# HUMAN CAPITAL WALKTHROUGH TOOL

| Purpose | This tool offers a set of protocols and processes for principal managers and principals, with the support of the HR Partner, to identify and improve a specific human capital challenge in a school that will improve the quality of the workforce and support student learning. HR Partners can use this tool in collaboration with Principal Managers to more deeply understand a specific HC challenge at the school level. |
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| Intended User(s) | HR/HC Leads, Principal Supervisors, HR Partners, Principals |

**What is a Human Capital Walkthrough?**

A Human Capital (HC) Walkthrough is a process that provides principals, principal supervisors, and HR partners an opportunity to analyze and reflect more deeply on ONE specific and challenging human capital concern that impacts the quality of the workforce in the school.

The HC Walkthrough utilizes a process already familiar to principals and principal supervisors called an Instructional Learning Walk. Just like an Instructional Learning Walk, the HC Walkthrough provides an opportunity for the **principal supervisors, principal and the HR partner** to gather firsthand data and observations that can deepen the understanding of the key challenge selected and how to improve it.

The HC Walkthrough process has four separate, but interrelated steps:
- **Step 1:** Identifying a school-level human capital challenge that, when improved, will positively impact the quality of the workforce and learning for students
- **Step 2:** Preparing for and organizing the HC Walkthrough
- **Step 3:** Conducting the HC Walkthrough
- **Step 4:** Reflecting on the HC Walkthrough and documenting recommendations and next steps

We propose that principals, principal supervisors, and HR partners conduct at least one Human Capital Walkthrough over the course of the year to improve how human capital is managed and deployed in service of student learning at each school.

This shared reflective experience has significant benefits for all members of the team. It enhances dialogue about human capital and expands the capacity of the team to analyze beliefs and actions about how to effectively harness talent in a school building. This approach:
- Stimulates collegial dialogue about the human capital and reinforces the HR/school partnership
- Reinforces the focus on the connection between instructional leadership and human capital management
- Deepens understanding of HC practices in the school
- Triangulates data pertaining to HC metrics through observation and interviews
- Reflects on what has happened and determines how to improve in key areas going forward

More detail on each step in the process is included below, along with appendices you can use to document observations, next steps, etc.

# STEP 1: Identifying a School-level HC Challenge

**Overview of Step 1:** The purpose of this step in the HC Walkthrough process is to help principals and principal supervisor focus on **ONE** high-leverage challenge regarding human capital in the school that, when addressed, positively impacts the quality of the workforce and learning for students.  Ideally, the HC focus area selected for the Walkthrough links directly to the principal's instructional vision for improvement in the school (e.g., The school needs to improve math scores but 50% of math teachers transferred or left the school in the last year).

**Timing:** Step 1 should occur at least 1 week before any observations or visits are conducted to allow for adequate planning time.  Allow approximately 60 minutes to identify a focus area for the Walkthrough.

**How to Identify a School-Level Challenge for an HC Walkthrough**

**A.  Start with the instructional improvement vision for the School.**  What is the school's priority for improving student learning?"

*[Note core improvement work here]*

**B.  Discuss HC challenges that are holding you back meeting this vision.**  What is the main human capital challenge(s) related to fulfilling this work?

*[Note one main HC challenge that is negatively impacting your instructional vision, e.g., you can't find a teacher with expertise in X, you are struggling to retain your most effective teachers, teachers are excessively absent]*

**Notes for the HR Partner**
- Bring all dashboards or data available at the school-level to this meeting to review as needed.  Data can and should come from a variety of sources and be viewable as school summary and teacher-level data.  Data to review should include, but not be limited to, the following:
    - Probationary status and seniority information
    - Attendance
    - Performance/ evaluation ratings
    - Diversity
    - Hiring data
    - Retention data, including transfer data
- The principal and the principal supervisor can also provide student data as appropriate
- If the principal and principal supervisor have identified more than one HC challenge that's impacting their ability to meet the instructional vision, use the data to understand which challenge is most pressing or could be highest leverage

# STEP 2: Preparing for and Organizing the Walkthrough

**Overview of Step 2:** The purpose of this step in the HC Walkthrough process is to clearly outline what will be observed and/or who will be interviewed during the Walkthrough to gain additional insights.  The questions, lookfors, and schedule for the Walkthrough is a key output of this step.

**Timing:** Step 2 should occur at least 1 week before any observations or visits are conducted to allow for adequate planning time.  Allow for approximately 60 minutes to identify a focus area for the Walkthrough.  This step can be combined with Step 1.

**How to Prepare for and Organize a HC Walkthrough**

A. **Based on the HC challenge identified in Step 1, brainstorm how you can ascertain more information during the HC Walkthrough to impact this challenge area.**  What are the questions to ask (and of whom) or areas we can examine to understand how to improve in this HC challenge area? *[See Appendix A for ideas on gaining additional information in specific human capital areas]*

| Questions to Ask (of Whom) | Areas to Examine |
|---|---|
| *[Note any questions if, when answered, help you dig deeper into understanding this HC challenge.  Note, who might be the best group or person to answer this question]* | *[Note any areas to examine that might shed light on the challenge, such as school protocols, data, survey results, observations, communications, etc.]* |

B. **Develop specific look-fors that will help you understand how the school is performing in the HC challenge area.**  What evidence will you look-for to understand the depth and breadth of your HC challenge?  What are the best practices in this area you can benchmark against?

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| *[Note any specific look-fors that will help you better understand the challenge and understand if best practices are being used]* |

C. **Organize the schedule for the Walkthrough.**  Working with the principal and principal supervisor, the HR Partner sets a clear schedule of when the Walkthrough will occur and who will be observed, interviewed, or when documents will be reviewed.  The principal and principal supervisor may ask others to participate at their discretion, including Aps, department heads, etc.  *[See Appendix B for a larger version of this schedule]*

**Date & Time of the Walkthrough:**

| What Will Happen (i.e. Interviews, Focus Group, Document Review) | When | Where | Questions to Ask/ Areas to Observe | Look-fors/ Best Practices |
|---|---|---|---|---|
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**Notes for the HR Partner**
- Make sure all staff are notified of the time, date, and location of Walkthrough at least 48 hours in advance
- Provide best practices and benchmarks in the challenge area to help the Walkthrough team develop look-fors

# STEP 3: Conduct the HC Walkthrough

**Overview of Step 3:** The purpose of this step in the HC Walkthrough process is to gather observations and firsthand data to help the Walkthrough team better understand the challenge and what potential solutions might be available to improve.

**Timing:** Step 3 should occur at least 1 week after Steps 1 & 2.  Allow for approximately 120 minutes or 2 hours to conduct the Walkthrough.

## How to Conduct an HC Walkthrough

A.  **The HR Partner assembles the members of the Walkthrough team and reviews the schedule of the Walkthrough and the norms.**  What are the norms you will agree to during the Walkthrough?

*[Note the norms you agree to here]*

B.  **Conduct the observations/ interviews/ reviews.**  Use *Appendix C: HC Walkthrough Observation Capture Sheet* for note taking about what you see and hear in each component of the Walkthrough.  There is no need to take verbatim notes, but take enough notes that will aid in your analysis of the data collected.

## Notes for the HR Partner

- Provide the schedule to all members of the Walkthrough team
- Keep to time to respect the time of others

# STEP 4: Reflecting on the HC Walkthrough

**Overview of Step 4:** The purpose of this step in the HC Walkthrough process is to reflect on the HC Walkthrough as a complete team and document recommendations and next steps for improvement in the HC challenge area.

**Timing:** Step 4 should occur after Step 3 – either immediately or shortly thereafter.  Allow for approximately 60 minutes to debrief the Walkthrough and plan for next steps.

**How to Reflect on the HC Walkthrough**

A. **Reassemble the team and review norms for debriefing.**  Each participant shares his/her observations.  The HR partner leads the discussion and asks each participant to share evidence collected and overview what was seen and heard.

B. **Identify trends, patterns, areas of strengths and additional questions.**  Were there any "ahas?"  Did what is heard and seen confirm what we know?  Did what is heard and seen confirm good practice?  Did what is heard and seen provide additional wonderings or questions?

*[Note any trends, patterns, strengths, or additional questions here]*

C. **Recommendations and next steps.**  Based on the discussion, the team makes specific recommendations to improve the practices in the walkthrough focus area.   Use ***Appendix D: HC Walkthrough Recommendations and Next Steps*** to document next steps in improvement.  Share recommendations with appropriate school and HR staff and agree to next steps, assignments and completion dates.

D. **Finally, discuss how you will measure your success and check in on progress.**

*[Note how you will measure your success and check in on progress and improvement]*

**Notes for the HR Partner**
- Debrief the process of the Walkthrough too.  How did this protocol work for the group? What worked well? What could be improved in the future?
- Be sure to set up time in the future to check in on progress since the last visit and improvement, as well as identify any other challenges that have surfaced

## APPENDIX A: Ideas for Learning More about HC Challenge Areas

| HC Challenge Area<br>*Questions to Consider* | What We Can Observe/Review | Focus Groups/Interviews to Consider |
|---|---|---|
| **Recruiting and Selecting**<br>• How is the school attracting high quality candidates?<br>• What is the hiring timeline?<br>• What is the selection process?<br>• Where do our teachers come from?<br>• Is our teacher workforce diverse?<br>• Where are the vacancies in the school? | • Observe new teachers' classrooms<br>• Observe an interview team<br>• Review marketing materials<br>• Review interview protocols or selection criteria | • Hiring teams<br>• New teachers<br>• Content alike teams<br>• Leadership team |
| **Deployment**<br>• How is the school assigning staff in subjects/grades?<br>• Is there a plan for matching teachers to student needs?<br>• Does the school match teacher assignments to meet the needs of the team? | • Observe teachers focusing on teacher classroom assignments<br>• Observe a strong grade level, certain content team, AP classes<br>• Review teaching assignments | • New and veteran teachers<br>• Teams and departments<br>• School-based leadership |
| **Inducting and Mentoring**<br>• What is the onboarding process?<br>• How are mentors selected and assigned? | • Observe a mentoring session<br>• Review mentoring assignments | • New teachers<br>• Mentors |
| **Performance Management**<br>• How are the teachers performing?<br>• How is the school conducting rigorous and consistent observation process for all teachers?<br>• Do the principal, AP and others responsible for giving feedback to teachers provide quality feedback that drives classroom improvement?<br>• Are teacher performance improvement plans aligned to the deficit areas? | • Observe teachers focusing on performance management<br>• Observe high performers and low performers<br>• Observe a pre/post observation conference<br>• Review formal evaluation write ups | • New and veteran teachers<br>• School-based leadership |
| **Making Tenure/Renewal Decisions**<br>• How are decisions made regarding keeping or exiting teachers?<br>• Is performance data that is used to make tenure/renewal decisions reliable? | • Review list of teachers up for renewal and those recently renewed or granted tenure with performance ratings | • School-based leadership |
| **Developing/Supporting/Professional Learning**<br>• Does the professional learning in the school align to the school improvement plan (SIP) and the needs of teachers?<br>• Are coaching and mentoring programs beneficial?<br>• What structures are in place to support professional learning? | • Observe a team meeting<br>• Observe a professional learning activity<br>• Review surveys of professional learning experiences | • Staff who provides staff development<br>• Teachers |
| **Providing Opportunities for Leadership, Promotion and Succession Planning** | • Observe professional learning | • New and veteran teachers |

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|---|---|---|
| • How is leadership distributed?<br>• Is there a cohesive plan to develop leadership and promote staff?<br>• What is the make-up of the leadership team in the school?<br>• How does the leadership team support professional learning opportunities? | • Observe an Instructional Leadership meeting | • Leadership team |
| **Retaining Top Talent**<br>• What are the ways the school is nurturing talent?<br>• How is the school keeping new talent and supporting its veteran talent?<br>• Review and analyze turnover and retention data. Who is leaving the school? | • Observe how staff is recognized<br>• Observe team or department meeting<br>• Review retention data by subject and grade level<br>• Review exit survey data, if available | • New and veteran teachers<br>• Teacher leaders |

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## APPENDIX B: Schedule for Walkthrough

**Date & Time of the Walkthrough:**

| What will happen *(i.e. Interviews, Focus Group, Document Review)* | When | Where | Questions to Ask/ Areas to Observe | Look-fors/ Best Practices |
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## APPENDIX C: HC Walkthrough Observation Capture Sheet

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| **School Name:** | |
| **Principal Name:** | |
| **Participants:** | |
| **Walkthrough Date:** | |

Use this capture sheet to take notes on what you see and what you hear.  After the observation, review your notes and in the What I learned column identify strengths, gaps and trends.  In your analyzing of what you see and hear, you may want to color code and use **GREEN (G)** for strengths, **RED (R)** for gaps, **BLUE (B)** for trends.

| What We Did | What I Saw | What I Heard | What I Learned |
|---|---|---|---|
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## APPENDIX D: HC Walkthrough Recommendations and Next Steps

Use this sheet to capture recommendations or next steps on how to improve in the HC Challenge area.

| Next Steps/Action Items | Person(s) Responsible | By When |
|---|---|---|
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