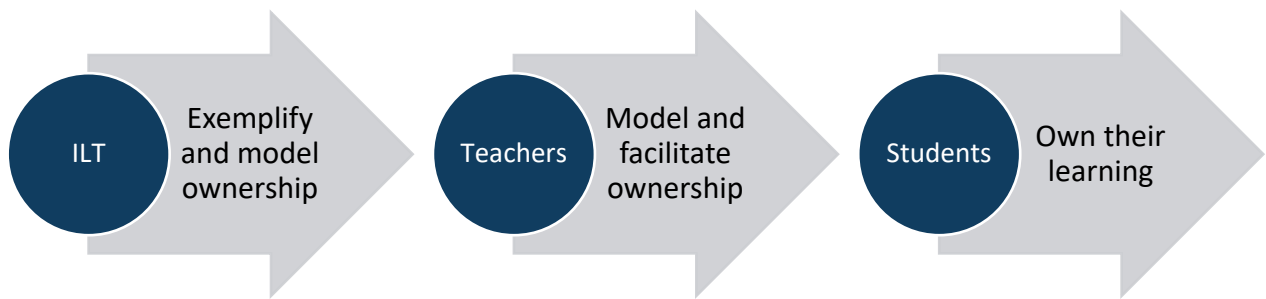


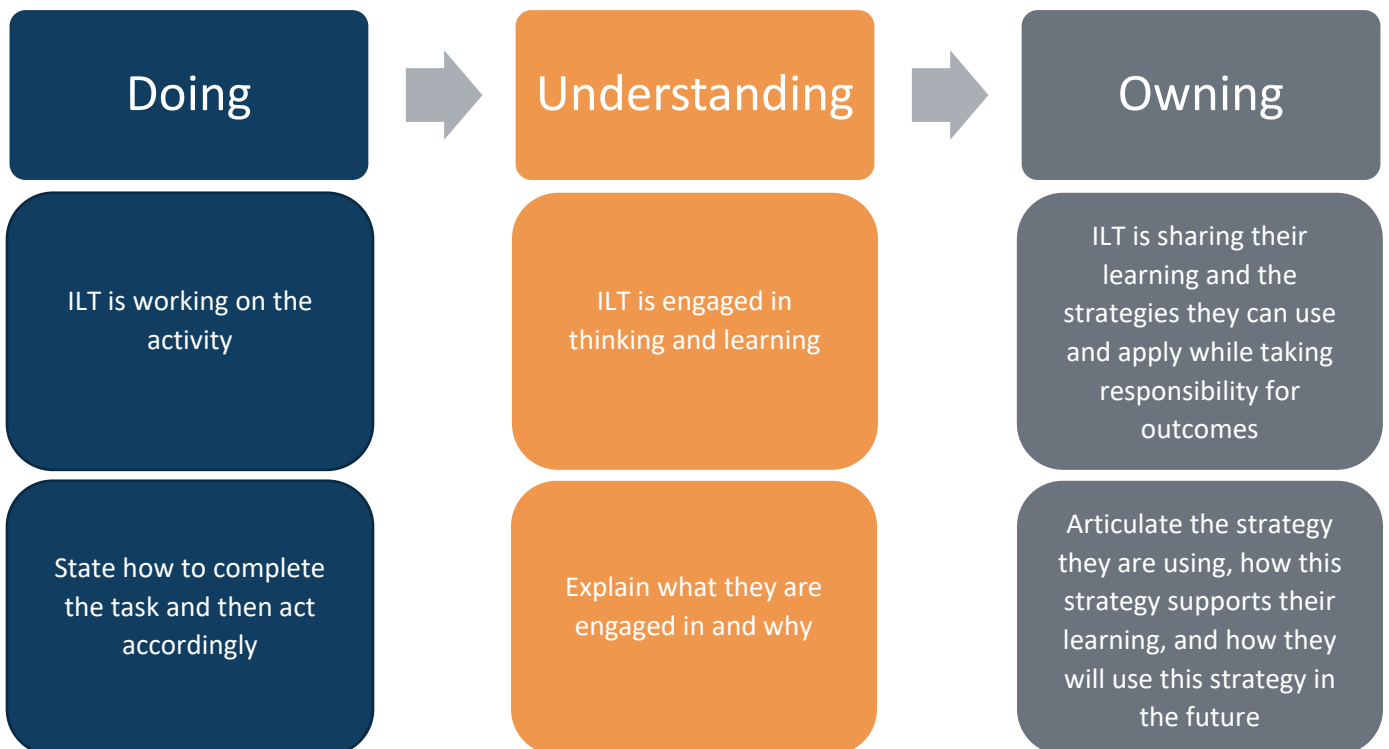
The Instructional Leadership Team’s Role in Cultivating Student Ownership

Achieving student ownership begins with the instructional leadership team (ILT) and how ILT members **own their roles as leaders**. At NIET’s 2022 National Conference, participants unpacked how their instructional leadership teams foster and support ownership and the opportunities to strengthen that focus, which will accelerate their impact on student learning.

This document includes some key resources and guiding questions any leader can use to help their own ILT go further in modeling and supporting teacher and student ownership, which reflects the highest learning destination. While “engagement” reflects doing and understanding, “ownership” reflects knowing how to apply learning in different contexts and taking responsibility for progress and success. For more information on the definition of ownership, [please see this NIET resource](#). When ownership is in place, learning accelerates.



The ILT Ownership Continuum



Ownership Strategies and Guiding Questions

ILTs can start by focusing on three key ownership strategies: data, habits, and choice.

Leaders should engage in **data analysis and reflection** first in order to:

- shift data analysis and reflection to teachers
- empower teachers to understand their ongoing progress as well as their students' progress, constantly reflect, and try new ways of thinking about their learning
- guide and support teachers in interpreting data, drawing conclusions, and identifying next steps
- engage teachers in setting rigorous goals and working independently with continued practice

Leaders use systems and routines that engage all teachers and nurture **effective professional learning habits** such as:

- frequent and robust collaboration designed to capitalize on the knowledge and skills of teachers and gather multiple perspectives
- the work of a team of teachers is organized in a way which encourages and supports self-guided and self-paced learning
- teachers know what professional learning awareness & use of resources and materials are relevant and when and how to use them

Leaders model for teachers how to make **intentional professional learning decisions (choices)**, and how to reflect in a way that informs and feeds future professional learning.

- Build trust and confidence with teachers to make the right decisions about their professional learning.
- Teachers who experience choice in the what, why, how, and when of professional learning take ownership of their learning and engage in sustained learning.
- Teacher choice intrinsically motivates teachers to further their professional learning on topics of interest or need.

As an ILT, discuss the following questions.

Data:

- What roles do teachers play in setting goals and analyzing data?
- How are teacher goals aligned to student mastery of standards and end-of-year assessments?
- What systems and structures are in place for teachers to participate in the identification of instructional needs?

Habits:

- What systems and routines do teachers need in order to lead their own professional learning?
- What systems and routines establish a collegial culture where teacher collaboration is strong?
- How will these systems and routines be established with teachers?

Choice:

- What systems and supports need to be in place to afford teachers opportunity and choice?
- What systems and supports need to be in place to nurture prospective teacher leaders and provide them even more opportunity and choice?
- How can you gradually release responsibility and develop more choice over time, versus all at once?

Examples of ILT Ownership Strategies

The following include some examples of how ILTs can take each ownership strategy and engage along the ILT Ownership Continuum. As you read each strategy, consider where you believe your ILT may be at currently and what it could look like to move to the next level of ownership.

Ownership Strategy	Doing	Understanding	Owning
Data	The ILT follows the district’s guidance and uses assessment data to develop a school goal and grade-level/content area goals. The goals are provided to teachers during PLC/cluster.	The ILT engages in analysis and discussion of assessment data. Based on the findings, the ILT develops a school goal and grade-level/content area goals and develops a plan to facilitate teacher understanding of the why and how behind the goals during PLC/cluster.	The ILT goes first in disaggregating the assessment data and discussing the implications for students, teachers, and the ILT/school. The ILT develops a plan to model this process and then facilitate as teachers go through the process during PLC/cluster. As a result, in subsequent PLC/cluster meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teachers develop a plan for goal-setting with individual students • teachers develop grade-level/content-area goals based on student goals • teachers determine how their grade-level/content-area goals feed into an overarching school goal
Habits	The ILT uses assessment data to identify a skill need and then selects a research-based strategy to address this need. The strategy is presented to teachers at PLC/cluster and teachers are told the steps to teach students.	The ILT engages in analysis and discussion of assessment data. Based on the findings, the ILT vets a strategy and models for teachers how to teach the steps of the strategy during PLC/cluster.	The ILT field tests the strategy with frequent and robust collaboration during the process around the impact on students. The field test work of the ILT is self-guided using student work as the driving force. The ILT develops a plan to model this process and then facilitate as teachers go through the process during PLC/cluster.

Ownership Strategy	Doing	Understanding	Owning
Choice	The principal provides a template for creating an individual growth plan (IGP) goal and presents at PLC/cluster. Teachers use refinement from evaluation to set a goal and spend the beginning of each PLC/cluster reflecting on the goal.	The ILT engages in the process of instructional goal setting. The ILT develops a plan to facilitate teacher understanding of the why and how behind reflection through PLC/cluster.	The ILT goes first in creating an IGP, spending time reflecting and giving each other feedback on their goals. The creation of an IGP includes guiding questions to get teachers to make thoughtful professional learning decisions, developing a system for IGP feedback that builds trust and confident with the teacher, and ensuring the IGP has choice built in. The ILT develops a plan to model this process and facilitate as teachers go through the process during PLC/cluster.

Next Steps to Consider in ILT

Consider the following questions individually and then discuss with your ILT.

Data	How does your ILT exemplify ownership of data and set the stage for teacher ownership of data? In what ways might your ILT elevate its ownership of data?
Habits	How does your ILT exemplify ownership of learning habits and set the stage for teacher ownership of learning habits? In what ways might your ILT elevate its ownership of learning habits?
Choice	How does your ILT exemplify ownership of learning choices and set the stage for teacher ownership of learning choices? In what ways might your ILT elevate its ownership of learning choices?
What might your ILT's plan of action to elevate ownership look and sound like? How will this impact your work as a leader?	