results and/or produced significant negative effects	Return to the action planning phase of your action research project, make the necessary revisions, and submit your revised plan for approval.
4. Determine appropriate utilization of findings	Determine how best to use the findings of your action research project.	
5. Disseminate findings	Disseminate findings to the appropriate audience groups — those whom are most likely to be able to benefit from the findings. Start with those closest to you before moving to broader audience groups.	
6. Determine future actions	Determine future actions, such as additional related action research projects.	

Final Practice

Instructions

- Perform this practice, referring to the topic step-action tables as needed.
- Complete the Final Practice Worksheet, listing results that are realistic based on the information in the practice scenario.
- Check your work.
- Meet with your Performance Coach to review the results and decide what to do next.
- Completing this Final Practice requires meetings with a team of 2 - 4 peers. Prepare for these meetings by:
 - Communicating the time and location of the meeting to the participants in advance
 - Preparing and providing copies of a meeting agenda
 - Being prepared with all the necessary materials and resources

Practice Scenario

Select a team or grade level with which you are associated. For that team or grade level, lead a team of 2 to 4 peers to:

- Identify issues that make potential action research topics
- Reviewing scholarly literature related to those issues
- Conduct action research for the most relevant and viable issue
- Analyze the results of the research

Refer to the topic step-action table as needed. Unlike the topic practice scenarios, however, you will need to brainstorm a list of existing issues affecting student learning for the group with which you work and submit the synopsis to the administration for approval.

Final Practice Worksheet

Use brainstorming to identify at least five existing issues affecting student learning for the group with which you work. Prioritize the issues based on their affect on student achievement. Write numbers 1 through 5 in the spaces provided.

Priority	Issue
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Final Practice Worksheet

Analyze the issues, adjust the priority, and reword as needed. List the revised issues in priority order in the left column of the table below. For each issue, list the question(s) that will be addressed by the research.

Issue	Question(s)

Final Practice Worksheet

Review scholarly literature for issue 1. Document your findings in the table below.

Priority 1 issue:

Source	Summary	Conclusions

Final Practice Worksheet

Review scholarly literature for issue 2 (if applicable). Document your findings in the table below.

Priority 2 issue:

Source	Summary	Conclusions

Final Practice Worksheet

Review scholarly literature for issue 3 (if applicable). Document your findings in the table below.

Priority 3 issue:

Source	Summary	Conclusions

Final Practice Worksheet

Design a plan for an action research topic selected in Topic 2. Record the plan in the template below.

Action Research Project Name:

Project overview (Include the project's purpose — link back to the concern(s) identified in the data):

Detailed description (Include the action/intervention that is expected to address the issue and the desired outcome):

Method for collecting and evaluating data (qualitative/quantitative, chart and narrative form):

Final Practice Worksheet

Data collection instruments (attach sample instruments):

Ethical considerations (*if applicable*):

Implementation timeline:

Final Practice Worksheet

Anticipated problems (if applicable):	Strategy for addressing the problem

Submit the synopsis to the administration for approval. Summarize the feedback below in the form of bullet points and incorporate it into your plan as applicable.

Final Practice Worksheet

Implement the action plan. Summarize the results in the space below.

Final Practice Worksheet

Analyze the research data, and describe your findings below. Include quantifiable data (if applicable). Other data, such as opinions, attitudes, or checklists, should be summarized in table form or illustrated in a chart.

Final Practice Worksheet

Draw conclusions based on the data analysis.

- What changes occurred as a result of the action/intervention?
- What is the relationship between the actions and the changes?
- What, if any, external factors impacted the results and to what degree?
- Are the effects of the action(s) a basis for further planning and subsequent action?
- Identify the main points which appear most frequently and are the most powerful.
- Are the findings transferable to other settings? If yes, explain.

Final Practice Worksheet

Re-evaluate the action/intervention based on the data analysis and conclusions you have drawn about its effectiveness.

- How well does the action/intervention fit the teaching style of teachers who will be employing the strategies, as well as the overall school culture?
- How might the students respond to the action/intervention?
- How might the parents respond to the action/intervention?
- What, if any, additional problems could the action/intervention cause?

Final Practice Worksheet

Determine appropriate utilization of findings. In the space below, describe how the findings of the action research project will be used.

Disseminate findings to the appropriate audience groups, starting with those closest. List the audience groups in order in the space below.

Final Practice Worksheet

List future actions, such as additional related action research projects, in the space below.

Final Practice Performance Checklist

Select one: Performer's self-assessment Performance Coach's observations

Performer's Name: _____

Performance Coach's Name: _____

Date of Performance: _____

*Check off each criterion that is observed. If the performance meets criteria with satisfactory quality, mark Yes. If not, mark No and provide feedback (use the back of the page for more space). Enter this performance into your portfolio when **all** items are marked Yes and **all** Feedback Form (next form) items are marked 3 or 4 (or Not Applicable).*

Evidence	Criteria	Proficient? Give Feedback.
1. Existing issues have been identified	<input type="checkbox"/> Issues affect student learning for the specified group (e.g. grade level or team)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
2. Issues are prioritized	<input type="checkbox"/> Numbers 1-5 indicating priority order for all five issues are present <input type="checkbox"/> Issues are re-prioritized and revised (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
3. Research question(s) are established	<input type="checkbox"/> Questions to be addressed by the research are present	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
4. Scholarly literature has been reviewed for issue #1	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature reviewed relates to the purpose of the action research <input type="checkbox"/> Literature reviewed is published research literature (scholarly) <input type="checkbox"/> Source is cited <input type="checkbox"/> Summary of research is present <input type="checkbox"/> Conclusions are described	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Evidence	Criteria	Proficient? Give Feedback.
5. Scholarly literature has been reviewed for issue #2 (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature reviewed relates to the purpose of the action research	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature reviewed is published research literature (scholarly)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Source is cited	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Summary of research is present	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Conclusions are described	
6. Scholarly literature has been reviewed for issue #3 (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature reviewed relates to the purpose of the action research	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature reviewed is published research literature (scholarly)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Source is cited	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Summary of research is present	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Conclusions are described	
7. Action research plan is present	<input type="checkbox"/> Addresses issue selected in Topic 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/> Includes:	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Project overview (including purpose)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Detailed description (including action/intervention & desired outcome)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Method for collecting and evaluating data (qualitative/quantitative)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Data collection instruments (ensure triangulation)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Ethical considerations (if applicable)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Implementation timeline	
<input type="checkbox"/> Anticipated problems and associated strategies (if applicable)		

Evidence	Criteria	Proficient? Give Feedback.
8. A synopsis of the action research plan is present	<input type="checkbox"/> Limited to 1 page	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
	<input type="checkbox"/> Includes key information about the action research project	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/> Has been approved by the school administration	
9. Action research plan was implemented	<input type="checkbox"/> Action/intervention was tested	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
	<input type="checkbox"/> Data (evidence) showing the affects of the intervention is present	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/> Date collection table was designed	
10. Research data has been analyzed	<input type="checkbox"/> A description of the analysis finding is present	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
	<input type="checkbox"/> Data is summarized in a table or chart	<input type="checkbox"/> No
11. Conclusions have been drawn	<input type="checkbox"/> Conclusions based on the data analysis are present	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
	<input type="checkbox"/> A description of the changes that occurred as a result of the action/intervention is present	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/> The relationship between the actions and the changes is described	

Evidence	Criteria	Proficient? Give Feedback.
12. A re-evaluation of the action/intervention is documented	<input type="checkbox"/> The following questions are adequately answered based on the data analysis and conclusions drawn about the action/intervention's effectiveness: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> How well does the action/intervention fit the teaching style of teachers who will be employing the strategies, as well as the overall school culture? <input type="checkbox"/> How might the students respond to the action/intervention? <input type="checkbox"/> How might the parents respond to the action/intervention? <input type="checkbox"/> What, if any, additional problems could the action/intervention cause? 	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
13. The action research project is wrapped-up	<input type="checkbox"/> An appropriate utilization of the findings is described <input type="checkbox"/> A plan for disseminating the findings to the appropriate audience groups is present <input type="checkbox"/> Future actions are listed	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Final Practice Feedback Form (page 1 of 2)

Performer's Name: _____

Performance Coach's Name: _____

Date of Performance: _____

Use the rubric below to rate **only** the cross-cutting leadership skills on this page (including write-ins). Enter this performance into your portfolio when **all** Performance Checklist (previous form) items are marked Yes and **all** Feedback Form (this form) items are marked 3 or 4 (or Not Applicable).

Performance Levels			
1	2	3	4
<p>Emerging Needs Study and Practice <i>Few/none of desired behaviors were adequately displayed.</i></p>	<p>Developing Needs Practice <i>Some but not all of the desired behaviors were adequately displayed.</i></p>	<p>Proficient Meets Criteria and Expectations <i>All desired behaviors were displayed and performed correctly.</i></p>	<p>Distinguished Could be Used as a Model to Teach Others</p>

Eligible for Portfolio

How effective was the performer in these Cross-Cutting Skills?		Rating				
1.	Facilitating group interaction and managing participation	1	2	3	4	n/a
2.	Assisting the group to meet task criteria	1	2	3	4	n/a
3.	Modeling appropriate leadership behaviors	1	2	3	4	n/a
4.	Teaching others how to perform the tasks	1	2	3	4	n/a
5.	Presenting information clearly and concisely	1	2	3	4	n/a
6.	Leveraging technology to increase effectiveness	1	2	3	4	n/a
7.	Motivating others to achieve success	1	2	3	4	n/a
8.	Using group processes to achieve desired results	1	2	3	4	n/a
9.	Other:	1	2	3	4	n/a

Turn the page to provide additional written feedback (required).

Final Practice Feedback Form (page 1 of 2)

Performer's Name: _____

Performance Coach's Name: _____

Date of Performance: _____

If any element was rated less than 3, what needs to be done to score a 3? To score a 4?

What greatest strengths did the leader exhibit through this performance?

What could be done to improve this leader's performance? Include any criteria on the Performance Checklist that were missed. Be specific.

Were there any significant issues that must be rectified (by additional practice and assessment) before entering this evidence into the Portfolio?

Final Assessment

When Can I Take the Final Assessment?

Complete the Final Assessment when you are able to sufficiently execute the module’s performance objective(s) according to the:

- Task-related criteria on the Final Assessment Performance Checklist
- Cross-cutting leadership skills on the Performance Feedback Form

When you take the Final Assessment — either as someone who takes it to “test out” of the module or as someone who has worked through the topics and Final Practice — the underlying assumption is that you are a competent, experienced, performer. This means that the Final Assessment does not include any “helps,” such as step-action tables or worksheets.

When Can I Add the Final Assessment to My Portfolio?

Has your Final Assessment performance met all the criteria on the Final Assessment Performance Checklist and earned at least a 3 on all of the cross-cutting skills on the Final Assessment Feedback Form?

Yes	No
<p>Add these items to your Portfolio and talk to your Performance Coach about next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Assessment Performance Checklist • Final Assessment Feedback Form • Module Progress Tracker page • Additional artifacts such as documents, slides, video tapes, participant feedback forms, etc. 	<p>Do the following as needed before attempting the Final Assessment again when you are ready:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain performance feedback from your Performance Coach • Review relevant topics in the module • Repeat Topic Practices and/or the Final Practice • Pursue additional learning, training and experience

**Final Assessment
Instructions**

1. Gain permission from your supervisor, sponsor, or Performance Coach to complete the Final Assessment in a school setting.
 2. Schedule the date, time and location of your session — one that works for you, your Performance Coach, and other participants.
 3. Invite a group of 2 - 4 volunteers to assist you. Ideally, you should invite your real work team. (If you are an aspiring leader, this may be a team that you would lead once you enter the leadership role. For an incumbent leader, it should reflect the team or type of team that you are currently leading.)
 4. Review the following with your Performance Coach:
 - Task-related criteria on the Final Assessment Performance Checklist
 - Cross-cutting leadership skills on the Performance Feedback Form
 - Final Assessment Scenario (on the next page)
 5. Prepare any other materials or information that you and your participants need to have with you on the day of the activity.
 6. Perform the Final Assessment as follows:
 - In a real school or district setting
 - With a team of teachers, staff, or other leaders as appropriate
 - Observed by your Performance Coach
 7. Retain artifacts from your performance (documents, slides, etc.)
 8. Obtain feedback from your Performance Coach about your performance, and discuss next steps.
-

**Final Assessment
Scenario**

Select a team or grade level with which you are associated. For that team or grade level, lead a team of 2 to 4 peers to:

- Identify issues that make potential action research topics
- Review scholarly literature related to those issues
- Conduct action research for the most relevant and viable issue
- Analyze the results of the research

NOTE: You may work with the same group of peers that participated in the Final Practice. However, be sure not to select the same issue to be the subject of the action research project that was chosen for the Final Practice.

Final Assessment Performance Checklist

Select one: Performer's self-assessment Performance Coach's observations

Performer's Name: _____

Performance Coach's Name: _____

Date of Performance: _____

*Check off each criterion that is observed. If the performance meets criteria with satisfactory quality, mark Yes. If not, mark No and provide feedback (use the back of the page for more space). Enter this performance into your portfolio when **all** items are marked Yes and **all** Feedback Form (next form) items are marked 3 or 4 (or Not Applicable).*

Evidence	Criteria	Proficient? Give Feedback.
1. Existing issues have been identified	<input type="checkbox"/> Issues affect student learning for the specified group (e.g. grade level or team)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
2. Issues are prioritized	<input type="checkbox"/> Numbers 1-5 indicating priority order for all five issues are present <input type="checkbox"/> Issues are re-prioritized and revised (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
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Evidence	Criteria	Proficient? Give Feedback.
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	<input type="checkbox"/> Source is cited	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Summary of research is present	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Conclusions are described	
6. Scholarly literature has been reviewed for issue #3 (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature reviewed relates to the purpose of the action research	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
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Final Assessment Feedback Form (page 1 of 2)

Performer's Name: _____

Performance Coach's Name: _____

Date of Performance: _____

Use the rubric below to rate **only** the cross-cutting leadership skills on this page (including write-ins). Enter this performance into your portfolio when **all** Performance Checklist (previous form) items are marked Yes and **all** Feedback Form (this form) items are marked 3 or 4 (or Not Applicable).

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Emerging Needs Study and Practice <i>Few/none of desired behaviors were adequately displayed.</i>	Developing Needs Practice <i>Some but not all of the desired behaviors were adequately displayed.</i>	Proficient Meets Criteria and Expectations <i>All desired behaviors were displayed and performed correctly.</i>	Distinguished Could be Used as a Model to Teach Others

Eligible for Portfolio

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2.	Assisting the group to meet task criteria	1	2	3	4	n/a
3.	Modeling appropriate leadership behaviors	1	2	3	4	n/a
4.	Teaching others how to perform the tasks	1	2	3	4	n/a
5.	Presenting information clearly and concisely	1	2	3	4	n/a
6.	Leveraging technology to increase effectiveness	1	2	3	4	n/a
7.	Motivating others to achieve success	1	2	3	4	n/a
8.	Using group processes to achieve desired results	1	2	3	4	n/a
9.	Other:	1	2	3	4	n/a

Turn the page to provide additional written feedback (required).

Final Assessment Feedback Form (page 1 of 2)

Performer's Name: _____

Performance Coach's Name: _____

Date of Performance: _____

If any element was rated less than 3, what needs to be done to score a 3? To score a 4?

What greatest strengths did the leader exhibit through this performance?

What could be done to improve this leader's performance? Include any criteria on the Performance Checklist that were missed. Be specific.

Were there any significant issues that must be rectified (by additional practice and assessment) before entering this evidence into the Portfolio?

Recommended Reading and Resources

Calhoun, E. F. (1994). *How to Use Action Research in the Self-Renewing School*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Robinson, V. & Kuhn, M. (2006). *Practitioner Research for Educators*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Sagor, R. (1992). *How to Conduct Collaborative Action Research*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Sagor, R. (2005). *The Action Research Guidebook: A Four Step Process for Educators and School Teams*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Summaries of Key Action Research Concepts
(<http://www.sou.edu/education/ActionResearch/summary.htm>)

Acknowledgments

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