

Backward planning

Backward planning is a way of creating a plan based on the end goal (Elmore, 1979). When you are working backwards from a goal, think about the skills, attitudes and motivation of every stakeholder who will be a part of the plan. Consider the notes below, made by a school leader before they planned the introduction of a visitors' programme at the school.

Goal: To establish a visitors' programme such that at least six visitors for each class (IX, X, XI and XII) are invited to school to speak about their profession and relate it to the content of the syllabus.

Stakeholders:

1. Teachers
2. Students
3. Parents or guardians
4. Office staff
5. Support staff



The role of the teacher is to:

- identify the professions that relate to the content of the syllabus
- discuss with the visitor what the syllabus includes and what the visitor may discuss with the students
- prepare students to think of what they would like to know more about
- prepare students with the skills of thanking the visitor appropriately
- give the students the opportunity to apply their learning from the visit.



The role of the student is to:

- help to identify appropriate people they know to visit the school
- identify what they already know and what they would like to know

more about from the visitor

- host the visitor appropriately
- apply the information learned from the visitor and discuss it further with peers and their teacher after the visit.

It is important to take a whole-school approach to the use of resources with all staff and stakeholders involved, not only in the use of resources but also in the maintenance and care of resources. In the scenario above, where visitors come to the school, it is important, for example, that all staff (not just teachers) are aware of the visitor's reasons for being there, that they are greeted appropriately and have a good impression of the school. A visitor is a valuable resource and should be treated with as much care as a physical resource.