Module 1: Expectations and Responsibilities of STARTALK Team Leaders and Site Visitors
The purpose of this model is to:

1. Review the role of STARTALK consultants in fulfilling its mission and achieving its goals.
2. Identify the expectations and responsibilities of Team Leaders and Site Visitors to support STARTALK programs in reaching their goals and upholding the STARTALK standards.
Overview

- STARTALK Goals, Philosophy and Principles
- Site Visits: Generalities
- Expectations of the site visit team
- Responsibilities of the site visit team
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STARTALK Goals

- Stimulate significant increases in the number of students enrolled in the study of critical languages.
- Increase the quality and supply of teachers of critical languages throughout the nation.
- Improve the quality and effectiveness of critical language curricula.

Source: ODNI STARTALK Program Review, September 2009
STARTALK Philosophy

The overall success of STARTALK depends on the success of each STARTALK program. Our job is to provide the support to ensure program success. We do this by:

- Highlighting program strengths
- Identifying areas for improvement
- Providing constructive recommendations and strategies for continued improvement and alignment to the STARTALK principles
STARTALK-endorsed Principles

• Implementing a standards-based and thematically organized curriculum
• Facilitating a student-centered classroom
• Using the target language for instruction
• Integrating culture into language instruction
• Adopting and using authentic materials
• Conducting performance-based assessment
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Components of Success: The Site Visit

- Curriculum Planning
- Feedback
- The Site Visit
Site Visits: Importance for the Program

Every program participates in a site visit because site visits provide:

– Just-in-time support to each program
– An opportunity for the program to implement short-term recommendations for improvement and consider longer-term recommendations
– An opportunity for program to reflect on successes and challenges
Site Visits: Importance for STARTALK

Provide an opportunity for STARTALK to:

– Observe, evaluate and support individual programs as they meet their stated goals.
– Provide a realistic snapshot of the STARTALK program.
– Offer feedback on short-term improvements and considerations for long-term improvements
– Gather data for continuous improvement
Site Visit Team Roles

- **Team Leader:** Individual who works most closely with the program and leads the site visit team
- **Site Visitors:** Individuals who offer their linguistic and/or pedagogical expertise to site visit teams
- **Observers:** STARTALK stakeholders who want to learn more about the program, but do not contribute to the site visit report
Site Visit Protocol

• Each site visit consists of the following:
  – Site visit team meeting
  – Meeting with /interview of the Program Director
  – Classroom observations
  – Interviews of participants and instructors
  – Site visit team debrief
  – Program Director debrief
  – Site Visit Report
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Expectations for Site Visitors

- Understand the STARTALK philosophy
- Recognize STARTALK principles as implemented in curricula and instruction
- Prepare carefully for the site visit by being familiar with all provided materials
- Conduct all interactions in a professional manner
- Understand and follow STARTALK procedures and protocols
Expectations for Team Leaders (1/2)

Setting the Tone

- Convey the message: importance of being part of a team with a shared goal of program excellence.
- Honor the efforts of programs in meeting goals.
- Build trust with the Program Director through regular communication, positive interactions and by following up on promised actions.
- Recognize the perceived power dimension between Team Leaders and Programs.
- Behave in a professional manner as a representative of STARTALK.
Expectations for Team Leaders (2/2)

- Provide support to Program Director in developing curriculum and planning for instruction.
- Respond promptly to communications from STARTALK Central, Program Directors and site visitors.
- Redirect behavior of Site Visitors and Program Directors when inconsistent with STARTALK expectations.
Roles of Observers

Observers:

– are STARTALK stakeholders
– may be included in the breakfast meeting
– participate in classroom observations

Observers are not responsible for:

– the site visit team debriefing
– program director debriefing
– report writing
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- Responsibilities of the site visit team
Team Leader Responsibilities (1/2)

Each Team Leader agrees to:

– Honor the efforts of the program
– Work collaboratively throughout the process
– Co-construct a timeline with the Program Director, and stick to it
– Be accessible to the Program Director
– Focus on the six STARTALK-endorsed Principles for Effective Learning
– Draw on the expertise of the other site visitors
Team Leader Responsibilities (2/2)

– If necessary, use the expertise of other specialists (language/curriculum)
– Coordinate local travel arrangements with Site Visitors
– Ensure that the site visit is well planned in advance
– Read all materials and be thoroughly acquainted with the program
– Ensure that the team is well prepared
– Follow the site visit protocol
Site Visitor Responsibilities

- Initiate communication if you need information or have questions
- Focus on the six STARTALK-endorsed Principles for Effective Learning
- Prepare carefully for the site visit by being familiar with all provided materials
- Follow protocol during the site visit and stay on script during the debriefing
- Communicate program feedback through Team Leader; resist the temptation to communicate feedback directly to teachers.
Observer Responsibilities

- Respect the judgment and decisions of the Team Leader
- Provide input when requested
- Refer questions from the program to the Team Leader
- Use this opportunity to learn about STARTALK and the site you are visiting
Reflections

• Does the information presented in this module reflect your own professional values?
• What have you gained from reviewing this module?
• What do you think will be the best part of being a Team Leader or Site Visitor?
• What challenges could you imagine encountering when working with programs?