

Develop and lead organisations

Level 4

- Facilitator Guide -

The development practice project

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SOME NOTES ON FACILITATION SKILLS

What is facilitation?

Facilitation is the process of making learning easy. This is done through the use of various approaches such as small group discussions, debates, question and answer sessions, personal reflection and sharing, experiential activities and practical exercises. You allow participants to discover solutions for themselves and encourage them to internalise lessons learnt, rather than lecture on topics.

Your role as the facilitator is to:

- Give direction to the group
- Create a comfortable and friendly environment for the group
- Observe what goes on in a group
- Identify the main needs of the group
- Learn ways to address these needs
- Adjust to the level of the group – in language, content, presentation, and pace.
- Apply and practice these skills in many different situations



Key principles of facilitation

Confidentiality: What is shared in the group remains in the group. Personal and sensitive information will not be told to others. However as evaluations of the course need to be done, and lessons learnt from each course, obviously you will need to discuss some of the content with your colleagues.

Respect: We should respect each other's opinions and experiences, even if they are different from our own or we do not agree with them –this includes the facilitator, who needs to display respect for every learner's opinion and contribution, and to make sure that s/he provides opportunity for all to participate.

Non-Judgmental: It is fine to disagree with another person's point of view but not to judge or put down another person because they do not feel the same as you do. This is particularly important because as a facilitator you have a lot of power in the group (people look up to you) and so you need to make sure that you do not appear to judge or dislike someone.

Use I-statements: Using I-statements ensures that the view you are expressing comes from you. It also shows confidence and assertiveness. It clarifies that you are speaking for yourself and not for the group.



Integrity: Walk your talk! Be a role model for the group. For example, the ground rules apply to the facilitator the same as for the participants – if it says cell phone silent, do not answer calls in the workshop!

Do's and don'ts of facilitation

Do's	Don'ts
Plan and prepare for sessions in advance	Create a long dialogue with one participant
Show interest when listening	Criticise on a personal basis
Use simple language	Dominate the group
Act responsibly	Be biased
Be patient	Be insensitive
Allow participants to discover	Allow domination
Encourage active interaction	Go beyond time allocated
Ask for suggestions from the group in answering questions	Exaggerate enthusiasm about delivering session – be false.

Critical skills of a facilitator

Listening: You pay attention to what is being said, show interest by nodding your head and maintaining eye contact. Allow the speaker to finish without interrupting (unless they are dominating the group and haven't allowed others to speak).

Paraphrasing: You repeat what the person said using your own words (i.e. interpret or reword). This is to ensure you understand and are not making assumptions.

Summarising: You sum up by going over the main points. You help participants to gain a better understanding of the subject.

Creativity: You must always have a plan B. Be imaginative and stimulated. Make your sessions fun yet educational by ensuring that the group does not miss the learning points. You know when and how to use ice-breakers, energisers and humour (without being offensive). Identify different ways of achieving the objectives without compromising the quality of the session.

Awareness: You pay attention to what is not being said in the group, their unspoken needs and watch out for group dynamics that need attention. You are able to “read” the energy and level of the group and adjust your programme accordingly.



Qualities of a facilitator

Good	Bad
Punctual and organised	Disorganised
Presentable	Messy, no care taken in presentation
Confident	Low self-esteem
Assertive	Passive
Friendly	Rude or impolite
Knowledgeable	Uninformed
Approachable	Intimidating
Creative and flexible	Rigid and unaccommodating

The difference between facilitation and presentation

Facilitation	Presentation
Interactive process	One way process
Use of different methods of approach	More formal
Participants discover for themselves	Audience receive the message
Facilitator works with participants as a team	Presenter delivers the message
Use different ways of facilitating (e.g. role plays, debates, small groups etc)	Use one way of presenting – normal “lecture” style

Tips for being a good facilitator

- Remember that you are a role model. Do your best to practise the behaviour you are talking about
- Keep studying and researching, learn about the issues, develop leadership skills
- Share information, be open to new experiences – there is always something to learn
- Ensure that you give accurate and updated information
- Understand your target audience
- Use target/age appropriate activities
- Always strive to keep to time
- Use ice-breakers and energisers that add value to sessions (and where possible, link to the content presented)
- Keep your mind open and flexible
- Have fun, love and enjoy what you are doing



OVERVIEW

Leading organisations is often a challenging and demanding role in a community based organisation. Often Community based organisations are informal in structure and were formed spontaneously from a need in a community. Leaders of these organisations, often are inspirational members of the community, but sometimes have very little experience of developing and leading an organisation.

This course explores the skills and capacities needed to develop and lead a community organisation. The challenge of running a community based organisation requires that leaders understand how groups develop, what leaders can do to support this, what different kinds of leadership styles can be used and how to handle the different interests groups and group dynamics. This manual will look at how we understand this role of a leader and how we can develop this to support the development of our organisations.

It is therefore not a 'hard skills' programme with set answers and approaches – but rather a chance for people to reflect on their own practice and leadership styles and gain a better understanding of groups and organisations. It is not a task list for managing people – this is covered better in the competency area of *Motivate and co-ordinate members of an organisation* and in *Plan and Manage distinct community development projects*. A focus on learning together as a group is covered in *Facilitate learning processes within an organisation*.

As a facilitator, you will need to be able to create the kind of environment where people feel comfortable to share their ideas and feelings, and learn together. There is not one right way for leadership – or only one way to develop groups. Therefore



your task will be to assist participants to explore different options and learn about some different tools so that they can then decide what works best for their organisation. Each situation is different and might require different approaches – therefore people need to be encouraged to learn how to make decisions about what is best in that environment.

This facilitator's manual is accompanied by a learner manual. Most of the activities described in this manual are covered in the learner manual with space provided to do each activity. Some activities will need a bit more explanation and some preparation beyond what the learner manual provides. These activities will be explained in more detail in this manual.

Participants should also be made aware that a facilitated programme of activities should be followed up by practical 'on-the-job' experience and practice (supported by a mentor if possible).

Below follows the Specific Outcomes and Assessment Criteria that this course is based on. This means that at the end of the learning period, the participants should be able practice all the points listed below. Please ensure that participants know about the Portfolio of Evidence and are reminded to collect and keep evidence. This can include exercises from the course, past experience, and on-the-job activities.

The competency standard follows below.



SPECIFIC OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Specific outcomes	Assessment criteria
<i>Competence in this standard means that the learner has clearly shown that s/he is able to...</i>	<i>Tasks and activities completed by the learner contain the following evidence of competence...</i>
1. Build healthy teams	With reference to a specific group: AC1: Group development is explained AC2: Possible group dynamics are identified in a specific context AC3: Different interests, perspectives and relationships among group members are analysed AC4: Processes to facilitate agreement on group behaviour and conduct are described AC5: Different ways to build open and supportive group environments are described
2. Reflect on the role of a leader in an organisation	AC1: Various leadership styles and approaches are described and analysed AC2: The characteristics of a good leader are explained (with examples in practise provided) AC3: Own personal leadership style is identified and its possible strengths and challenges discussed AC4: Fears and vulnerabilities in being a leader are discussed AC5: A plan for leadership development is evident
3. Select appropriate processes to develop the organisation	AC1: Stages of organisational development are explained and the challenges of each identified AC2: An organisation is analysed in terms of its current stage of development and group dynamics AC3: The needs of different organisations are discussed and interventions suggested AC4: Processes to reflect and learn within organisations are described and used
4. Communicate effectively	AC1: The ability to listen attentively and learn from others is demonstrated

(including giving and receiving feedback)	AC2: Cultural sensitivity and confidentiality is displayed in their dealings with others AC3: Communication is conducted in an open and transparent way with stakeholders AC4: Situations where feedback is needed are identified AC5: Ways of giving and receiving feedback are practised both individually and in a group context AC5: Considerations with regards to difficult feedback are explored
5. Manage basic conflict situations	AC1: The sources of conflict are identified and discussed AC2: Some methods of dealing with conflict are mentioned AC3: A tolerant and non-judgemental approach is demonstrated AC4: Practical examples of successful conflict resolution are described

DEVELOP AND LEAD ORGANISATIONS - COURSE PLAN

Workshop Outline – Day 1

Time	Topic	Activity/Method	Aids/Materials	SO	AC
09h00	Welcome and introduction	On coloured cards, people share their experiences of leadership – what do you find challenging about leading groups or your role as a leader. Arrange these on flipchart in plenary	Coloured cards Spray glue		
10h00	Share the programme outcomes	Outline the programme and the experiential/ reflective nature of the programme. Explain the PoE and the assessment process	Flipchart, kokis Programme outline		
10:30		Tea			
10h45	What makes a good leader	In pairs, answering the questions on the <u>thinking partner</u> sheet, discuss your experiences of good leaders (exercise 1 below)	Thinking partner question sheets.	SO2: Reflect on the role of a leader in an organisation	AC2: The characteristics of a good leader are explained (with examples in practice provided)
11:15	What is a good leader?	Then share in 4s the thoughts from your pair conversations– what do you think makes a good leader. Come up with some points and share in the big group (capture on flipchart)	Flipchart, kokis	SO2: Reflect on the role of a leader in an organisation	AC2: The characteristics of a good leader are explained
12:00	Leadership	In small groups, get people to draw	Large sheets of		



Time	Topic	Activity/Method	Aids/Materials	SO	AC
	structures of organisations	some different pictures of the leadership structures in their organisations. Share in the plenary and discuss different pros and cons of different structures. Use this to teach hierarchical and team based structures and discuss what is often needed in CBOs	paper, crayons and kokis for drawing.		
12h45		Lunch			
13:30	What are the different leadership styles?	Experiential activity – Balloon walk (exercise 2) Facilitate a discussion on what kinds of leadership you saw? Different roles of a leader. Create a list together of different styles of leaders	Balloons (as many as people in the group) blindfolds, obstacles if necessary	SO2: Reflect on the role of a leader in an organisation	AC1: Various leadership styles and approaches are described and analysed
14:45	Different leadership styles	Teach about the 3 different leadership styles in the manual (these are just some of which there are more and other definitions). Show chart of different leadership styles. Break into small groups and discuss your understanding of these different styles and when it is appropriate to use which style. Share and discuss in the group	Flipchart, kokis Chart of leadership roles on flipchart paper	SO2: Reflect on the role of a leader in an organisation	AC1: Various leadership styles and approaches are described and analysed
15h15		Tea			
15h30	Roles of a leader	In pairs, discuss what the different roles of a leader are, as you have learnt today. Share in the plenary and	Consult some possible additions to	SO2: Reflect on the role of a leader in an	



Time	Topic	Activity/Method	Aids/Materials	SO	AC
		then look at the list in the manual and take any comments	roles listed below in this manual	organisation	
16:00	My personal leadership style	Personal reflection – spend some time reflecting on yourself as a leader – what are your strengths and what are the challenges for you? Is there anything that makes you afraid as a leader? What can you do about this? If there is time, share with a partner.	Exercise sheet in learners manual	SO2: Reflect on the role of a leader in an organisation	AC3: Own personal leadership style is identified and its possible strengths and challenges discussed AC4: Fears and vulnerabilities in being a leader are discussed
16h15	Check out	Thoughts or reflections on the day – what have I learnt: about groups or about myself?			

Workshop Outline – Day 2

Time	Topic	Activity/Method	Aids/Materials	SO	AC
9:00	Needs of a group	In pairs, reflect on what groups you are involved in (e.g. church, sport, organisations etc) What works well and what doesn't in these groups? What do you think is needed to build healthy groups/ teams? Share in plenary and then teach: needs of a group.	Exercise in learners manual. Flipchart, kokis	SO1: Build healthy teams	AC2: Possible group dynamics are identified in a specific context
9:45	Needs of a group	Individually spend time thinking about what a leader can do to meet these needs. Share in group. Add any of those in the list below (Exercise 3) Make a list of group needs – task and relationship actions	Consult list of task and relationship needs in this manual for additions	SO1: Build healthy teams	
10h15		Tea			
10:30	Group development	How do you think groups develop? In groups of 4 draw a picture of how you think groups develop. Share in plenary <i>Or do the acting exercise to teach the 4 roles (see exercise 4 below)</i> Use to teach stages of group development: Forming, storming, norming, performing. Get the group to brainstorm what they understand about each of these	Paper for drawing. Crayons and kokis	SO1: Build healthy teams	AC1: Group development is explained



Time	Topic	Activity/Method	Aids/Materials	SO	AC
		stages. Write on flipchart			
11:30	Group development and the role of the leader	Reflect in small groups: What is the role of a leader at each stage of group development? Share in plenary and go through the questions in the manual that leaders can think of at each stage and the overview.	Exercise sheet in learner manual	SO1: Build healthy teams	AC1: Group development is explained
12:00	Group dynamics	In small groups, come up with a definition of group dynamics and 3 examples of group dynamics that they have experienced.		SO1: Build healthy teams	AC2: Possible group dynamics are identified in a specific context
12:30	Group dynamics –case story	Read the story in the group. Get people to reflect individually on what the dynamics are in the story and what they could do about it as a leader. Share and discuss in plenary	Story in Learner's Manual (also printed in this manual)	SO1: Build healthy teams	AC2: Possible group dynamics are identified in a specific context AC5: Different ways to build open and supportive group environments are described
13:00		Lunch			
13h45	Processes to support group development	In pairs, come up with some ways that you could enhance and support group development? As a leader what could you do to create an open and supportive group environment? What could you do to facilitate	Flipchart and kokis	SO1: Build healthy teams	AC4: Processes to facilitate agreement on group behaviour and conduct are described AC5: Different ways



Time	Topic	Activity/Method	Aids/Materials	SO	AC
		agreement on group behaviour etc. Share in plenary.			to build open and supportive group environments are described
14:15	Organisational development	Read story of Organisational development – discuss in groups – what did you see? What happened to this organisation? Did you notice any stages of organisational development Teach: the stages of organisational development. Discuss in plenary? What is needed from a leader at each of these stages	Story of OD in learner manual. Stages of organisational development written on flipchart.	SO3: Select appropriate processes to develop the organisation	AC1: Stages of organisational development are explained and the challenges of each identified
15:15		Tea			
15:30	Different roles in groups	Teach these different roles in a group - mover-challenger-supporter- observer. Explain the different group roles, and then get people to place themselves physically in the room at different places. See more on the exercise (Exercise 5) in detail. Then discuss in plenary	Four player model written up on board	SO1: Build healthy teams	AC2: Possible group dynamics are identified in a specific context
16:00 <i>Optional Depending on time</i>	<i>Group roles and dynamics</i>	<i>Break into groups – observers, movers etc. What is good about this group? What can be challenging or a problem? Take the feedback and then discuss the shadow handout.</i>		<i>Build healthy teams</i>	<i>AC3: Different interests, perspectives and relationships among group members are</i>

Time	Topic	Activity/Method	Aids/Materials	SO	AC
					<i>analysed</i>
Home-work	Organisational reflection	Explain the homework: In organisational groups, or alone – reflect on what stage your organisation is at. What do you think your organisation needs at the moment to develop to the next stage?	Exercise sheet in learner manual	SO3: Select appropriate processes to develop the organisation	AC2: An organisation is analysed in terms of its current stage of development and group dynamics AC3: The needs of different organisations are discussed and interventions suggested
16:15	Closing circle	Closing circle to discuss learnings from the day and evaluation.			

Workshop Outline– Day 3

Time	Topic	Activity/Method	Aids/Materials	SO	AC
9:00	Organisational development	In groups of 3, share some of your reflections on your organisation and the things you can do to develop your organisation. Then discuss – what processes can we use to reflect and learn in our organisations. Share and discuss in Plenary.	Flipchart and kokis	SO3: Select appropriate processes to develop the organisation	AC3: The needs of different organisations are discussed and interventions suggested AC4: Processes to reflect and learn within organisations are described and used
10:00	Communication skills	Print the principles of thinking environment on small pieces of paper. Break into groups and give 2 to each group. Get them to think of examples/ role plays of how they can demonstrate this as leaders in a work environment. Share in plenary.	Principles of thinking environment printed onto card and cut out so that groups can choose from a hat.	SO4: Communicate effectively	AC3: Communication is conducted in an open and transparent way with stakeholders
10:30		Tea			
10:45	Feedback	Introduce as focussing on communication and conflict resolution as important skills for a leader. Read the story of Babalwa to bring awareness to the need for feedback	Babalwa's story	SO4: Communicate effectively	AC3: Communication is conducted in an open and transparent way with stakeholders AC4: Situations



Time	Topic	Activity/Method	Aids/Materials	SO	AC
		as a leader – giving and receiving. As a way to learn about yourself and how you relate to others.			where feedback is needed are identified
11:00	World views and other opinions	Draw the symbol M on a piece of flipchart and show to the group (the 3 facing away from you) ask the group what they see. You should get three different answers: W, M and 3. Use this to teach worldviews and why it is so important to be humble in your worldview. Use this to introduce giving feedback as a way of sharing your worldview, but not judging or thinking you have the final answer. Read <i>Moishe and the pope</i>	symbol M on a piece of flipchart. Story of Moishe and the Pope	SO5: Manage basic conflict situations	AC3: A tolerant and non-judgemental approach is demonstrated
10:45	How to give feedback	Teach the feedback model in the learner manual. Think of some appropriate case studies that you can use as examples. Then get them to do an example individually (write out the feedback)	Compassionate Feedback Model written up on flipchart – use different colours.	SO4: Communicate effectively	AC5: Ways of giving and receiving feedback are practised both individually and in a group context
11:30	Giving feedback	Then get into pairs and actually practise giving the feedback to their partner (need to explain the situation first). Role-play feedback examples in pairs. Share learnings from this activity	Exercise sheet from Learner Manual	SO4: Communicate effectively	AC5: Ways of giving and receiving feedback are practised both individually and in a group context
12:00	Giving difficult	Discuss in plenary - what	Flipchart and	SO4:	AC5: Considerations



Time	Topic	Activity/Method	Aids/Materials	SO	AC
	feedback	considerations do I need to make when the feedback is sensitive. Share conditions for giving feedback.	kokis	Communicate effectively	with regards to difficult feedback are explored
12:30	Conflict – understanding the sources	In groups of 4, discuss what some of the possible sources of conflict are in an organisation. Teach the difference between presenting needs and underlying needs. Read the case example in the Learner Manual and discuss the questions in plenary together.	Case story from learner manual	SO5: Manage basic conflict situations	AC1: The sources of conflict are identified and discussed
13:00		Lunch			
13:45	Conflict Case studies	Ask the group to tell you 3 stories of conflict in an organisation. Then break into groups to answer questions about these conflicts and what you would do in each situation. • What was the need of the individuals (presenting need and deeper need)? • What was the need of the organisation? • What was the essence of the conflict? • What the third option or alternative can you think of that is win-win? • How can you use the conflict to	Questions written on flipchart. Flipchart and kokis	SO5: Manage basic conflict situations	AC2: Some methods of dealing with conflict are mentioned AC3: A tolerant and non-judgemental approach is demonstrated

Time	Topic	Activity/Method	Aids/Materials	SO	AC
		build the organisation?			
14:45	Preventing conflict	In pairs discuss – what can we do as a leader in an organisation to prevent conflict from happening? Share in plenary and come up with some actions that a leader could take.	Flipchart and kokis	SO5: Manage basic conflict situations	AC2: Some methods of dealing with conflict are mentioned
15:15		Tea			
15:30	Role of a leader	Reflecting on all we have done so far – in plenary or small groups of 4 discuss what do you think the role of a leader is?	Flipchart and kokis	REVISION	
15:45	Personal reflection	What do you think you can do as a leader to improve your leadership? What can you do for your organisation? Come up with a plan for your development (15mins)	Exercise in learner manual	SO2: Reflect on the role of a leader in an organisation	AC5: A plan for leadership development is evident
16:00	Closure	Finish with closure and share learnings and plans in the plenary. Complete evaluation form afterwards.	Evaluation forms printed.		



SOME OF THE EXERCISES IN DETAIL

Exercise 1 :Thinking partners

What does leadership mean to me?

Get the group into pairs and explain exercise. Explain that the role of the thinking partner is to ask questions **only**, to listen and to encourage good thinking in their partner. The guidelines should be explained and the question sheets handed out:

What makes a great leader?

- Ask all the questions of your partner before swapping over
- Allow for about 10 minutes each way
- Use the questions as prompts for your partner to think
- Listen as a learner and encourage the story
- Allow your partner time to think

Questions

1. Thinking back on your work or life experience, think of a time where you felt that you experienced a really good leader –someone who really embodied all the characteristics of great leadership.

a) Describe the situation and conditions under which you experienced this great leadership

b) Describe the qualities that the person brought to their role

c) Describe what they did as a leader that you really appreciated

2. Think back on a time when you think that you demonstrated good leadership qualities.

When was this and what did you do?



Exercise 2: The balloon walk

This is a group initiative, designed to draw learning from the group's experience. The objective for the activity is to get the group from one side of the room to the other, holding balloons between them, without dropping, touching or popping the balloons. If the group is bigger than 15 you will probably have to split them into 2 groups.

Equipment: one balloon per person. A few blindfolds for blindfolding people. Something to mark the beginning and end points of the exercise.

Instructions: Get the group into one line (back to back) and explain that they will need to walk from one point to another. They need to place the balloon between themselves and the person walking in front of them, but are then not allowed to touch the balloon with their hands until they have reached the end point.

If anyone touches or drops the balloon, the group will either have to go back to the beginning or will be penalised – i.e. someone will be blindfolded or someone will lose their voice (normally good to make this one of the more outspoken leaders, to encourage other leadership in the group). Sometimes you could even put a new leader in the front.

Once you have given the instructions, give the group a few minutes to plan. Once they have indicated that they have started, any mistake is then penalised.

Debriefing: Guide the debriefing session by using questions about what happened and what they learnt from the activity.

You can also ask specific questions about leadership – who was/ were the leader/s? What did they do? Where different kinds of leadership displayed? What kind of



leadership worked? What does a leader need to be aware of? Use the discussion to come up with some different leadership styles as well as some of the roles of a leader.

Roles of a leader

Here are some ideas of the various roles of a leader that could be mentioned by the group. If these don't come up during the feedback, then share them afterwards:

- Build ownership
- Engage all in mission, vision and values
- Make new people welcome
- Create a safe space for disagreement
- Give constructive feedback, encourage feedback and openness
- Create opportunities for people to work together
- Improve and facilitate good communication
- Make relationship building a priority, not only task delivery
- Encourage appreciation and celebration
- Observe the team
- Identify critical issues
- Learn ways to solve key problems
- Practise what you preach
- Observe people's feelings
- Be aware of the needs of the group
- Listen to people and try to be non-judgemental
- Be flexible
- Be accountable



Exercise 3: Needs of a group

Elicit these answers from the group. If not all of these are covered by the group feedback, you can add these below:

Task needs:

- Starting a discussion or helping the group begin a job
- Asking for information
- Giving information to ensure group members have relevant information
- Asking what people think
- Summing up in discussions and checking to see if everyone agrees
- Helping people to analyse problems and making creative suggestions
- Ensuring that everyone knows what is expected of them and their task
- Giving feedback on the tasks and their results
- Monitoring and checking on progress in a consultative, positive way.

Relationship needs:

- Encouraging and showing appreciation
- Giving everyone a chance to speak
- Finding out what people feel about things
- Encouraging shy members
- Setting standards (e.g. contracts like listening to each other etc)
- Relieving tension
- Resolving arguments and conflict



Exercise 4: Group Development:

When teaching forming, storming, norming and performing, it is important not to focus on the terms too much as people often struggle with this. It is not the terms that are important, but the concept of how groups develop. There are 2 different possible ways to teach this:

1. Break the group into smaller groups of 4 and ask them to draw a graphic representation of how they see the process of group development. Share these pictures in the plenary and then use this to teach the process of Group development. This method takes time because of the drawing process.
2. Another shorter and effective way to teach this is by getting the group to 'embody' (act-out) the different stages. Don't explain anything, just get them to copy the actions below.
 - Ask the group to get up and go around the room shaking hands with other people – like they are meeting them for the first time. Mimic smiling and overly polite behaviour. This can create lots of laughs and good energy.
 - Then get them to walk around with a frown on their faces with clenched fists raised (like they want to start a fight).
 - Then get the group to go around hugging each other.
 - Lastly get them to make a chain, touching arms and making train sounds and moving round the room (a united chain).
 - You can then get the group to go through the stages a couple more times.

Then on the flipchart, get them to speak about what they saw happening in each stage. Just note thoughts, comments, feelings and words. After you have spoken about each stage, label them and explain the group development process.



Story of Group Dynamics



Story of Group Dynamics

You are the leader of a small community based organisation that runs an educare centre for orphans and vulnerable children. You and your group of volunteers have been doing this for the last 5 years. You have always been surrounded by a strong and dedicated team who are very passionate about their work.

In the last year, you received some money from the government to support your services. This was a very exciting move for the organisation and has meant that you can now pay stipends to your workers and grow your service. Because of this, you have hired some new community volunteers.

You realised that you would need more formal systems so that the new people would know what to do in the job so you started with job descriptions and reporting systems. Some of the old staff seemed to really dislike this and are slow to start implementing. You notice over tea that the new staff don't sit with the old staff and there is clearly, not a good relationship between them.

One of your most dedicated members of staff starts to challenge all the new systems and doesn't want to write any reports. He has been with you the longest (from the very beginning) and all the old staff, see him as a role model and guide. The new staff, however, have been to complain that he is bossy and is always telling them what to do.

The situation is at its worst when you try to organise a fundraiser for the centre and there is a big argument about who will do what on the day. Some of the staff get angry and say that they aren't going to come anymore.

Exercise 5: Four Player Model

Mover Supporter Observer Challenger

1. Teach the model first. Below is some information you can use in teaching the model
2. Then divide the room into 4 places – one for each of the roles and ask people to go and stand in each place depending on the dominant role that they play in their work environment.

Stop and discuss. What do you notice? If this was an organisation, what would be the pros and cons of the kind of roles we are playing (for example, sometimes there are too many challengers or none at all). Have some discussion and take comments.

3. Then ask people to place themselves according to the main role that they play in their home environments

What is different? Why do they play different roles there? What has changed? Have some discussion about why it is important as a leader to be aware of these different roles and how you need to encourage the roles that are missing.

Some information on the four player model

David Kantor developed a powerful theory that suggests that conversations reflect structures based on each individual's needs. They reflect the unspoken needs of the group and the situation. He notes that people play different roles not because they intend to, but because the conversation needs someone to fill that role.



These roles include the following:

- **Move** - When someone makes a move, they are initiating the action
- **Follow**- Another person listening to this initial proposal might agree and want to support what is being said. The second person could be said to be following the first.
- **Oppose** - A third person may think something is not quite right with this picture. He or she may oppose the ideas of the first person.
- **Bystand/ Observe** - A fourth person might observe the situation without taking sides. After following the conversation, this person may propose a way of thinking and seeing that expands everyone's view. This person could be called an observer/ bystander.

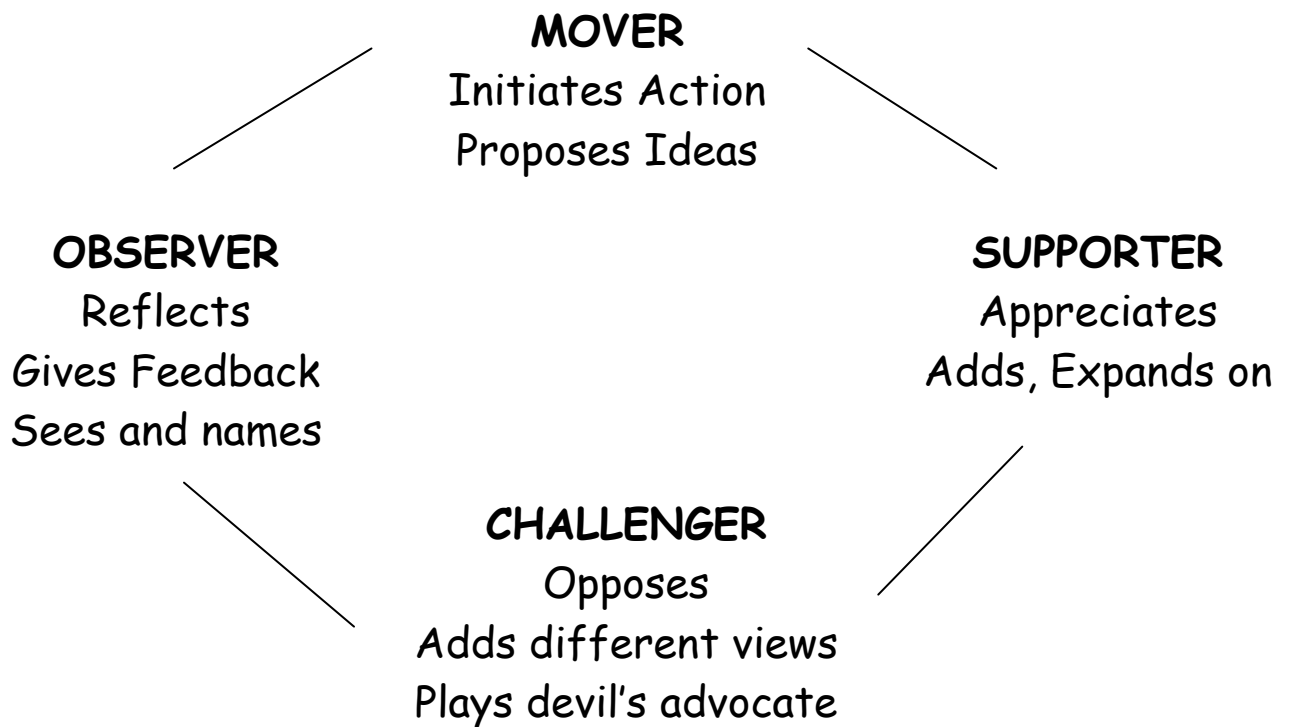
A healthy conversation and team, according to Kantor, consists of all of these roles and actions being used in balance. None is omitted. All of the people in the conversation are free to occupy any of the four positions at any time.

It is common for people to get stuck (or comfortable) in one of the roles identified here. It is also common for people and teams to make the setting uncomfortable for some roles. For example, if someone opposed something and is branded as “not being a team player” because of it, opposition from the whole team can be diminished. It is important to think carefully about logical downsides and risks. It is also important to reveal past experiences. Therefore, an opposing position can add important information to the learning mix. All the roles add value to conversations.

We are likely more comfortable in some roles than others, but it can provide new dimensions for us to learn to engage in all four. The team as a whole can help by asking if we have covered all the bases in this conversation.



The model is shown below



FOUR PLAYER SYSTEM: INTENTIONS and IMPACTS

ROLE	INTENTION	SOMETIMES COMES ACROSS AS:
MOVER	Direction Clarity Discipline	Omnipotent Dictatorial Impatient
SUPPORTER	Appreciation Loyalty Compassion	Yes-person Pliant Soft
CHALLENGER	Correction Integrity Courage	Critical Competitive Attacking/ Defensive
OBSERVER	Perspective Self-reflection Name what they see	Disengaged Withdrawn Judgemental



Consider four behaviours/ roles team members could demonstrate during a team discussion:

- Taking charge, offering ideas and leading the discussion.
- Agreeing and going along with what's being proposed.
- Disagreeing and challenging what's being proposed.
- Quietly paying attention to what's being discussed.

From the point of view of productive teamwork, each of the four roles is both useful and problematic. When the team can't seem to get going or loses focus, it's critical that someone take charge. On the other hand, when the team is engaged in a productive conversation on a difficult topic, team members will resent someone intervening to take charge in order to move things along. Kantor points out that each role provides a specific benefit to the team. Taking charge provides direction, going along provides completion, challenging provides correction and paying attention provides perspective.

Over time, a team that lacks one of the roles will miss out on that benefit. They might describe their team as *lacking direction*, (in other words, insufficient taking charge) or *settling for half-baked solutions* (in other words, a deficiency of disagreeing and challenging). The roles can also feel out of balance when individuals get stuck demonstrating the same one or two of the four roles. While each role provides a specific benefit, repeated demonstration of the role by the same individual creates dysfunction.

There is a significant risk that other team members will make less than flattering judgments about individuals who only bring one type of role to the team. Team members will use words like, *bossy* or *dictatorial* to describe individuals who only

ever take charge. The individual who always agrees and goes along looks *wishy-washy* to the rest of the team. Someone who only ever disagrees or challenges will quickly develop a reputation as *negative* or *critical*. The team member who never says anything during the meeting will be viewed as *disengaged* or *aloof*.

You can read more about this in the extra readings section if you would like.



Case Study: Babalwa's Story

Read this story to the participants (it is also in their learner manual).



Case study

Babalwa is a nurse at a local hospital and an enthusiastic member of the local community, and various local organisations. At a community meeting it is proposed that a group be set up to run a proposed development project in the local district. Babalwa is an obvious candidate to lead this group because of her experience and involvement. The NGO that is setting up the project asked Babalwa if she will do it and she agreed.

After a few weeks, the group has shrunk in size and is much smaller than when it started. Those who have left the group complain to their friends that Babalwa is rather controlling as a leader, talks too much and doesn't listen to the points of view of others. One person even complains to the NGO representative but he is too busy to follow up. At the next community meeting it is noted with sadness that Babalwa's group has broken up and the project cancelled.

Either ask these questions in small groups or ask the whole group:

- Why did the group break up?
- How do you think the people who belonged to the group feel?
- How do you think Babalwa feels?
- What could have been done to help the situation?

- How can we encourage feedback in our homes, our work situations and our communities?

Moishe and the Pope

About a century or two ago, the Pope decided that all the Jewish people had to leave Rome. Naturally, there was a big uproar from the Jewish community.

So, the Pope made a deal. He would have a religious debate with a member of the Jewish community. If the representative won, the Jews could stay. If the Pope won, the Jews would leave. The Jews realized that they had no choice. They looked around for a champion who could defend their faith, but no one wanted to volunteer. It was too risky. So, in desperation, they finally picked an old man named Moishe, who spent his life sweeping up, to represent them. Being old and poor, he had less to lose, so he agreed. He asked only for one condition to the debate. Not being used to saying very much as he cleaned up around the settlement, he asked that neither side be allowed to talk. The Pope agreed.

The day of the great debate came. Moishe and the Pope sat opposite each other for a full minute before the Pope raised his hand and showed three fingers. Moishe looked back at him and raised his index finger. The Pope waved his hand in a circle around his head. Moishe pointed to the ground where he sat. The Pope pulled out a communion wafer and a glass of wine. Moishe pulled out an apple.

The Pope stood up and announced, "I give up. This man is too good. The Jews may stay." An hour later, the cardinals were all around the Pope asking him what happened. The Pope said, "First, I held up three fingers to represent the Trinity. He responded by holding up one finger to remind me that there was still one God common to both our religions. Then, I waved my hand around me to show him that God above was all around us. He responded by pointing to the ground, showing that God was also right here with us, in our midst. I offered the wine and the wafer to show that God absolves us from our sins. He pulled out an apple to remind me of original sin. He had an answer for everything. What could I do?" Meanwhile, the Jewish community had crowded around Moishe, amazed that this old, somewhat feeble man had done what all their scholars had insisted was impossible! "What happened?", they asked. "Well," said Moishe, "first he said to me that the Jews had three days to get out of the city. I told him that not one of us was leaving. Then, he told me that this whole city must be cleared of Jews! I let him know that we were staying right here." "And then?" asked a woman. "I really don't know," said Moishe. "He took out his lunch, so I took out mine."



Compassionate Feedback Model

Compassionate Feedback Model

“WHEN I (hear, see)

Describe the behaviour – just the facts as specifically as possible without judgement or exaggeration

“I FEEL (happy, sad, angry, afraid)....”

Say how you feel – tell how their behaviour affects you.

“BECAUSE I (assume, believe, think)....”

Give your assumption that led you to feel the way you do

-----Pause here for discussion to hear their thoughts-----

“I WOULD LIKE.....”

Ask for what you would like in the future – changes you would like to see

“WHAT DO YOU THINK?”

Then Listen again

The Source of Conflict

A story of two colleagues

Cindy and Themba have been working together for over a year. In the last month Cindy was promoted to team leader of Themba's team. Since then there has been constant tension and arguments between them.

They finally come to see you in your office, complaining about each other and how they can no longer work together. Themba says that Cindy is bossy and controlling and always interferes in his work. Cindy says that Themba never listens and doesn't appear to want to do his job. You are left to facilitate this difficult situation.

Give the small groups these questions to consider

- What was the need of the individuals (presenting need and deeper need)?
- What was the need of the organisation?
- What was the essence of the conflict?
- What the third option alternative can you think of that is win-win?
- How can you use the conflict to build the organisation?

As facilitator, when you take feedback on the possible sources of conflict, these are some ideas that you might hear:

- Themba is threatened because Cindy has been promoted above him (and maybe because she is a woman). He needs to feel valued and respected.
- Cindy is nervous about her new responsibility and so is trying too hard and being too controlling. She needs to be helped to be more trusting.
- Themba needs to feel trusted and respected in his work – therefore Cindy needs to be more empowering. Her new role also needs to be explained.
- They need to find ways to support and value each other's contribution.

Course evaluation form

Date: _____

Facilitator/s: _____

What did you like about the course?

What part of the content was most useful to you?

What was not useful to you?



What did you not like or would change about the course?

Please rate the following (circle or underline your choice):

<i>Facilitation</i>	Excellent	Good	Not Good
<i>Pace</i>	Perfect	Too fast	Too slow
<i>Content</i>	Appropriate	Not appropriate	

Do you have any other comments or feedback for the facilitator/s?

What support would you like in implementing the learnings from this course?

EXTRA READINGS FOR THE FACILITATOR'S/ LEARNERS' INTEREST

The Phases of Organisational Development

This is just one perspective on the phases of organisational development. Thanks and acknowledgement to CDRA for this article (www.cdra.org.za).

THE NATURE OF INITIATIVES AND ORGANISATIONS

Underlying the following discussion of initiatives are three basic assumptions, all quite obvious yet important. The first is that all initiatives and organisations are human creations, no matter how old and well established. They are created by people with an idea in response to a perceived need and they are continuously being modified by people's ideas and actions. A school, a cafe, a company, may well carry something of the personality of the founders, but it is changed by the ideas and aspirations of those who now share responsibility. So we live and move in a world created by nature and in a large and increasingly complex institutional world created by people.

The second assumption is that this institutional world of, shops, restaurants, NGO's, schools and even government agencies is one in which each initiative, like a human being, goes through characteristic phases of development. Organisations are not mechanical systems but, are a living system with phases of crisis, adaptation, growth and development. This means that organic metaphors such as seed, stalk, bud and flower, or childhood, adulthood and old age, are more relevant to the life cycle of organisations than mechanical metaphors such as input, output, clockwork or a smooth running engine. It also implies the third assumption, namely that one of the central tasks of initiative takers is keeping the organisation alive and developing as a healthy living organism.

In working in NGO's, I am frequently surprised by how little awareness initiative takers have about their whole organisation and about its stage of development and how relieved they are when they recognize that their organisation, while unique, shares characteristic phases of crisis and development with other organisations.

The following description is devoted to giving a general picture of the phases of an initiative development over time, as an aid for individuals to more consciously shape and develop their organisations. The picture presented in no way seeks to deny the uniqueness of individual initiatives, but rather to describe the characteristic challenges and opportunities which exist in the life cycle of most organisations.



THE PIONEER PHASE - IMPROVISING IN RESPONSE TO NEEDS

Looked at from the view point of the life phases of an organisation, one can say it starts with a gestation period when one or more individuals are walking around with an idea - an idea which is slowly ripening. This gestation period may be shorter or longer - often it is deeply connected with that individual's life and destiny.

Henry Ford knew he wanted to be an engineer at 12. He also knew he wanted to find his own automobile company when he was in his late twenties. But it took him until 40 to finally create the Ford Motor Company.

Following the gestation period is a moment of birth - when the school first opens its doors, the company delivers its first product, or NGO receives its first grant. This is a very important moment in the biography of all initiatives and it should be celebrated like a birthday. Usually this is done, often unconsciously, through a party, a festive meal, or even just saving the first dollar or pound earned by the new co-op. However, if this can be done consciously, as a foundation or a birth ceremony, inviting friends, customers, and helpers, it will help to get the new baby off to a good start.

If the initiative flourishes, it enters a period which is analogous to childhood; vibrant, exciting, full of surprises and of growth. Co-workers are involved in many activities, routine is limited and the direction of the initiative is clear. It is a time full of ups and downs - a mood similar to the early twenties in an individual's life.

A couple who started a futon manufacturing and retail business only a few years ago gave a picture which describes many early initiatives which have gotten off to a successful start: endless activity in deciding on staff, setting wage levels, ordering supplies, supervising production, keeping the books, getting bank loans, planning future activities and occasionally stopping to catch a breath. They also mentioned two qualities essential to any starting enterprise: concern for the quality of their Futon (cotton) bedding, and doing their utmost to assure customer satisfaction. The same qualities apply to a new school, a literacy project, or any endeavour. Its reputation rests on the satisfaction of its clients, customers or parents. If it provides a quality service or product, it will generally thrive.

Having a concern about quality and client satisfaction means that a new initiative, a pioneer organisation, has to act like a large sense organ, continuously monitoring the satisfaction of those it serves, while at the same time sensing how the initiative is functioning internally. If a literacy project spends more time developing programmes than helping people read and write, or if a school is unable to maintain discipline, interest and support from pupils and parents will begin to decline.

Sometimes people have the question whether it is better to start an initiative alone or together with others. In reality this is never an abstract question; a couple will decide to open a furniture store, one individual to start a college, or two partners to begin a consulting service NGO.



In the past a single individual - a pioneer - tended to start a new venture and others then joined him or her, attracted by the personality and vision of the individual. They then need to be certain that they have a common vision and are equally committed with their time and energy. Absent and halfhearted initiative takers are not readily accepted by those who are in it full time. Also the group should not be too large and should be capable of working together. If these conditions are met, then a group of individuals - because of their combined talents and wider set of destiny connections - definitely has a greater potential than a single pioneer.

As the pioneer organisation grows, it has a number of characteristic qualities which one can observe in organisations as diverse as schools, co-operatives, and community clinics:

- ❖ It is generally of small to medium size, although I have worked with a community college with a teaching staff of 600, still in its pioneer phase.
- ❖ It has a shallow, flexible structure with a limited hierarchy. Key decision makers are often involved in the full scope of organisational activities.
- ❖ It is person-oriented, rather than function oriented. If you ask a pioneer about his or her organisation, you will usually be told that Tom does publicity, Mary, craft therapy, Steve, counselling and so on.
- ❖ Leadership is personal and direct with people generally knowing who makes what decisions. However, throughout the initiative's growth there is the need to clarify the role of the central carrying group vis-a-vis detailed work groups and supporters. This is especially important and problematical in initiatives largely dependent on volunteer help.
- ❖ Decision making is intuitive. Things are decided more by hunch or by feel than through a long process of rational analysis. This style of arriving at decisions usually means that the pioneer organisation is able to respond rapidly to changes in the environment.
- ❖ The pioneer organisation has a family atmosphere about it. Everyone contributes as they are able and most of the staff have a strong sense of loyalty to the founding group, and to the initiative.
- ❖ Motivation and commitment in a pioneer organisation are high.
- ❖ The goals of the organisation are implicit - carried in the minds and personalities of the carrying group.

This phase of an organisation's life is exciting, somewhat insecure, and very creative. It is really about developing something out of an idea, a hope and seeing it grow into an institution with services or products, a physical space, and staff. Another way of describing this is to say



that one is bringing a child into the world - a child with its unique personality - full of vitality and potential.

As the initiative grows, a number of problems begin to appear. This may be two, five, ten, or even twenty-five years after its beginning. One of the issues is size, not everyone knows everyone anymore. New people join the organisation in substantial numbers and do not share the joys and struggles of the early days, having no relation to the institution's past or the people who made it what it is. Another issue is that new structures of decision making are needed to cope with increased size and complexity. Leadership often becomes unclear and motivation decreases. A sense of uncertainty, of crisis exists. In many smaller NGO initiatives this crisis of the pioneer phase includes some of the following phenomena:

Loss of confidence in leadership. Increasing criticism, usually by newer people, about the "autocratic" and "non-democratic manner" in which decisions are made. Newer people have little relationship to the starting situation and the sacrifices that the original group made in getting things going. In some case, these issues are also generational with a new generation of people wanting to both have more influence and wanting to work in new ways. An unclarity about goals and directions which at an earlier time were embodied in the carrying group.

Then there was a personal relationship, and if there was a question, everybody knew who to go to. I remember attending a faculty meeting in an educational institution and watching all heads turn toward one person when a question of significance arose. In the absence of close personal relationships, the need for clearly understood goals and policies arises. What was implicit and personal needs to become explicit and objective.

The need for a definition of responsibilities and decision making authority. When things are smaller and informal one decision making centre is adequate; but if you have a kindergarten, a lower school and a high school, or upper school, who has what responsibilities? In a college, what is the relationship between the teaching faculty and the administration, or between the departments or divisions?

In a furniture cooperative, how will purchasing, accounting, merchandising and hiring be divided in an orderly fashion? Such questions become burdensome and indeed become the source of conflicts.

In both large and small organisations the crisis of the pioneer phase is perplexing and painful. The need for change is recognized but its direction and how to achieve it often remains obscure. It is in such circumstances that a developmental picture can help, not as a prescription but as a rough road map so that at least the nature of the next landscape is discernible.



THE DIFFERENTIATION PHASE: THE CHALLENGE OF DIVERSITY WITH CONSCIOUSNESS

The challenge of the phase of differentiation is how one can move from the personal, intuitive, improvising mode of a smaller pioneer organisation to a more objective, clear and functional way of meeting a growing organisation's objectives.

In my experience, there is a trade-off between consciousness and form in meeting this challenge. The more conscious people are of goals and policies - the direction and guiding principles of an organisation - the less there is the need for rigid forms and control mechanisms. However in the absence of shared goals and policies, hierarchical principles, procedural handbooks, and rigid reporting relationships seem to become imperatives.

Cultural institutions such as schools, development organisations, primary health care centres and the like often resist the pressures for greater functional clarity by attempting to muddle through. This tendency is quite pronounced in faculty-run schools, partly because most teachers have limited administrative and organisational experience. The trend in most businesses is the other way - replacing people by systems and so rationalizing operations that individuals feel like a cog in the proverbial machine. The tendency to muddle through, to cling to a vague hope of the old unity, generates chaos and the struggle for power between individuals. The opposite emphasis reduces individuals to numbers and robs them of their creativity.

The central question for all organisations in this phase of development is to bring about functional differentiation without sacrificing human creativity and commitment. Achieving this balance, and entering a healthy differentiation process, involves paying attention to the following organisational needs:

1. Renewing the identity and purpose of the initiative by developing a vision of the future and clear mission statement. This means a renewed dialogue with the spirit, developing a vision - a struggle for the original and now newly willed central aims of the organisation.

The process of developing a vision of the future is akin to an individual asking him or herself what is really central to their life. It should involve many people in different parts of the organisation so that a commonly shared sense of direction emerges.

A colleague I know took over a year to develop an image of the future while including faculty, administrators and support staff in the process.

While lengthy, it was time well spent as it generated a new hope and commitment. In many organisations suggesting such a process raises fears. Will teachers and administrators, or leaders, not want totally different things? I have never experienced this to be the case. Generally, people see the same organisational reality and share a common picture of the values they want to pursue in the future. In this process of



renewing the culture, the identity, of the institution, it is essential to also call to mind the initiative's biography, the rich texture of its history, personalities, failures and successes.

2. In conjunction with renewing the organisation's sense of purpose, there is a need to create a new understanding of the different functions of leadership. What are the differences between goals and policies and where and how does evaluation and review take place? Such differences are seldom understood and yet such a differentiation in awareness, in consciousness, needs to be present to provide a healthy basis for differentiation in form and function. While there are different ways of describing the main leadership functions in organisations, they often include the following aspects:

- Goal Setting
- Policy Formulation
- Establishing Plan and Procedure
- Integrating Functions
- Organising and Executing Work Activities
- Innovating and Renewing
- Evaluating and Reviewing

Goal-setting consists of setting long and medium term goals for the initiative. It is a central responsibility of those guiding the organisation, although ideally as many people as possible should be involved.

Policies are different than goals. They provide a framework, a set of guidelines, according to which individuals can make decisions and act. Examples are policies on hiring or promotion, purchasing, remuneration, and the like.

If a hiring committee at an Educare Centre has an agreed upon policy that an Educare trained teacher with at least a half year experience are essential qualifications, then they have something to go on.

Establishing plans and procedures for particular work activities can be done if goals and policies are shared. The scholarship committee of a school can develop its plans and procedures knowing what policy there is on financial aid and what restrictions exist in terms of the projected budget (a statement of financial goals). A small manufacturing company can plan production of annual goals if a marketing plan exists. In short, the delegation of responsibility becomes possible to sub-units, committees, or even to individuals, within a broad goal and policy framework. Developing such a framework, is of course, helped when the organisation has already reviewed its sense of purpose.

The first three functions of leadership have been mentioned. They tend to be the responsibilities of all or most of the leadership in smaller service or professional organisations. The fifth function, that of organising and executing work activities,



belongs to the whole organisation, but the focus is on the individual rather than the leader. In a school it is the teachers or in a cafe the cook and the waitresses who need to organise and carry out the myriad of daily activities.

Likewise, innovation and renewal are everyone's responsibility, although for the organisation as a whole it tends to lie with those individuals or groups having a central leadership role.

Evaluation and review is usually understood as financial review and quality control in product organizations and seldom is paid much attention to in other types of institutions. Yet it is absolutely central to an initiative's learning and development. In schools or service agencies, in shops, farms or medical facilities, it should be like an extended New Year reflection. How has this past year gone? What successes or failures have we had? Why did things go wrong in this class or with this particular product? What can we improve upon next year? What new activities can we engage in? Questions of this type are vital, and the more members of an organization are engaged in them the more a responsible work community is created.

The fourth function mentioned, that of integration, is like five, six and seven; everyone's concern, yet it tends to fall heavily on those having a leadership function. They must relate more general specific tasks to goals and principles.

Bringing about an awareness of the leadership functions in an organization is by itself not enough - they must be exercised.

Where and by whom are long and medium term goals set? How are they communicated and responded to by other parts of the organization? I have worked with some clients where goals were set but it was largely a paper exercise for outside consumption, and people within the initiative knew little about it.

Policy formulation is equally important. Where and by whom are policies to be defined? Plans and procedures are established and carried out in many parts of an organization, as are the other functions, yet what is important is that people are aware of what functions of leadership are being exercised by whom and how the results are communicated to the rest of the institution. Generally as many people as possible should be involved in developing policy. In this way a sense of ownership is created.

If we step back from this functional description and ask what really lies behind the differentiation process in organizations, then we can say that the soul of the organization is being developed. This inevitably involves multiplicity and differentiation just as in the individual the soul development of the twenties and thirties manifests through becoming aware of the complexity of thoughts, emotions and intentions. This process of differentiation is difficult for many initiatives because it involves some task specialization. But if overall goals and policies are shared by people in the initiative, then a conscious division of tasks can take place so that the whole benefits.



3. A third organizational need in the differentiation stage is that of functional specialization and structural clarity. In self-administered schools there is a need to differentiate the upper or high school from the lower grades and from the preschool. Administration, records, accounting, fundraising, and publicity activities need to be consciously picked up. Committees need to be established as everything can no longer be decided and implemented by one decision making group.

The phase of differentiation can also be called an administrative phase, in which what was done semi-consciously to make things run in the early years now needs conscious attention.

An important principle during this phase of development is that of giving clear mandates and responsibilities to sub-groups or committees of an initiative. This means that each committee needs to have clear terms of reference regarding their tenure and areas of responsibility.

4. A fourth important aspect of the differentiation process in any organization is the need for a change in leadership and decision making styles. In most new initiatives leadership is personal and decisions are made by hunch, by intuition. As the organization grows and becomes differentiated there is the need to have leadership become more functional - related to areas of expertise and responsibility - and for the decision making to become more rational and analytical. Both of these style characteristics will develop over time, but the transition is often difficult as individuals used to the more free-willing and informal style of the pioneer phase resent the more rational and sometimes more "bureaucratic" approach appropriate to the differentiation phase.

As with the thirty year old, a differentiated organization runs the risk of too much rationality. The need for social contact, for a nurturing of human relationships is very important. Can the staff of a well established school continue with the vitality of shared research work and create regular opportunities for meeting, for sharing meals, for knowing each other? Can a group of architects or workers in a shop create possibilities for the "soul" of the initiative to live? Differentiation needs to be balanced by conscious attention to building the human team to have fun, as well as work.

Many organizations reach this phase in their life cycle, often unconsciously and with great struggle. Yet it is clear that this phase too has its limitations, its period of crisis, as anyone who has worked in a large corporation or a big state institution knows.

This crisis is most visible in those institutions where differentiation has been carried through by mechanistic structures, systems and procedures without considering their impact on human capacities or motivation. In these types of institutions a marked loss of vitality, decreased motivation, high levels of absenteeism, and continued communication difficulties are evident.



While symptoms of this crisis are clearest in large bureaucracies and many companies in traditional manufacturing sectors, they also appear in smaller NGO's which have been in the differentiation phase for some time. The weight of the past, endless committee meetings, a lack of purpose, gossip, conflict and limited innovation are symptoms which become evident in well established development agencies, schools, and smaller cooperative production companies. Being well-established and in most cases quite secure, it is as if they too were experiencing a kind of mid-life crises, searching for new meanings and a new way of working.

The interest in cooperative and associative models, in NGO's suggests that there is a conscious and widespread search underway in all societies for possible answers to the crisis of differentiation.

THE INTEGRATION PHASE

In their best-selling book, *In Search of Excellence*, Peters and Waterman point to a number of basic qualities which have made some mature large companies successful. These include:

1. Clear-cut goals and a culture of commitment and excellence
2. Treating people as people and valuing their contribution
3. A decentralized and flat structure
4. An awareness of the central work processes in organizations and greater support for these processes rather than to administrative procedures and control.

Our work in many different organizations suggest that a mature institution facing a crisis of the "administrative" or differentiation phase needs to consciously enter a new cycle in its development, opting for a new set of values, a different orientation towards work activity and simpler, decentralized structures. We believe this is as true for manufacturing companies as it is for service institutions, schools and NGO's which have reached maturity.

Practically, this means that a mature institution needs to formulate a new set of simple, yet meaningful goals related to the essential products or services provided to clients. These goals need to be an integral part of the organization's past - its biography - to be authentic and to have the capacity of motivating both clients and co-workers or employees. What are a school's central educational goals and its educational philosophy, and how do they relate to the needs of both parents and students? What is a group of literacy teachers really seeking to offer a client? Is a co-op actually offering a set of quality products?

It does not do to say quality or service to customers is number one if they have never been so and there is no intention of making it a reality. Implied in this effort to reformulate goals or purposes is the recognition that people need to be able to find meaning in their work and in their lives.



An organizational culture that responds to this need in an honest way gains the commitment of its people and a direction and purpose for itself.

In the differentiation phase the basic aims of a school, a community clinic or a company tended to get lost over time as technical, administrative and financial concerns became paramount. The focus of attention had quite properly shifted inward to make sure things were functioning rationally. But the price of this inward focus is a loss of connection to clients and a dimming of the vision which made the initiative what it is.

As in the beginning of the differentiation phase, an entry into full and conscious maturity, into the integration phase of the organization's life cycle, requires renewed attention to the initiatives central tasks and goals. This can be done through a detailed study of the organization's biography, a conscious celebration of its uniqueness and a restatement of its central goals.

Implied in this reformulation of goals is waking up to the "sleeping partners" of the initiative, the customers and clients. The principle of association, of dialogue needs to be adopted so that the initiative really knows the needs and preferences of those it seeks to serve. A school needs an active parent council and student council so that teachers, parents, students and the community can have a frank discussion of needs and possibilities.

A clinic or therapeutic centre requires a patient group, and a farm or food store a consumer circle. Only by taking such steps can the mature initiative avoid the one-sidedness of deciding by itself what an outside group needs, and keep its goals, products and services in touch with changing people and changing culture.

A second important aspect of the integration phase is the further development of the values and criteria which go into the organization's decision making process. In the pioneer phase, customer satisfaction and survival was paramount, while the base of the initiative was being built. In the next phase of development, administrative and technical criteria played an ever greater role, so that the implementation of new information systems or production systems to increase efficiency were often more important than their impact on people.

In the integration phase, technical, financial and social or human criteria need to be consciously balanced. If one looks at an initiative as containing these three sub-systems, then a decision in one area has implications for the others:



A new technical system will effect social relationships and financial outcomes. A new product line requires investment, training, shifts in work patterns and new equipment. Consequently, any important decision needs to consider the consequences in these three areas and to include those measures or activities which will assure an integrated approach. Most



importantly, the human impact of change needs to be considered and human needs taken more consciously into account in the integration phase.

A third area is related to this latter point - namely a conscious understanding of the human as the essential ingredient in any successful initiative. Most organizations going through the differentiation phase divide the work process in such a way that some people are involved in planning and delegating work (leaders), others are involved in doing it (field workers), and still others in controlling it and checking it (administration).

This is, of course, most visible in large product organizations making cars, refrigerators or tubular steel. However, it is also a tendency development agencies, doctor's offices, hospitals and other initiatives where senior leaders plan work, less senior people do it, and others check and control.

This simple division of labour is important, yet it has the consequence of using the capacities of people in a one-sided way. Who has not laughed or cried at the architect who has designed an office that is uninhabitable or a house that cannot be built because the designer did not understand the building materials?

Equally, we have all experienced a person doing a specific job and following instructions but not being able to carry it out properly because he did not really understand how it related to a customer's need. In the first case, the architect is using the ability to think in order to design; in the second a person is using their will to do. Human beings, however, have three capacities: to think and plan, to will and do, and to feel and be responsible. The modern division of labour and the related high levels of specialization foster a one-sided development of individuals. This tendency is particularly pronounced in the differentiation phase of an initiative.

In the integration phase the three capacities again need to be more consciously taken into account in building semi-autonomous work or project teams, which over time acquire the quality of planning, executing and controlling their own work within general guidelines. The creation of such groups or teams within general guidelines require delegation, open sharing of goals and other information, and often time and training. But without steps in this direction, people will use their ingenuity to circumvent time or quality systems, their feelings to "challenge" the organization and their will to enter politics or play sport.

A culture of excellence, of commitment, means not only creating an organization with worthwhile goals, but also one in which people have an opportunity of using their innate faculties for the benefit of the whole. A recognition of the full potential of human creativity also involves a commitment to professional development activities, flexibility in work hours and scheduling, and the fostering of individual initiative.

Self-administered initiatives in the cultural or service spheres may feel that this does not apply to them. But here too differentiation inevitably leads to the hiring of administrators, bookkeepers, secretaries, maintenance people, cooks and others. Teachers also should have an



insight into the bookkeeping and the supply ordering system. The same people doing the same jobs for many years fosters one-sidedness. The question then emerges, how can people be helped to both broaden their insights and balance the use of their capacities.

When an organization has moved toward integration, its ability to respond to its environment is enhanced, its internal functioning is more streamlined, and people can have a renewed sense of ownership and pride in their work. One could say it has achieved full maturity and a collective wisdom which also allows it to help other initiatives and to serve the wider needs of its community.

In summary, the qualities of the integration phase include:

1. Renewing central aims and the organization's values and culture to provide meaning.
2. Working proactively to attain this shared vision instead of reacting to every request or problem that arises.
3. Creating the organization for an association - a conscious dialogue with customers, clients, suppliers and the community in which the initiative is active.
4. A leadership and decision making style which takes human needs into account explicitly balancing financial, technical and social criteria.
5. An enhanced understanding of human beings and the creation of work processes and structures which take this new understanding of human capacities into account.
6. Creating a process organization in which structures reflect the requirements of central work processes rather than administrative control mechanisms. Paying attention to and enhancing the rhythmic quality of the initiative's life.
7. Building teams and smaller, decentralized and flatter organizational forms.
8. Process, horizontal thinking, rather than vertical and hierarchical thinking.

These qualities do not add up to an organizational blueprint. Rather, they suggest a type of awareness, a way of looking at and understanding organizations and people from a less analytical, but deeper, more whole and conscious perspective.

This perspective and the resulting direction are being explored by many initiatives today, for we all face the question of what new organizational forms are appropriate for the growing individualized consciousness we have in our societies.



A CONSCIOUS ENDING

If the pioneer stage can be likened to childhood, the differentiation phase to early and middle adulthood, and the integration phase to full maturity and old age, what can be said about the death of an initiative? A convenient response is to say that they die when they fail and are no longer needed. However, I feel that many institutions have not only become old, but also sclerotic, disposing of vast resources but no longer really serving human needs. It has been suggested that the life cycle of the institutions should approximate that of individuals if they are to serve the needs of the times. What a revolutionary idea! What would happen to cultural, social and economic creativity if institutions over seventy or eighty years old turned over their resources to new groups wishing to respond to similar needs in new ways?

What a peaceful ongoing creative revolution society would experience. To do this would require institutions to contemplate a conscious death process in order to allow a new resurrection. It is an intriguing thought, if not a present reality.

THE IMAGE OF DEVELOPMENT

What has been presented is a sketch of developmental patterns in organizations. Frequently I am asked, can't a stage be missed? The answer is no if organizations have a true life cycle moving from simple to more complex, from one central organizing principle to another. This means that true development is a discontinuous, irreversible process in time, moving from a stage of growth through differentiation to a higher stage of integration and passing through states of crisis which offer the impetus for development. This pattern is, I believe, true for all living forms, for the human being, and for organizations.

However, it is possible for initiatives to move more or less rapidly through these phases. A school which starts with six grades and a kindergarten will face questions of differentiation sooner than one which starts with one grade, adding a new grade each year.

A company which has three employees the first year and seventeen the second will also face developmental issues more rapidly than one which grows more slowly.

Furthermore, it is quite common for large organizations to have different segments be it at different stages of development. A new product division may be in the pioneer stage, the mother company may be going through the crisis of differentiation, while one older division may already have started working with the principles of integration. The described image of an initiative's development over time is incomplete. Like all ideal-type descriptions it cannot do justice to the rich texture of organizational life, nor to the uniqueness of each initiative. Its purpose is rather to describe a landscape of possibilities, indicating paths to be pursued and pitfalls to be avoided so that we may become more conscious and responsible co-creators on earth.



The Art of Facilitative Leadership: Maximizing Others' Contributions

by Jeffrey Cufau

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Leadership traditionally has been thought of as “doing the right thing” while management has been defined as “doing things right.” Contemporary leadership combines these two distinctions with an emphasis on “doing the right thing . . . right.” As Jim Collins and Jerry Porras noted in the seminal work, *Built to Last* (Harper Business, 1994), no longer can effective leaders frame choices in dualistic either-or frameworks; rather they must learn to embrace the and, considering both what needs to be done and how that choice can best be implemented. But no one individual, however talented or knowledgeable, can single-handedly lead an organization to success. In order to advance their organizations' efforts, leaders must be able to actively engage others so their talents and contributions are fully leveraged.

How can they do so? Using facilitation skills. Effective facilitation involves using processes and tools to maximize the collective intelligence of individuals in a group to determine the right course of action and to then build a template for acting on the choices they make. Facilitation, while long associated with individuals leading workshops, planning meetings, or other group processes, actually encompasses a broad mix of consulting and coaching skills that are too critical to be relegated to the domain of a select few.

In today's organizations, individuals at all levels need to possess facilitation skills. By necessity, people are making decisions collaboratively in consultation with others. More work is being completed in cross-functional teams and through internal or external partnerships than ever before. But this need for greater collaboration comes at a time when the diversity of perspectives, talents, and cultures present in the workplace is increasing. Achieving better results by tapping into this mix is a goal that can be accomplished through effective application of facilitative leadership fundamentals.

The good news? Facilitation is a skill that almost all individuals can master and add to their overall portfolio of leadership skills.

The Essence of Facilitative Leadership

The essence of facilitative leadership can be summarized in six major themes:

Facilitative leaders make connections and help others make meaning. In a fast-paced environment overloaded with information, people need to be able to connect on a variety of levels: with their colleagues, with the issues at hand, and with the lessons from the past and the potential of the future. Facilitative leaders listen for and seek to make (or help others make) the connection between what is occurring in a conversation and what has occurred in other places or at other times. For example, they might ask how a current decision under deliberation might affect operations in another area. Effective facilitation involves periodically asking the question, “How does this discussion connect with others we have been having or to what someone else is doing?”



Facilitative leaders also seek to connect comments made by various individuals in a meeting. Because facilitation involves deep and active listening, leaders who have developed these skills likely have an overall sense of the links among disparate threads of conversation. They help group members make these correlations, as well as identify the meaning behind what is occurring, by posing expansive, open-ended questions that invite others into the discussion.

Such leaders create a reflective space for individuals and groups where they can make sense of what is transpiring and capture real-time learning about both what they are doing and how they are doing it. They slow the conversation down periodically, and invite the group to assess the nature of the deliberations and how they can be enhanced: “How are we doing what we are doing?”

Facilitative leaders help others understand that the diversity present in the group is likely to yield different meanings that can coexist peacefully alongside each other without any one perspective needing to win. In sum, leaders who exercise these skills work with others to achieve synergy, producing a group result that surpasses what any individual might have achieved on his or her own.

Facilitative leaders provide direction without totally taking the reins. When group members do not share ownership of decisions and their outcomes, they are less likely to follow through on commitments. Too often, individuals abdicate their responsibility to the leader; that is, they fail to acknowledge that ensuring a group’s effectiveness is the responsibility of all members. In order for groups to realize their full potential, every individual must be concerned with the good of the whole. For this reason, facilitative leaders more often ask rather than tell groups what they need to be doing and help them move forward rather than control their movement.

In his classic work, *Facilitation* (McGraw-Hill, 1995), Trevor Bentley noted that facilitative leaders position themselves differently *vis-à-vis* the group, depending on the situation. They lead from the front during a group’s early stages of development, when participants need to clarify their shared purpose and benefit from having a structure that connects them to the group’s work and to each other. As a group develops and members take more responsibility for directing its activities, the leader becomes just another voice, serving alongside the other members. Finally, when a group reaches higher stages of performance, the facilitative leader contributes from behind, offering insights and observations that add to the team’s evolving momentum.

Facilitative leaders balance managing content and process. Individuals using a facilitative approach are concerned with both what the group is discussing or deciding and how they are actually doing it. They appreciate and understand that the team may need to use different processes to achieve different desired outcomes. An important part of these efforts involves thoughtfully considering how the group might reach a certain result.

Facilitative leaders often work with group members to establish shared agreements for how participants will interact with each other and do their work, that is, the group process aspect of their efforts. The group then uses these agreements as guidelines for discussions and as evaluation criteria for how well they are accomplishing their charge: “We’ve made some significant decisions today. When you reflect on the conversations that led to them, how well did we do on the agreements we established earlier?”

Sometimes group process is dismissed as “soft stuff” that keeps teams from the real work of making decisions. But individuals want others to consider their perspectives and to solicit and appreciate their contributions and ideas. As a result, individuals leading groups and teams must appropriately balance attention to content and process.



Facilitative leaders invite disclosure and feedback to help surface unacknowledged or invisible beliefs, thoughts, and patterns. Call it what you want—the dead cow on the table, the elephant in the middle of the room, or the skunk smelling up the place—most groups have certain topics they need to discuss in order to move forward on key decisions and efforts. Facilitative leaders work with individuals and groups to identify and discuss the important issues they may be unaware of or unwilling to address. These may be issues that are perceived as being too “hot” or fraught with potential conflict to be brought into the open.

Facilitative leaders understand that the greatest risk is when a group avoids dealing with the truth, when individuals speak in glossy abstractions of reality so as not to rock the boat. To overcome this tendency, they frequently invite participants to step back and examine what’s not being said that needs to be brought into the discussions: “When you think of what we want to accomplish today, what are the questions or issues we need to discuss that have yet to surface?” The more that work groups learn to address issues openly and honestly, the more productive their relationships and work activity will become.

By attending to the relationships among individuals in a group and the natural dynamics that unfold as they work with each other, facilitative leaders increase people’s comfort in engaging in open and honest dialogue. Individuals feel supported in making statements that previously would have been considered too difficult to share, such as opinions that run counter to conventional wisdom or the perspective of those holding the greatest power. They learn to communicate in a respectful manner how others’ behaviours are affecting them and their work. They become comfortable revealing their own observations or perceptions and inviting their colleagues to do the same.

In this manner, feedback becomes a routine part of the group’s conversations as opposed to something that gets saved up and shared only selectively. The facilitative leader adeptly manages both feedback and disclosure (as defined in the Johari Window model developed by Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham, 1969) so that group members make more information public and discuss it respectfully and thoughtfully.

Facilitative leaders focus on building the capacity of individuals and groups to accomplish more on their own, now and in the future. Facilitative leadership is not just about the immediate task. It is also about helping a group or team learn together so they might become more productive in the future. Similarly, when coaching an individual employee, a facilitative leader focuses not only on dealing with the employee’s immediate need but also with laying a foundation for future strong performance.

This long-term definition of success helps keep facilitative leaders from assuming too much responsibility for a group. Doing so could leave group members unable to manage future efforts without the leader’s involvement. To prevent such dependence from developing, facilitative leaders regularly engage groups in debriefing their meetings and projects to determine what lessons can be learned and what adjustments need to be made in the distribution of responsibilities.

Leaders who operate in this way also understand that group agreements and structure may need to change as the work itself or the environment in which it is being done changes. They see structure as a means to an end not as the end itself or a turf to be protected at all costs. Such leaders frequently ask group members, “Are we best organized to accomplish our desired results given the current environment in which we operate?” Engaging in this process allows individuals to see boundaries between departments, positions, and functional areas as permeable, something that must be regularly evaluated for their impact and effectiveness.



Facilitative leaders operate from a position of restraint. Because facilitative leaders want to maximize others' contributions, they tend to operate first from a position of restraint, carefully measuring what, if any, action they need to take. Exercising this kind of discretion helps them avoid the "heroic leader" syndrome describe by Roger L. Martin in his book *The Responsibility Virus* (Basic Books, 2002): "When leaders assume 'heroic' responsibility for making the critical choices facing their organizations, when their reaction to problems is to go it alone, work harder, do more, to be more heroic still, with no collaboration and sharing of the leadership burden, their 'heroism' is often their undoing."

Trevor Bentley offers a continuum with three categories of interventions available for the facilitative leader: gentle, persuasive, and forceful or directive. Gentle interventions include doing nothing, offering silence or support, or asking questions to clarify. Persuasive interventions involve asking questions to move the group or offering suggested choices, paths, or actions. Forceful interventions reflect a higher degree of involvement and include offering guidance, choosing for the group, or directing the group.

Some misinterpret the continuum, believing that a facilitative leader should never offer persuasive or directive interventions. But should an emergency siren go off during a group meeting, I doubt anyone is looking to clarify the range of options available to them through some nominal group process, thoughtfully flesh out the pros and cons of each option, elicit a choice from the group, and then run that choice through deBono's Six Hat Thinking Method. No, participants would be very comfortable with following a directive from the leader!

What the continuum does illustrate is the range of options available to a facilitative leader at all times. The wise leader understands the consequences of the intervention she might choose and does not unnecessarily move deeper into the continuum unless doing so advances the group's capacity. She carefully and deliberately selects how to intervene and at what level. Simply moving one step back on the continuum can often allow a group to retain more control over its own efforts. Notice the difference between "I think we should move on" and "Are we ready to move on?" The latter allows for much more choice from the group itself. Facilitative leaders do not make choices for others that either (1) they do not need to make or (2) that rightfully do not belong to them.

Making the Commitment

Every person can adopt the role and lens of a facilitator in their interactions with others. Making a commitment to act in this way, however, needs to be done thoughtfully. Authenticity is one of the hallmarks of the effective facilitator. As the Sufi philosopher Rumi says, "If you are unfaithfully with us, you are causing terrible damage." Appropriating a few techniques learned in a workshop or from a book without truly incorporating them into your overall leadership identify will cause them to be seen and experienced as insincere or manipulative.

In a world in which technology allows almost everything to be copied and widely distributed, our authentic self is the one thing that really can't be copied. Failing to bring who we are to what we do commoditizes our individuality and denies the unique style and contributions we bring to our individual relationships, the communities of which we are part, and the organizations and stakeholders we serve. Facilitative leaders model their genuine selves for others and help create the space that honors the diversity and genuineness present in any group.

Because authenticity is rarely ostentatious and seldom calls attention to itself, it is experienced by others as natural and genuine. When others comment favorably on some aspect of our authenticity, we are often bemused, because the quality they noted is so much a part of who we are that we would not know how to be any other way. As G. Ross Lawford notes in *The Quest for Authentic*



Power: Getting Past Manipulation, Control, and Self-Limiting Beliefs (Berrett-Koehler, 2002), “The power of authenticity is quietly efficient and confidently effective.” Facilitative leaders not only help others tell the truth because of their leadership style and interventions, they help others be the truth.

Any time we choose to alter the normal style most individuals would associate with our work, we need to be sensitive to how that change might be perceived and received. If your colleagues see you as a real “take charge” type of person, they might question your intentions if you suddenly shift to a strongly facilitative stance. Rather than changing overnight, gradually introduce new leadership skills and facilitation behaviours in your regular interactions with others. For instance, when you find yourself about to tell someone or a group what to do, pull back a bit and ask a thoughtful question that might help them discover for themselves what most needs to be done. When you need to coach an employee on a job-specific issue, make sure to probe if other relevant issues are what actually need to be discussed.

Professional literature often draws rigid lines between leadership and management, seeming to suggest that one is right and one is wrong. In reality, organizations need individuals who both do the right thing and are capable of doing things right. They need people who can help individuals and groups do the right things right—the very nature of facilitative leadership.

Jeffrey Cufaude, a former higher education administrator and non-profit association executive, is currently an architect of ideas, writing, speaking, and facilitating on various individual and organizational development issues. His core purpose is to build communities of ideas and idealists.





DIALOGIC LEADERSHIP

BY WILLIAM N. ISAACS

When Monsanto and American Home Products dissolved their intended merger last year, it was not due to a lack of strategic or market synergy, or to regulator intrusion. According to a *New York Times* report, the deal failed “because of an insurmountable power struggle between the two companies’ chairmen. . .” (*The New York Times*, October 14, 1998, p. C1).

Breakdowns in human interaction and communication play a pivotal role in organizational life. In the case of Monsanto and American

Home Products, the CEOs of the two companies had very different approaches to leadership. One spent his lunch hour playing basketball with employees. The other refused to move to the company’s new headquarters, preferring to stay in touch with key employees by email. The two leaders gradually began to question each other’s motives and moves. For instance, when one of the chairmen recommended a candidate for CFO, the other circulated a memo asserting that this man would never fill the role. Each felt that the other was

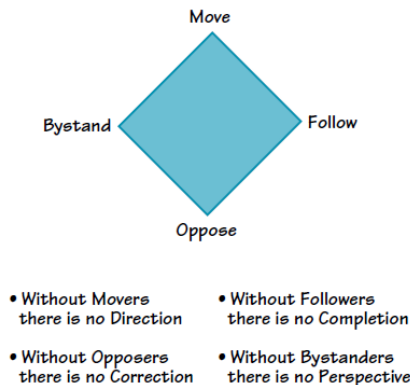
undermining him and the company. They eventually proved unable to work together, and the merger fell through.

Sometimes apparently successful mergers also quickly show signs of strain. Eight months into their venture, Citigroup, the new amalgamation of Travelers Group and Citicorp, fired James Dimon, the man who acted as peacemaker between, and was assumed to be the heir apparent to, this firm’s two co-chief executives. Dimon was widely respected; his departure came not as a result of poor performance but, as one manager put it, “corporate politics.”

Executives interviewed later said that the collapsed Monsanto and American Home Products deal was “not in the best interests of the shareholders” and that Dimon’s surprising exit “was the best thing for the business.” Yet this kind of talk covers up more honest accounts about what happened. According to reports, the leaders in each of these situations hit awkward conflicts about a range of substantive issues: ultimate control in a “co-CEO” scenario, membership of important executive teams, and the timing of integrating disparate cultures and businesses. In the end, these

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FOUR-PLAYER MODEL



Adapted from David Kantor © 1995

In any conversation, some people *move*—they initiate ideas. Other people *follow*—they complete what is said and support what is happening. Still others *oppose*—they challenge what is being said. And others *bystand*—they provide perspective on what is happening.

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people failed to find a way to talk and think together effectively to resolve these difficult issues.

Although we all may not be dealing with strained or failing multi-billion dollar corporate mergers, we are probably quite familiar with such difficulties in communication and trust and the way these can dramatically affect organizational performance. So how do we create environments that can transform these difficulties into successes?

This article explores how “dialogic leadership,” an approach that has evolved from the core principles from the field of “dialogue,” can lead to the creation of environments that can dissolve fragmentation and bring out people’s collective wisdom.

The Concept of Dialogue

In the new knowledge-based, networked economy, the ability to talk and think together well is a vital source of competitive advantage and organizational effectiveness. This is because human beings create, refine, and share knowledge through conversation. In a world where technology has led to the erosion of traditional hierarchical boundaries, and where former competitors (such as Exxon and Mobil) contemplate becoming bedfellows, the glue that holds things together is no longer “telling” but “conversing.”

The term “dialogue” comes from Greek and signifies a “flow of meaning.” The essence of dialogue is an inquiry that surfaces ideas, perceptions, and understanding that people do not already have. This is not the norm: We typically try to come to important conversations well prepared. A hallmark for many of us is that there are “no surprises” in our meetings. Yet this is the antithesis of dialogue. You have a dialogue when you explore the uncertainties and questions that no one has answers to. In this way you begin to *think together*—not simply report out old thoughts. In dialogue people learn to use the energy of their differences to enhance their collective wisdom.

Dialogue can be contrasted with “discussion,” a word whose roots mean “to break apart.” Discussions are conversations where people hold onto and defend their differences. The hope is that the clash of opinion will illuminate productive pathways for action and insight. Yet in practice, discussion often devolves into rigid debate, where people view one another as positions to agree with or refute, not as partners in a vital, living relationship. Such exchanges represent a series of one-way streets, and the end results are often not what people wish for: polarized arguments where people withhold vital information and shut down creative options.

Although it may make logical sense to have dialogue in our repertoire, it can seem illusive and even a little quaint. Yet the fact remains that every significant strategic and organi-

zational endeavor requires people at some stage to sit and talk together. In the end, nothing can substitute for this interpersonal contact. Unfortunately, much of our talk merely reinforces the problems we seek to resolve. What is needed is a new approach to conversation, one that can enable leaders to bring out people’s untapped wisdom and collective insights.

Human beings create, refine, and share knowledge through conversation.

“Dialogic leadership” is the term I have given to a way of leading that consistently uncovers, through conversation, the hidden creative potential in any situation. Four distinct qualities support this process: the abilities (1) to evoke people’s genuine voices, (2) to listen deeply, (3) to hold space for and respect as legitimate other people’s views, and (4) to broaden awareness and perspective. Put differently, a dialogic leader is *balanced*, and evokes balance, because he can embody all four of these qualities and can activate them in others.

An old story about Gandhi illustrates this concept well. A man came to Gandhi with his young son, complaining that he was eating too much sugar. The man asked for advice. Gandhi thought for a moment and then said, “Go away, and come back in three days.” The man did as he was asked and returned three days later. Now Gandhi said to the boy, “You must stop eating so much sugar.” The boy’s father, mystified, inquired, “Why did you need three days to say that?” Gandhi replied, “First, I had to stop eating sugar.” Similarly, dialogic leadership implies being a living example of what you speak about—that is, demonstrating these qualities in your daily life.

Four Action Capabilities for Dialogic Leaders

The four qualities for a dialogic leader mentioned above are mirrored in four distinct kinds of actions that a person

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may take in any conversation. These actions were identified by David Kantor, a well-known family systems therapist (see “Four-Player Model” on p. 1). Kantor suggests that some people *move*—they initiate ideas and offer direction. Other people *follow*—they complete what is said, help others clarify their thoughts, and support what is happening. Still others *oppose*—they challenge what is being said and question its validity. And others *bystand*—they actively notice what is going on and provide perspective on what is happening.

Watching the actions people take can give you enormous information about the quality of their interactions and can indicate if they are moving in the direction of dialogue or discussion. For instance, in a dialogic system, any person may take any of the four actions at any time. Although people may have a preferred position, each individual is able to move and initiate, to follow and complete things, to oppose, and to observe and provide perspective. None of these roles is better or worse than the others. They are all necessary for the system to function properly. As people recognize these different roles and can act on this recognition, they begin to create a sequence of interactions that keeps the conversation moving toward balance.

In a system that is moving away from dialogue, people generally get stuck in one of the four positions. For instance, some people are “stuck movers”: They express one idea, and before that idea is established or acted upon, they give another, and another, making it difficult to know what to focus on. But perhaps most revealing of non-dialogic interactions are the ritualized and repetitive interactions that people fall into that systematically exclude one or more of the positions.

In the Monsanto merger process, for instance, the two CEOs became locked in a dynamic where one would initiate an action, and the other would oppose and neutralize it, leading the other to push back even harder. The conflict eventually escalated to the point where it sabotaged the deal.

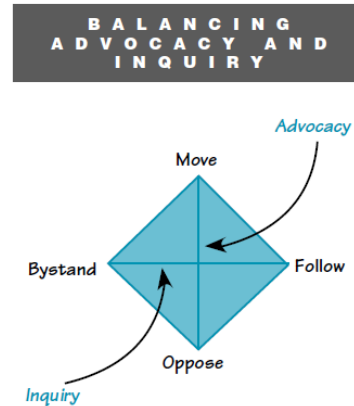
An intense move-oppose cycle between two high-powered players like this one often prevents others from fulfilling their roles as “bystanders” and “followers.” The bystanders, who can see the ineffective exchange, often become “disabled,” imagining that no one wants them to identify what is happening. So the knowledge they carry is lost. At the same time, people who might otherwise be inclined to follow one side or the other to help complete what is being said tend to stay on the sidelines, for fear of getting caught in the cross-fire. The result is that the interaction remains unbalanced.

The quality and nature of the specific roles can often cause difficulties. For example, opposers are generally branded as troublemakers because they question the prevailing wisdom when people would prefer to have agreement. For this reason, others often tune them out. This failure to acknowledge the value of the opposer’s perspective leads them to raise their voices and sometimes increase the critical tone of their comments. In such cases, people hear the criticism, but not the underlying intent, which is almost always to clarify, correct, or bring balance and integrity to the situation.

A dialogic leader will often look for ways to restore balance in people’s interactions. For instance, she might strengthen the opposers if they are weak or reinforce the bystanders if they have information but have withheld it. Genuinely making room for someone who wants to challenge typically causes them to soften the stridency of their tone and makes it more possible for others to hear what they have to say. Reinforcing and standing with those who have delicate but vital information can enable them to reveal it. The simple rule here is: Pay attention to the actions that are missing and provide them yourself, or encourage others to do so.

Balancing Advocacy and Inquiry

One central dimension in a dialogue is the emergence of a particular balance between the positions people



This figure reveals another way to track the action in a conversation and offer balance into it. To advocate well, you must move and oppose well; to inquire, you must bystand and follow.

advocate and their willingness to inquire into their own and other’s views. Professors Chris Argyris and Don Schön first proposed the concepts of “advocacy” and “inquiry” to foster conversations that promote learning (see their book *Organizational Learning*, Addison-Wesley, 1978 for a fuller explanation). In the vast majority of situations, advocacy rules: People are trained to express their views as fast as possible. As it is sometimes put, “People do not listen, they reload.” They attribute meaning and impute motives, often without inquiring into what others really meant or intended. This was evidently the case in the merger situations described above. Bellicose advocacy stifles inquiry and learning.

The four-player model further reveals the relationship between advocacy and inquiry (see “Balancing Advocacy and Inquiry”). To advocate well, you must move and oppose well; to inquire, you must bystand and follow. Yet again, the absence of any of the elements hinders interaction. For instance, someone who opposes, but fails to also say what he wants (i.e., moves) is likely to be less effective as an advocate. Similarly, someone who follows what others say (“tell me more”) but never provides perspective

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may draw out more information but never deepen the inquiry. Thus, the figure “Balancing Advocacy and Inquiry” reveals another way to track the action in a conversation and offer balance into it.

Four Practices for Dialogic Leadership

Balanced action, in the sense named here, is an essential and necessary precondition for dialogue. But it is not sufficient. Dialogue is a *qualitatively* different kind of exchange. Dialogic leaders have an ear for this difference in quality and are constantly seeking to produce it in themselves and others. I have found that there are four distinct practices that can enhance the quality of conversation. These four correspond well to the four positions named above.

For instance, you can choose to move in different ways: by expressing your true voice and encouraging others to do the same, or by imposing your views on others. You can oppose with a belief that you know better than everyone else, or from a stance of respect, in which you acknowledge that your colleagues have wisdom that you may not see. Similarly, you can follow by listening selectively, imposing

your interpretation of what the speaker is presenting. Or you can listen as a compassionate participant, grounding your understanding of what is said in directly observable experience. Finally, you can bystand by taking the view that only you can see things as they are, or you can suspend your certainties and accept that others may see things that you miss. In order to make conscious choices about our behavior, we need to become aware of our own intentions and of the impact of our actions on others.

There are four practices implied here—speaking your true voice, and encouraging others to do the same; listening as a participant; respecting the coherence of others’ views; and suspending your certainties. Each requires deliberate cultivation and development (see “Four Practices for Dialogic Leadership”).

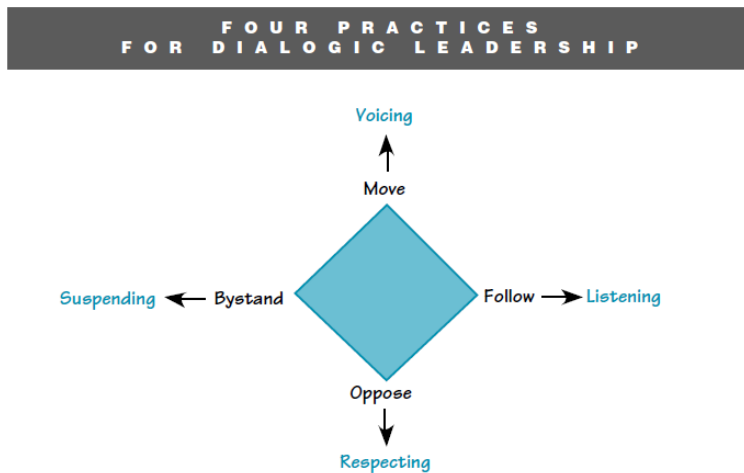
Listening. Recently, a manager in a program I was leading said, “You know, I have always prepared myself to speak. But I have never prepared myself to listen.” This is because we take listening for granted, although it is actually very hard to do. Following well requires us to cultivate the capacity to listen—rather than simply impose meaning on what other people are saying. To follow deeply is to

blend with someone to the point where we begin to participate fully in understanding how they understand. When we do not listen, all we have is our own interpretation.

Equally important is the ability to *listen together*. To listen together is to learn to be a part of a larger whole—the voice and meaning emerging not only from me, but from all of us. Dialogues often have a quality of shared emergence, where in speaking together, people realize that they have been thinking about the same things. They are struck when they begin to hear their own thoughts coming out of the mouths of others. Often decisions do not need to be made; the right next step simply becomes obvious to everyone. This kind of flow, while rare, is made possible when we relax our grip on what we think and listen for what others might be thinking. In this situation, we begin to follow not only one another, but the emerging flow of meaning itself.

Respecting. Respect is the practice that shifts the quality of our opposing. To respect is to see people, as Humberto Maturana puts it, as “legitimate others.” An atmosphere of respect encourages people to look for the sense in what others are saying and thinking. To respect is to listen for the coherence in their views, even when we find what they are saying unacceptable.

Peter Garrett, a colleague of mine, has run dialogues in maximum-security prisons in England for four years. He deals with the most serious, violent offenders in that country on a weekly basis. Together, they have produced some remarkable results. For instance, prisoners who will not attend any other sessions come to the dialogue. Offenders who start off speaking incomprehensibly and who carry deep emotional wounds gradually learn to speak their voice and to listen. Peter carries an unusual ability to respect, which reassures and strengthens the genuineness in others. This stance enables him to challenge and oppose what they say, without evoking reaction. I asked him to share the most important lesson that he has learned in his work. He said, “Inquiry



Four practices can enhance the quality of conversation: speaking your true voice and encouraging others to do the same; listening as a participant; respecting the coherence of others’ views; and suspending your certainties.



and violence cannot coexist.” True respect enables genuine inquiry.

Suspending. When we listen to someone speak, we face a critical choice. On the one hand, we can resist the speaker’s point of view. We can try to get the other person to understand and accept the “right” way to see things. We can look for evidence to support our view that they are mistaken and discount evidence that may point to flaws in our own logic. This behavior produces what one *New York Times* editorial writer called “serial monologues,” rather than dialogue.

On the other hand, we can learn to suspend our opinion and the certainty that lies behind it. Suspension means that we neither suppress what we think nor advocate it with unilateral conviction. Rather, we display our thinking in a way that lets us and others see and understand it. We simply acknowledge and observe our thoughts and feelings as they arise without feeling compelled to act on them. This practice can release a tremendous amount of creative energy. To suspend is to bystand with awareness, which makes it is possible for us to see what is happening more objectively.

For instance, in one of our dialogues with steelworkers and managers, a union leader said, “We need to suspend this word *union*. When you hear it you say ‘Ugh.’ When we hear it we say ‘Ah.’ Why is that?” This statement prompted an unprecedented level of reflection between managers and union people. Our research suggests that suspension is one of several practices essential to bringing about genuine dialogue.

Voicing. Finally, to speak our voice is perhaps one of the most challenging aspects of dialogic leadership. “Courageous speech,” says poet David Whyte in his book *The Heart Aroused*, “has always held us in awe.” It does so, he suggests, because it is so revealing of our inner lives. Speaking our voice has to do with revealing what is true for each of us, regardless of all the other influences that might be brought to bear on us.

In December 1997, around a crowded table in the Presidential

Palace in Tatarstan, Russia, a group of senior Russian and Chechen officials and their guests were in the middle of dinner. Things had been tense earlier in the day. Chechnya had recently asserted its independence through guerrilla warfare and attacks on the Russians. They had shocked the world by forcing the Russian military to withdraw and accede to their demands for recognition as an independent state. The Chechens were deeply suspicious of the academics and Western politicians who had gathered everyone in that room; the Chechens feared that they were Russian pawns intent on derailing Chechen independence. The Russians, for their part, were fearful of adding further legitimacy to what they considered a deeply troubling situation.

Dialogic leaders cultivate listening, suspending, respecting, and voicing.

And yet, despite all this suspicion, after a few hours people began to relax. At the first toast of the evening, the negotiator/facilitator of the session stood up and said, “Up until a few days ago, I had been with my mother in New Mexico in the States. She is dying of cancer. I debated whether to come here at all to participate in this gathering. But when I told her that I was coming to help facilitate a dialogue among all of you, in this important place on the earth, she ordered me to come. There was no debate. So here I am. I raise my glass to mothers.” There followed a long moment of silence in the room.

It is in courageous moments like these that one’s genuine voice is heard. Displays of such profound directness can lift us out of ourselves. They show us a broader horizon and put things in perspective. Such moments also remind us of our resilience and invite us to look harder for a way through whatever difficulties we are facing. When we “move” by speaking our authentic voice, we set up a new order of things, open new possibilities, and create.

Changing the Quality of Action

Dialogic leaders cultivate these four dimensions—listening, suspending, respecting, and voicing—within themselves and in the conversations they have with others. Doing so shifts the quality of interaction in noticeable ways and, in turn, transforms the results that people produce. Failing to do so narrows our view and blinds us to alternatives that might serve everyone.

For instance, in the Monsanto merger story, the CEOs did not seem to respect the coherence of each other’s views. Each one found the other more and more unacceptable. Although we do not know for sure, it seems likely that they did not reflect on perspectives different from their own in such a way that enabled them to see new possibilities. The paradox here is that suspending one’s views and making room for the possibility that the other person’s perspectives may have some validity could open a door that would be otherwise shut. By becoming locked into a rigid set of actions, these leaders ruled out a qualitatively different approach—one that they could have made if they had applied the four dialogic practices described above.

Dialogic leadership focuses attention on two levels at once: the nature of the actions people take during an interaction and the quality of those interactions. Kantor’s model is a potent aid in helping diagnose the lack of balance in actions in any conversation. By noticing which perspective is missing, you can begin to reflect on why this is so and quickly gain valuable information about the situation as a whole.

Dialogic leadership can appear anywhere, at any level of an organization. As people apply the principles outlined above, they are learning to think together, and so greatly increase the odds that they will build the expansive relationships required to build success in the new economy. ■

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