

# **First2 Network Leadership Training Guide**

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## About this Guide:

The First2 Network generated this guide as a resource for anyone interested in facilitating a leadership training for students or faculty. These ideas were initially developed and used in student leadership training workshops, but we have since expanded our annual training to include faculty, which is an even richer experience for all. We invite you to use and adapt the resources in this guide and to let us know how we can improve them.

## About the First2 Network:

*The First2 Network (First2) is an expanding group of over 1,000 people and 30 organizations working to increase the number of college graduates in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) to strengthen our communities and drive an innovation economy in West Virginia and beyond. First2 focuses on rural, first-generation, low-income, and other underrepresented STEM students, making sure all our students can succeed.*

*First2 works in true partnership with student leaders, tests and learns with stakeholders to share and scale high-impact practices, and drives systemic change through informed policy and resource allocation.*

## Who We Are:

We are one of 17 Alliances across the country funded through the NSF INCLUDES initiative. We started out as a pilot project in 2016, funded by the National Science Foundation. We had reviewed the literature on STEM student success, and learned that nationally, 50% of the students who start out with a STEM major change that major or drop out of college during the first 2 years of their post-secondary education, and the statistic is worse for first generation students. Understanding the obstacles that face first generation STEM students, and changing the systems that produce these obstacles, became our charge.

## What We Do:

We work with institutional teams to test and share high-impact practices to improve the college enrollment rate and success of undergraduate STEM students, with emphasis on rural first-generation students, through their first 2 years of college. At the core of our shared vision to improve student STEM success is the assumption that the students themselves should be co-creators of the solutions and that our efforts will drive systemic change as well as inform resource allocation and policy on a large scale.



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## How We Do It:

- **Work in true partnership with students:** not “to” students; not “for” students; but “with” students, we explore ways to improve the college STEM experience.
- **Use improvement science to identify, test, and scale high-impact practices** organized around four main drivers of change identified by the network; meaningful connection with institutional teams to promote belonging, connection to STEM research and career opportunities, engagement in leadership experiences, and success academically. Institutional teams apply improvement science approaches from the Carnegie Foundation for Teaching and Learning (Plan-Do-Study-Act or PDSA rapid cycles of testing of change ideas) to build evidence for scalable and transferable practices and policies across the state and the nation.
- **Conduct educational research** to understand the factors that affect rural first-generation students’ entry into and persistence in STEM career pathways.
- **Foster** new partnerships and programs addressing STEM success and systems change.
- **Expand our network** across West Virginia and other rural states

## Welcoming Students as Leaders:

The First2 Network is actively working to improve the success rates of first-generation and underrepresented students in STEM pathways, and student leaders are critical to this process; their voices, opinions, and insights are central to change work and can help develop systems and practices that support STEM students to succeed.



In First2 we emphasize the importance of student leadership and we elevate students to be the agents of defining, implementing, and testing changes towards improvement within their own experience, between their near peers, and across the institutions that serve them. This shift from being “the served” to being collaborators provides deep insight into systemic barriers that are felt,



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seen, and experienced by first generation rural STEM students. We involve students in decision-making alongside key stakeholders so their diverse perspectives and ideas can be truly heard.

At the core of our shared vision to welcome students as leaders is the assumption that students:

- speak first
- co-create solutions
- are experts on their lived reality as underrepresented STEM students
- are at the table at every level of the network

To empower students with the skills and knowledge to embrace their roles as leaders on their campus and within our network, we developed a Student Leadership Training Program that you can reference or modify to train students on your campus or at your organization. The program provides a variety of interactive facilitation techniques to foster an environment of active learning, collaboration and shared understanding. The goal is for students to not only feel more confident in their leadership skills, but to also feel empowered and equipped to facilitate similar leadership training activities with their peers and institutional teams.

### Our Leadership Training Agenda (provided as an example):

DAY ONE	
TIME:	ACTIVITY:
9:00am	Arrive
9:00am-10:00am	Set-up
10:00am-11:00am	Opening (Introductions and Icebreaker) – Fast Friends
11:00am-11:30am	Networking and/or downtime
11:30am-12:30pm	How is the First2 Network Making Change? – Discussion and Drawing
12:30pm-1:00pm	Lunch <i>**consider making arrangements for participants to clear their plates to a designated spot when they are done vs. having their plates cleared for them, since students may network with others and eat their lunch intermittently throughout the early part of the afternoon</i>
1:00pm-1:30pm	Take a walk outside
1:30pm-2:30pm	Student Roles on their Institutional Teams – Panel of Experts
2:30pm-2:45pm	Network Communication Tips - Trivia
2:45pm-3:30pm	Developing Elevator Speeches – Speed Dating



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3:30pm-4:00pm	Networking and/or downtime
4:00pm-5:00pm	Leadership Styles – Understanding the Leadership Compass
5:00pm-6:00pm	First2 Connections – Cocktail Party
6:00pm-7:00pm	Dinner
7:00pm-	Optional fun/social activities <i>**consider including a a study group activity (with drinks and treats). The facilitator should have a list of a couple of options and allow people to sign up for things that they might want to do. The facilitator can ask someone who has signed up for each activity to be in charge of gathering everyone up and making a plan--which also helps those participants with their leadership and organizational skills.</i>

<b>DAY TWO</b>	
<b>TIME:</b>	<b>ACTIVITY:</b>
9:00am-9:45am	Breakfast
9:45am-10:00am	Opening – Birthday Line
10:00am-11:30am	Mentoring, Conflict Resolution, Active Listening, Team Building/Club Engagement – Participant Centered Research
11:30am-12:00pm	Networking and/or downtime
12:00pm-12:30pm	Lunch
12:30pm-1:00pm	Take a walk outside
1:00pm-2:00pm	Improvement Science – Potato Heads
2:00pm-3:00pm	Closing – Evaluation and Appreciation Circle



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## Tips for Facilitating an Effective Training Program:

When creating agendas for your student leadership training, we encourage you to consider the following:

- Be enthusiastic
- Incorporate metacognition; at the end of each activity, check for shared understanding/learning and discuss the facilitation technique that was used.
- Alternate quieter, stationary activities with activities where people move around the room or consult with each other in break out groups/pairs
- Provide participants with an easy way to provide feedback or to ask for clarification. One way that we do this is by giving everyone with jargon/awesome signs; make signs where one side says “JARGON” and the other side says “AWESOME.” Encourage the participants to hold up the side that says “jargon” if someone uses a word that is not (or may not be) understood outside of the program and to hold up the side that says “awesome” if someone says something they particularly agree with or feel excited about.



- Provide fidget toys on the tables for those that could benefit
- Sit at round tables, in a circle, or in a horseshoe where everyone can see everyone else’s faces.
- After lunch, take a walk outside...it helps to stretch and get fresh air!
- Provide openings and closings – don’t abruptly start and/or end activities.
- Provide food/snacks and water – no one wants any ‘hangry’ participants!
- Discuss the concept of step up, step back; that if you often find yourself speaking, find opportunities to ‘step back’ so someone else can speak or respond. Similarly, if you are someone that does not speak up often, push yourself outside of your comfort zone to speak up more than you might in other settings.



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## Training Activities:

### Opening (Introductions and Icebreaker)

#### Time:

about 45 minutes

#### Context:

The goal of an opening activity is to engage participants in the learning environment without abruptly and jarringly ‘jumping in’ to the content too quickly. Often programs start in the morning when some people are still waking up or switching gears into their day.

Introductions/icebreakers serve the dual purpose of providing an opening activity while also helping the participants to get to know each other and feel more connected.

#### Facilitation:

Spend about 5 minutes providing some introductory context for your program; welcome everyone and generally outline the program and what the goals of your time together are. This is also a good time for quick ‘housekeeping’ announcements (where the exits/bathrooms are located, etc.).

Then consider starting off with general introductions; going around in a circle, ask everyone to share their:

- Name
- Role
- What they hope to learn or gain from the program
- Their (brief; 1-3 sentences) response to a fun question. Examples of questions:
  - If you could have one superpower, what would it be?
  - What is one interesting fact not many people know about you?
  - Identify an adjective that describes you and starts with the same letter as the first letter of your name
  - What skill could you offer a zombie apocalypse team?

Take about 15 minutes to do this.

After facilitating a round of introductions, randomly break everyone into pairs (one way you can do this is to write everyone’s names individually on popsicle sticks and then randomly draw two sticks at a time). Have each pair move to their own space of the room. Provide them with the list of “36 Questions for Increasing Closeness” questions (SEE RESOURCES) and instruct them to spend the remainder of the activity time (about 30-40 minutes) asking each other questions from this list and actively listening to each other’s responses to these questions.



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## How is the First2 Network Making Change? – Discussion and Drawing

### Time:

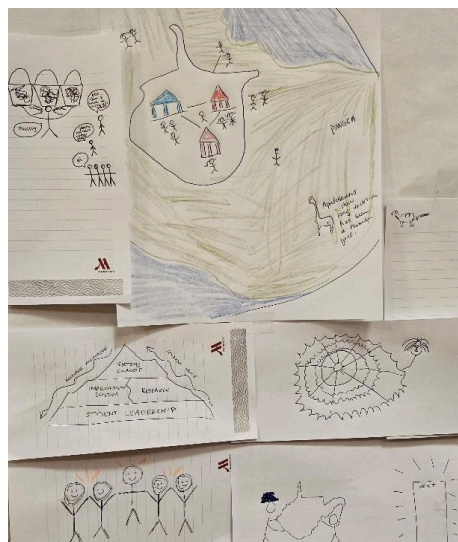
about 60 minutes

### Context:

This is an opportunity for strong student, staff and faculty leaders within your institutional team to facilitate a discussion to conceptualize and better understand the ‘big ideas’ that are currently driving the network forward as the network aspires to drive systemic change.

### Facilitation:

1. Facilitate an interactive discussion about the following (for about 45 minutes)
  - a. How is the First2 Network making change?
  - b. Discuss the ‘three-legged stool’ approach that First2 has to improving the retention of STEM students in WV and beyond:
    - i. Working in true partnership with student leaders
    - ii. Testing and learning with stakeholders to share and scale high-impact practices
    - iii. Driving systemic change through informed policy and resource allocation
  - c. How are we tying our ideas to systemic change?
  - d. What is a change idea?
  - e. How does changing things that students see and experience result in systems change?
2. Provide participants with colored pencils and pieces of letter-sized white paper.
3. Instruct participants to brainstorm ways to visually represent the ‘three-legged stool’ idea of student leadership, testing and scaling high-impact practices, and systemic change as one graphic. They can brainstorm multiple graphics if they choose. Use the remaining 15 minutes to have them complete their drawings.
4. Facilitate a discussion about their drawings and what informed their choices about what to include in their drawings.



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## **Student Roles on Institutional Teams: Panel of Experts**

### Time:

about 45-60 minutes

### Context:

Creating a 'panel of experts' composed of individuals with various perspectives and/or first-hand knowledge about a topic of interest is a great way to actively engage people with your program while also empowering those that are participating as panelists.

### Facilitation:

1. Choose a topic of interest/relevant to the goals of your activity that your student leaders can speak to. For our training program our topic was 'student roles on institutional teams.'
2. Assemble a group of panelists; your panel should, at a minimum, include students but can also include administrators, faculty, and First2 staff. Choose panelists with specific and varied knowledge about your chosen topic.
3. Choose a moderator; this person will call on participants to ask questions, ask questions directly to keep the discussion moving forward, and/or ask for additional feedback after the identified panelist has had the opportunity to respond to the question.
4. Have each panelist introduce themselves and briefly describe their experience with the topic; in this case, their experience with institutional teams.
5. Give the other program participants index cards and give them about 1-2 minutes to write down 2-3 questions they have for the panelists in regards to the chosen topic; in our case, the topic was regarding what questions participants had about the role of students on First2 institutional teams.
6. Have participants take turns asking the panelists questions; when asking a question, the participant should identify one panelist to respond to the question first and then the moderator can ask additional panelists for feedback when appropriate.
7. FACILITATION TIP: If every panelist but one or two has had a chance to respond to a question, the moderator can direct questions to the panelists that have not responded yet. The more excited the facilitator is about this activity the more the panelists and audience will get into it.



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## Network Communication Tips - Trivia

### Time:

about 15 minutes

### Context:

Trivia questions can be an engaging way to check shared understanding of content. The facilitator can provide additional facts or context, or facilitate some brief discussion, after questions as well if it is helpful to do so.
















### Facilitation:

1. Use the PowerPoint presentation (or create a Kahoot game) to ask your participants trivia questions about First2 communication and communication best practices (SEE RESOURCES).
2. Give participants a small prize if they answer a question correctly, such as a small piece of candy and/or a First2 Network sticker. At the end of the activity, consider giving everyone a small prize for participating actively.

### TRIVIA ANSWER GUIDE:

1. The First2 Network has a Communication Team. – TRUE
2. The co-chairs of the First2 Communication Team are: b. Sue Ann and Margaret
3. What can add value to written communication materials? e. all of the above
4. Written communication should be: a. easy to skim for information
5. You should always proofread written communication for correct grammar and spelling, including social media posts. – TRUE
6. Text hierarchy is defined as: a. using elements such as font, font size and color to make text more readable
7. You should never post anything online that you would not want your Mom or boss to see. - TRUE
8. How can you help tell the story of First2? e. all of the above
9. BONUS QUESTION: choose your own!

#### COLORS

PMS	CMYK	HEX/WEB
 Pantone P 172-16 C	 C:68 M:61 Y:60 K:49	 #3d3d3d
 Pantone P 106-6 C	 C:72 M:38 Y:0 K:0	 #4789c8
 Pantone P 109-5 C	 C:61 M:21 Y:0 K:0	 #5ba7dc
 Pantone P 151-11 C	 C:39 M:5 Y:58 K:0	 #a3c88a
 Pantone P 4-15 C	 C:12 M:16 Y:94 K:0	 #e5c93a



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## Developing Elevator Speeches – Concentric Circles

### Time:

about 45 minutes

### Context:

Concentric circle activities, sometimes nicknamed ‘speed dating’ activities, are useful when you want your participants to have the opportunity to consult with a lot of people in a short period of time; this activity also keeps people moving and actively thinking/engaged throughout the activity’s duration. For this leadership training program, we used concentric circles for participants to improvise ‘elevator speeches’ (summarized information that can be delivered in about 30-45 seconds, or what is equivalent to the length of an elevator ride) that would summarize the First2 Network, and who it benefits, for a variety of audiences.

### Facilitation:

1. Give each participant one blank index card.
2. Ask each participant to write on their index card a person (in general terms) that someone might speak to about the First2 Network; some examples are a prospective participant, a high school senior, a STEM faculty member, a WV Legislator, a STEM industry leader, a college President, a parent of a STEM college student, etc.
3. Mix up all the cards and have each participant draw a card and NOT look at what is on it.
4. Arrange all the participants in two concentric circles; one large outside circle, one smaller circle inside the larger circle. Each person in the outer circle should be facing a partner who is part of the inner circle.
5. Instruct the participants in the outer circle that they will have 45 seconds to improvise an elevator speech for the audience/role of their partner based on what is written on their partner’s card... tell them that the people that are part of the inner circle will hold up their cards on their foreheads so that their partner can read what it says, but they (the person holding the card) cannot.



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6. Start a timer for 45 seconds and instruct them to start.
7. When the 45 seconds are done, stop the participants.
8. Repeat the exercise with the participants on the outer circle holding up their cards on their forehead and the participants that are part of the inner circle giving elevator speeches.
9. Instruct the OUTER CIRCLE ONLY to move one person to their LEFT.
10. After about 5 rounds of this, stop all the participants. Have them guess 'who they think they are' based on the elevator speeches they received and then check their card to see if they are correct!



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## Leadership Styles – Understanding the Leadership Compass

### Time:

about 60 minutes

### Context:

Understanding and appreciating different leadership styles and the strengths each style provides helps leaders more effectively work within group settings, identify ideal roles for team/group participants and delegate tasks strategically. In this context, these skills are meant to help both students and faculty/staff work more collaboratively within their institutional teams.

### Facilitation:

1. Group participants in random pairs. Give each pair multiple (at least 6) post-it notes.
2. Instruct all pairs to, for about 5 minutes, brainstorm about 4-5 qualities of a strong leader and to write (using a bold black marker) one quality on each post-it note.
3. Introduce and briefly discuss (10 minutes maximum) the leadership compass model.

Resources for this could include:

- The Four-Fold Way by Angeles Arrien, Ph.D. (book)
- (2007). *18. leadership compass exercise*. League of Women Voters.  
<https://www.lwv.org/sites/default/files/2018-07/46-%20Leadership%20Compass%20Exercise.pdf>

Key traits for each leadership compass point include:

- NORTH (power, warrior) – assertive, active, decisive, fast-paced
  - SOUTH (connection, healer) – value-driven, supportive, intuitive, empathetic
  - WEST (wisdom, teacher) – analytical, balanced, procedural, practical
  - EAST (vision, visionary) – generative, creative, insightful, holistic
4. Write each compass point on poster-sized sticky notes and hang them in the four corners of the room.
  5. Have the pairs take their leadership qualities (written on sticky notes) to what they feel is the corresponding leadership style and stick those qualities to that poster.
  6. After everyone has placed their sticky notes on corresponding posters, discuss what you all observe as a group; is there a leadership style that people identified more qualities for? Less? What might have informed these choices?



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7. Now instruct each person to stand by the leadership style poster that they resonate with most in terms of their own leadership style. BRIEFLY (no more than 1-2 minutes per group) discuss with each group what strengths they associate with this leadership style but also what they feel can sometimes be challenging about this leadership style.
8. Ask all the participants what kind of leader they would want to have (and to move to that leadership style poster accordingly):
  - As a city council member?
  - As a social justice advocate?
  - As a research project leader?
  - As a zombie apocalypse survival team leader?
  - As someone organizing your college graduation party?
  - As someone making a documentary about First2?
  - As someone organizing a community garden?
  - As someone working to communicate with extraterrestrial life?

Briefly discuss, after each question, what informed their choices to move where they did. Remind them of the concept of 'step up, step back' and attempt to call on or engage participants that may not have had a chance to speak during this activity yet.

9. Have the group come back together and facilitate a 5-minute discussion about the ways in which no leadership style is 'better' or 'worse' than the other, they are different and provide valuable strengths in different contexts.
10. Have the participants get in a group with their institutional team; challenge them to think about a PDSA they are planning to start or that is in progress and for each of them to identify 2-3 concrete ways they can serve as a strong leader as part of that process (according to their leadership style). For example, if someone is a 'South' leader maybe they can be the person that drafts the emails they need to send to faculty/staff for support for their change idea.



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## First2 Connections – ‘Cocktail Party’

### Time:

about 60 minutes

### Context:

The ‘cocktail party’ facilitation structure can be used to have groups discuss topics of interest to get to know each other better and build their sense of connectedness within the network. You can also use this structure when trying to brainstorm ideas around a certain idea or topic, with the modification that a ‘scribe’ from each group writes down key ideas on a poster-sized post-it note that stays on the table with the topic question.

### Facilitation:

1. Decide how many tables you will have for your ‘cocktail party’ activity based on how many total participants you have; ideally, you should have 1 table for every 5-7 participants but start with at least 4 tables.
2. Choose a discussion topic or question for each table; write each topic/question in bold marker on a white letter-sized piece of paper and place it in the center of the table.

Questions could include:

- What have you enjoyed most about your involvement with the First2 Network?
- What is one system-level change you hope the network can achieve in the next 2-3 years?
- What is one way the network could improve on member recruitment?

Or you can have icebreaker topics such as:

- If you could learn one new skill, what would it be?
- What is one item on your ‘bucket list’?
- If you could be any animal, what animal would you be and why?

3. Instruct participants to randomly sit at a table and discuss with the group the topic presented.
4. Give participants about 10 minutes at each table to discuss the topic/question with their group.
5. At the end of the 10 minutes, instruct the participants to go to a new table that they have not visited yet.
6. Repeat this rotation until the time for the activity has run out.



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## **Opening – Birthday Line**

### **Time:**

about 15 minutes

### **Context:**

The goal of an opening activity is to engage participants in the setting without abruptly and jarringly ‘jumping in’ to the content too quickly. Often programs start in the morning when some people are still waking up or switching gears into their day. The following activity is a fun way to engage participants, stimulate their thinking and get them moving.

### **Facilitation:**

1. Ask all the participants/staff present to arrange themselves in a line, in chronological order, based on the month/day of their birthday (not year/age); however, instruct them that they have to do this WITHOUT TALKING.
2. Once everyone has arranged themselves in a line, go down the line and have everyone whisper to you what month/day their birthday is.
3. Celebrate their ability to complete the activity successfully and/or for how close they got!
4. If there were multiple inconsistencies, discuss and process what may have contributed to this; what was challenging about the activity and what can they learn from it that will help them be stronger leaders in the future?



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## **Mentoring, Conflict Resolution, Active Listening, Team Building/Club Engagement – Participant Centered Research**

### Time:

about 60 minutes

### Context:

In participant-centered research, each person has an opportunity to be both a ‘researcher’ and a ‘participant.’ They learn from the experience of hearing feedback regarding their assigned question and they learn from the process of self-reflecting on, and formulating, their own responses to the questions that are asked of them.

### Facilitation:

1. Choose 4 questions to use for this participant-centered research; one related to mentoring, one related to conflict resolution, one related to active listening, and one related to team building/club engagement.
  - a. For our program we used the following questions:
    - i. What are the two most important things to remember when mentoring and why?
    - ii. What are two great ideas for team building in clubs and institutional teams?
    - iii. What is a challenge for recruitment to clubs and institutional teams and what are two ideas for how to overcome it?
    - iv. What are two effective techniques that you use for conflict resolution and why are they effective?
2. Assign each participant a number 1-4 (to create 4 equally sized groups).
3. Assign the “1”s your first question and have them write that question down, assign the “2”s your second question and have them write that question down, and so on.
4. Arrange two rows of chairs facing each other. Have people sit in each chair in order based on their number (a 1 sits down, then a 2 sits down next to them, and so on). When you get to the end of one line, continue the rotation in the next line. You should end up with everyone sitting across from another person.
5. Give each pair (two people sitting across from each other) 5 minutes to both ask their research question AND respond to the research question of their partner, so about 5 minutes for each person to speak. Instruct the participants to take notes about how each person responds to their assigned research question.



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6. After the ten minutes have elapsed, instruct each person to move one seat to their LEFT and repeat the exercise; everyone should now be responding to a new research question.
7. Repeat this two more times so that everyone has the chance to respond to all four research questions.
8. Have those assigned to as researchers of question 1 get in a group (and so on for the other 3 questions) and summarize the main themes/ideas from the responses they collected on an oversized post-it note.
9. Have each group report out about the main themes/ideas they identified.

Example for how to configure this:

Round 1-left side	Round 1-right side	Round 2-left side	Round 2-right side	Round 3-left side	Round 3-Right side	Round 4-left side	Round 4-right side
1	2	1	1	1	4	1	3
2	3	2	2	2	1	2	4
3	4	3	3	3	2	3	1
4	1	4	4	4	3	4	2



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## Introducing Improvement Science – Potato Heads

### Time:

about 60 minutes

### Context:

Using Mr. Potato Head toys to enact a Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle gives participants hands-on experience with the concepts of improvement science so that they can translate these concepts more readily and effectively to the PDSAs being conducted on their respective campuses. While it may not focus on/drive home the core improvement science concept of disciplined inquiry, it is a great fun activity that shows how you can improve through repetition and adaptation. It can also be used as a growth mindset exercise; you get better at something when you practice.

### Facilitation:

1. Facilitate the Student Leadership Training PDSA Presentation (SEE RESOURCES) and facilitate a discussion about the value of completing, evaluating and scaling PDSAs.
2. Facilitate the Potato Heads exercise by David M. Williams, Ph.D.:

<https://www.davidmwilliamsphd.com/mr-potato-head-pdsa/>

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Williams, D.M. *Mr. Potato Head PDSA Exercise Facilitator Guide*. Austin, TX: DMW Austin, LLC. 2019. (Available on [www.davidmwilliamsphd.com](http://www.davidmwilliamsphd.com))

3. **FACILITATION TIP:** Have the potato head parts all ready to go but NOT on the table until time to go. People will play with the potato heads and their parts will get misplaced or moved around....let them know they can play with them all they want to AFTER the activity. Make sure that each bag has the right parts to match the picture.



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## **Closing – Evaluation and Appreciation Circle**

### Time:

about 60 minutes

### Context:

The goal of a closing activity is to conclude the active learning component of your program while also offering time for more in-depth reflection, evaluation, and goal-setting. It is an opportunity to leave your participants feeling:

- Educated about the program content
- Empowered to think further about the content or seek out more knowledge
- Inspired to follow-up on any action items they identified for themselves

Closings are also an opportunity to evaluate the program; this can be done through evaluation forms/surveys, a round asking everyone to respond aloud to an evaluation question while someone takes notes on their responses, or facilitating small focus groups (note that focus groups are more appropriate for longer programs that span several weeks/months, etc.).

For our student leadership program, all participants were asked to complete a post survey (SEE RESOURCES).

Ask all the participants to complete an evaluation using a format you have chosen; if you are using a survey, you can hand out hard copies or project a QR code that everyone can access.

After everyone has had time to complete an evaluation, you can facilitate an appreciation circle.

### Appreciation Circle Facilitation:

1. Have everyone arrange themselves seated in a circle.
2. Ask everyone to silently think about/identify one person present in the circle that they want to appreciate for something that person did during the program or contributed to the program; ask them to put their hand on their head when they know who they want to appreciate.
3. Ask for a volunteer that would like to start. Give that person a large ball of yarn.
4. Explain that when appreciating someone, you should identify their name and then look at them while offering your appreciation. The person that is appreciated then responds “Thank you.” Challenge them to not respond with more than ‘thank you.’



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5. Have the person that volunteered to go first offer their appreciation. When they have finished and the person they appreciated has said 'thank you,' instruct the person that went first to gently toss the ball of yarn to someone else in the circle who will then go next.
6. Continue in this way until everyone has offered an appreciation.
7. Reflect on and briefly discuss the 'spider web' of yarn that was created during this exercise; how the practice of appreciation and gratefulness connects us to a common purpose, in this case supporting STEM students to succeed through the activities of First2 Network.



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## Training Feedback:

We facilitated this training program as described in our 'Sample Agenda' October 13-14, 2023; 17 students and 9 faculty/staff representatives attended. 16 students completed a post-survey regarding this event and below are some highlights from their responses:

- 75% of respondents strongly agreed that the training provided useful knowledge that [they] can apply to [their] responsibilities as a First2 Student Leader
- 68% of respondents strongly agreed that they developed new skills during the training that they will be able to apply in their role as a First2 Student Leader
- 8 out of 16 respondents felt the leadership training was extremely effective in increasing their knowledge in leadership styles and strengths and weaknesses in team work; 4 felt the training was very effective in this area.
- 8 out of 16 respondents felt the leadership training was extremely effective in increasing their knowledge in the area of First2 systems network and systems change; 2 felt the training was very effective in this area.
- 62.5% of students felt, as a result of the training, extremely competent in leadership role in their First2 Campus Club.

Students that attended also offered the following comments about their experience with the training:



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## Next Steps:

We hope that your participants gain value from this training program, continue to reflect on the lessons learned and/or ideas discussed after their participation, and provide you with feedback that will help you scale and improve the program going forward.

Also, while training is an important step in the process to welcome students as leaders at every level of your network or institution, we challenge you to regularly evaluate and strategically discuss action steps for the following to work towards sustaining true partnership with students:

1. How do you promote continuity of leadership through different stages of growth with participants?
2. What tools and resources do you use to ensure that your participants feel like their participation is important and valued?
3. How do you capitalize on the value and power of peer interactions?
4. How do you build a community centered around the shared experience of your participants?
  - o Between peers and near peers?
  - o Between participants and mentors?
  - o Between participants and individuals who are in power positions?
  - o Between participants and individuals who are in the workforce?
5. What are different ways that you collect information in order to ensure that you're capturing everyone's voice?



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## RESOURCES

- *36 questions for increasing closeness*. Greater Good in Action.  
[https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/36\\_questions\\_for\\_increasing\\_closeness](https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/36_questions_for_increasing_closeness).
- [Student Leadership Training Post Survey \(2023\)](#)
- [First2 Communication Trivia](#)
- [Student Leadership Training PDSA Presentation](#)
- Potato Heads Exercise by David M. Williams, Ph.D.:  
<https://www.davidmwilliamsphd.com/mr-potato-head-pdsa/>  
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Williams, D.M. *Mr. Potato Head PDSA Exercise Facilitator Guide*. Austin, TX: DMW Austin, LLC. 2019. (Available on [www.davidmwilliamsphd.com](http://www.davidmwilliamsphd.com))
- (2007). *18. leadership compass exercise*. League of Women Voters.  
<https://www.lwv.org/sites/default/files/2018-07/46-%20Leadership%20Compass%20Exercise.pdf>  
Sources:  
*The Personality Compass* by Diane Turner and Thelma Greco, 1998.  
*The Medicine Way: A Shamanic Path to Self-Mastery*. Kenneth Meadows. Element, 1991.  
*The Medicine Wheel: Earth Astrology. Sun Bear and Waburn*. Simon and Schuster, 1980.  
Adapted from the Northwest Leader Corps training curriculum written and compiled by Nicole Trimble. An EnCorps resource. Please retain the original program attribution when adapting or using this resource. Rev. June 2007.



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