

WRITING THE REBUTTAL

Purpose: Must place a counter document on file refuting inaccuracies, misconceptions, erroneous statements and correcting any item deemed by the teacher to be misleading or disparate

(a) Analyze the observation/evaluation

- (1) obtain overview of document as to its being negative, positive slanted, self-serving for evaluator, etc.
- (2) document areas of negativism in observation/evaluation
- (3) attempt to gain sight of a pattern, form or context of items checked and narratives
- (4) select those items in need of correction by rebuttal
- (5) scrutinize the recommendations and respond as in 4.(e) above

(b) Neutralize all items which appear to be negative

- (1) give reasons for performance in the items evaluated negatively
- (2) give rationale for activity; teacher performance; lesson plan; lesson content, purpose, objective, class-size, referrals, materials and follow-up
- (3) any item mentioning the words - "failure to do," "lack of," "in need of," "should/could have," "noticed," "appeared," should be answered in rebuttal
- (4) mention any failures on the part of evaluator to appropriately and accurately relate performance details

(c) Equalize the results - i.e., where the observation/evaluation appeared negative, the rebuttal should be structured so as to strengthen performance and weaken the negative items on the observation/evaluation

- (1) stress preparation, motivation and lesson flow
- (2) focus on objectives, procedures and attainment
- (3) be clear in directions, assignments and closing of lessons
- (4) connect all performance with curriculum and job description
- (5) always mention an evaluator "failing"
- (6) be critical of, but don't reject, recommendations
- (7) review prior observation, evaluations and utilize content to your advantage

(d) Seek assistance from association representatives before submitting the written rebuttal



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Tips for Rebuttal writing

When writing a rebuttal under the new evaluation and tenure system, a rebuttal should focus on:

- Just the facts – never attack the evaluator.
- Analyze, neutralize, and equalize the observation.
- Incorrect statements of fact** – If the evaluator gets a statement of fact incorrect on the evaluation, it should be noted in the rebuttal and corrected.
- Incorrect use of the model or understanding of the model.**
 - Members need to be experts on the model.
 - State where administration fails to implement the model correctly, cite it or use the model to argue a point or show that the member should have been ranked higher.
 - Remember to cite the model.
 - Approach it like writing a research paper and be sure to provide proofs and citations where possible.
- Failure of the procedure/process** – If the administration did not train staff properly, note it. If the administrator failed to follow the procedure outlined by the model, contract, state regulations or law, it must be noted. Cite specifically how the administration failed. This would include CAP procedures, SGO procedures, failure to verify correct rosters for SGPs, etc.
- Identify an issue resulting from a person's political affiliation, nepotism, union activity, any form of discrimination, or other conduct.**
- Statements by the observer that are arbitrary or capricious** and have no support in the teacher's practice or in the model chosen by the district should be specifically cited.
- If the member previously requested assistance or training** and did not receive it, state this in the rebuttal.
- Keep a rebuttal to the point.**

○ Some questions to consider:

- What is the tone of the observation?
- Is the report designed to lead toward professional growth?
- Are there positive facts that have been omitted?
- Is there a pattern?
- What evidence can the member provide to neutralize flawed or incorrect data cited by the observer?
- How can the member address items that have been ranked ineffective or partially effective? What is the observable data that the member can show?
- Did the member meet the lesson objective?
- Was the lesson in line with the model and curriculum? If so, state it.
- Identify any needed support (such as professional development) that has not been provided or has been provided poorly.
- How can the member discuss any recommendations from the observer in terms of the model and curriculum?

BUZZ WORDS

"MAYBE"

"PERHAPS"

"I UNDERSTAND"

"FAILURE TO DO"

"YOUR LACK OF"

"I SUGGEST"

"YOU MIGHT TRY"

"I ASSUME"

"YOU COULD/SHOULD HAVE"

"IN NEED OF"

"INSUFFICIENT"

"MOST EDUCATOR'S AGREE"

"I'M SURE YOU WOULD AGREE"

"I NOTICED"

"IT APPEARED"

"IT IS MY BELIEF"

"I OBSERVED"

"I NOTED"

"MUST"

"IT IS OBVIOUS"

"IT IS QUESTIONABLE"

RULE OF THUMB:



IF THE HAIR STANDS UP ON THE BACK OF YOUR NECK, OR....YOU HAVE THAT UNCOMFORTABLE FEELING IN THE PIT OF YOUR STOMACH.....



ANSWER AND RESPOND TO ANY NOTE, MEMO, EVALUATION, INCIDENT, COMMENT, OR HEARSAY!!

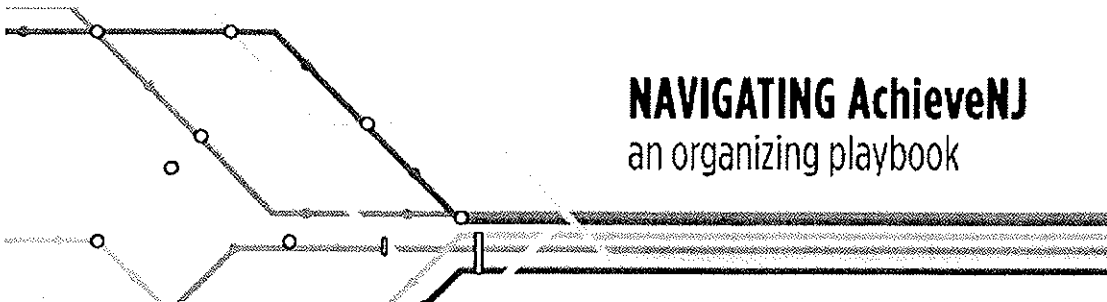


ALWAYS WRITE SOMETHING ON YOUR EVALUATION(S)!!

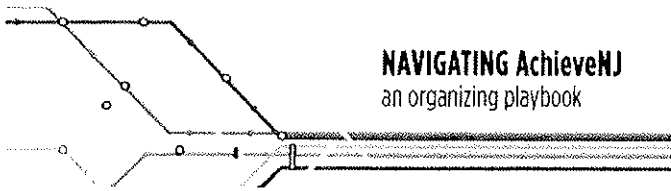
and lastly,



SAVE EVERYTHING!!!!
DON'T THROW AWAY ANYTHING
GOOD OR BAD!!!!!!



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Reflective Response Tips

- Use a thesaurus.
- Always start out with a positive comment. (“The children are always excited to have a visitor in the classroom.”)
- Neutralize them with words.
- Remember, a visitor does not know what has happened before their visit or what happens after their visit.
- If the supervisor uses a child’s name, don’t make the same mistake. “The child in question” or “The child you mentioned” is more appropriate and professional.
- If the class did not behave, call it “visitor’s phenomenon.”
- Be professional and positively aggressive as opposed to negatively aggressive.
- Do not use the names of other staff members unless you have their permission.
- When strength has been noted, embellish it. (“I am pleased that you have recognized the effectiveness of my organizational skills. Thank you.”)
- Don’t be afraid to ask for another evaluator to visit your classroom or for a demonstration lesson.
- Have an association representative go over your evaluation if you are concerned about any of the content. Always have an A/R check your written rebuttal before you attach it to your evaluation.
- Check your personnel file at least once a year.

Management

Leadership

- Accelerated
- Achieved
- Administered
- Analyzed
- Appointed
- Assigned
- Attained
- Chaired
- Conducted
- Consolidated
- Consulted
- Contracted
- Controlled
- Coordinated
- Decided
- Delegated
- Designated
- Directed
- Enforced
- Enhanced
- Established
- Executed
- Evaluated
- Facilitated
- Governed
- Harmonized
- Hired
- Implemented
- Improved
- Increased
- Initiated
- Instituted
- Judged
- Lead
- Lobbied
- Managed
- Motivated
- Named
- Negotiated
- Organized
- Oversaw
- Planned
- Presided
- Prioritized
- Produced
- Recommended
- Reconciled

- Reorganized
- Reported
- Restructured
- Reviewed
- Scheduled
- Spearheaded
- Strengthened
- Supervised

Communications

- Aided
- Arbitrated
- Advised
- Appraised
- Arranged
- Authored
- Briefed
- Clarified
- Collaborated
- Communicated
- Composed
- Conferred
- Consulted
- Contracted
- Contributed
- Convinced
- Cooperated
- Coordinated
- Corresponded
- Counseled
- Debated
- Defined
- Directed
- Documented
- Drafted
- Elicited
- Edited
- Enlisted
- Explained
- Expressed
- Formulated
- Influenced
- Informed
- Inspired
- Interpreted
- Interviewed
- Lectured
- Mediated
- Merged
- Moderated

- Motivated
- Negotiated
- Persuaded
- Presented
- Printed
- Promoted
- Publicized
- Published
- Read
- Reconciled
- Recruited
- Represented
- Reported
- Resolved
- Revamped
- Rewrote
- Spoke
- Suggested
- Summarized
- Talked
- Translated
- Unified
- Updated
- Verbalized
- Wrote

Research

- Analyzed
- Calculated
- Catalogued
- Clarified
- Collected
- Compared
- Computed
- Conducted
- Correlated
- Critiqued
- Diagnosed
- Discovered
- Evaluated
- Examined
- Experimented
- Explored
- Extracted
- Extrapolated
- Gathered
- Identified
- Inspected
- Interpreted
- Interviewed

- Investigated
- Located
- Monitored
- Observed
- Organized
- Proved
- Read
- Researched
- Reviewed
- Solved Studied
- Summarized
- Surveyed
- Synthesized
- Tabulated
- Tested
- Uncovered
- Verified

Teaching

- Adapted
- Advised
- Assisted
- Clarified
- Coached
- Communicated
- Consulted
- Cooperated
- Coordinated
- Counseled
- Developed
- Enabled
- Encouraged
- Enforced
- Evaluated
- Explained
- Facilitated
- Focused
- Graded
- Guided
- Individualized
- Informed
- Initiated
- Instructed
- Persuaded
- Schooled
- Served
- Set goals
- Taught
- Trained
- Tutored



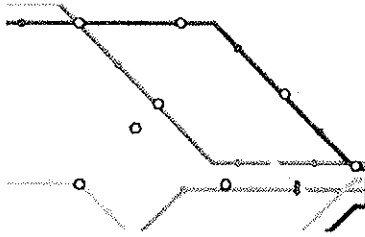
You have great verbal interaction with your class. However, I did note that you only called on students that had their hands raised. Perhaps calling on the other students who are not raising their hands would allow you to also ascertain what information “they” know about the subject you are discussing.

Thank you for noticing the great verbal interaction between me and my students. It is wonderful to have a class who is so excited all the time and more than willing to talk even with a visitor in the room.

Prior to your visit we had used “speaker power” in the room. Every child had to speak using the “power” as we were discussing last night’s homework. The lesson I delivered during your visit was the time for students to raise their hands and be comfortable knowing that “speaker power” time was not in use for the next 40 minutes.

As you know, there are so many other ways to ascertain what information they have digested. After you left we used “catch if you can” to review the lesson and to reinforce what the students learned.

I always appreciate your suggestions. It is most unfortunate that “visitors” do not get to see what happens before and after their visit. The short time you are in the room gives you just a “taste” of what occurs on a daily basis.



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Reflective Response #2

I noticed that one of your students had their head down on the desk while I was observing your class. It is of the utmost importance that you keep all children focused.

Thank you for joining our class today. It is always a pleasure.

I am also glad you noticed that "CM" had her head down on her desk while you were in the classroom, but I am extremely pleased that you did not question "CM" about her head being down. It showed me that you understood there may have been "more than meets the eye" to the situation. I thank you for that!

"CM" had talked with me prior to your visit. She said she really did not feel well. She had been up all night because of her sister, who shares her bedroom, was throwing up all night long. And, as you know, it is almost impossible to function 100% on a day after you have had no sleep.

The class and I discussed with "CM" that today was a "special" day for her. She actually took advantage of one of our class personal days and knew when she needed to put her head down it was okay for this particular day.

It is important for our students to know that it is okay to not feel 100% each day. It validates their feelings.

How wonderful it is to have "CM" want to stay in school for the day and do her best under such adverse conditions. She could have asked to go to the nurse, go home, or caused disturbances throughout the day, but she was mature enough to realize when she needed some "head down" time.

**Your lesson today appeared to be of interest to all.
However, your time on task needs to be addressed.**

I'm glad that you were able to see the high interest level my students exhibited during the lesson you observed today.

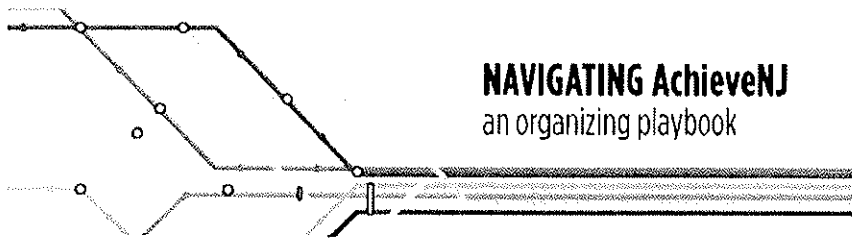
As this was in introductory lesson to the concept of _____, I knew that their interest would be peaked and remain high by raising a variety of questions and holding short discussions. After you left, the students were asked to formulate questions and comments about what they learned using the K-W-L approach. They did this with ease and excitement due to their sustained level of interest.

It was a pleasure coming into your room today. You are to be commended for your successful classroom atmosphere.

Thank you for joining my class today. It was indeed a pleasure to have an “outsider” see the learning that takes place on a daily basis in my room. So often no one realizes just how hard teachers work!

The atmosphere in my class is a result of a mutual respect the students and I share, and the students know they must maintain a high level of decorum due to the rules and procedures we have mutually agreed upon this year.

I look forward to working with you and my co-workers for many future years.



I noticed that you do not have a lot of display of student's work in your room. Your room is not as organized as it should be. And, I think you need to rethink your seating arrangement.

I'm so glad you came in on Thursday. We have been removing things from our bulletin boards in anticipation of putting up a new display of the most recent work. I hope you'll be able to come again in the next few weeks to see our science display.

The seating arrangement has been on my mind for some time. I would greatly appreciate your suggestions for a better seating arrangement in the classroom.

or

The seating arrangement has been on my mind for some time. If you remember, last fall I had a different seating arrangement that was not satisfactory. I was trying to find a different arrangement that would suit you and please you. You seem to know exactly how my students should be seated in order to learn. After almost a year with these students, although I feel this has been working for them you have noticed differently in just one visit.

**Your lesson today on South Africa was exciting.
However, your lesson should have been stopped to
calm down the few students who were over reacting.
It is necessary to have all students focused at all times.**

Thank you for noticing just how excited the kids were about the lesson on South Africa! They have positively contributed more to the learning atmosphere in the room than one could ever even hope for.

Prior to your joining us for your 45 minute visit we had a fire drill (or whatever else you think occurred) and as you know that activity really escalates one's ability to begin a lesson immediately upon entering the room. Your timely visit did not allow us to take the 15 minutes or so necessary to 'calm down' after such an important event/training for the students.

May I also reiterate that visitor's phenomenon (contributed/takes over) for many of us when we know a guest is in the room. Many students want to show visitors/guest what they know and are excited. All students were focused – some were just thrilled to have you visit so they could show off.