DoIT DIVISION OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Managing Fear and Conflict during Facilitation

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What to Take Away

- Value of Facilitation
- Methods to Overcome Fear and Conflicts
- Step into Facilitation Role

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The Knowledge of Peers

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Brainstorming Exercise

- A Volunteer – find a "token" and count ideas
- Clockwise, pass the token and share a idea
- One person speaks or passes token; all listen
- How many ideas your team can create?

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The Parking Problem

The director of a non-profit organization is leading a staff meeting. There are five minutes left in the staff meeting and a crucial item on the agenda is looming: how to make sure parking spaces are allotted fairly for all employees. A new tenant in your office building caused the landlord to reallocate parking spots. Now you only have two parking tags and ten employees in an urban office setting.

--- Derived from a Focus on Facilitation group exercise "Fast on Your Feet" by Darin Harris, Office of Quality Improvement, UW-Madison.)

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Smarter, Better Results

- A group routinely makes smarter decisions than any individual member
- Performance of the group is NOT dependent of the smartest member
- A "wise crowd" requires diverse and independent opinion, decentralized knowledge, and aggregation into decision

From *The Wisdom of Crowds,* James Surowiecki, 2005

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Some Wisdom…

"Talent is the only remaining competitive advantage for business."

– Steve Pogorzelski, former CEO of monster.com

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What a Group Facilitator Looks Like

- Wants others to succeed
- Recognizes wisdom and creativity of people
- Appreciates group dynamics and power
- Has interpersonal and collaborative problem-solving skills
- Understands human behavior
- Is (largely) fearless

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SWOT Analysis

- Campus-wide System – "…of course, our school/college is different (or unique or)…"
- Four-Team Conflict – "…well yes, but then he…and I can't do that until…"
- Campus-wide Service – "…we can accept the central service as long as we stay in control…"

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Threats and Weaknesses

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Strengths

- Stakeholders
- Preparations
- You
- Relationships
- Attendees

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Handling Threats with C.A.R.S.

- Consideration
  - Have foresight: plan and come prepared
- Accommodation
  - Be mindful: adapt and redirect as needed

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Handling Threats with C.A.R.S.

- Reaction
  - All senses "on deck": have a response ready and quickly take action
- Suspension
  - Halt progress: minimize damage, assess, and begin repairs

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The sponsor has not clearly defined the project scope and you know from several interviews that some of those invited to the kickoff meeting are long winded. Do you:

A. Write a draft project charter anyway and share it with the invitees before the kickoff meeting?

B. Include an agenda item for free-form discussion of project scope?

C. Finalize the project scope with the sponsor before the meeting?

D. Narrow the scope yourself and present it at the kickoff meeting?

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You notice during discussion that one participant wants to focus on a side topic. Doing so has the effect of reducing the energy in the room. Do you:

A. Talk privately with the participant during a break?

B. Continue the meeting, but again remind the participant about the main topic?

C. Point out the "wandering" and ask the group about a way to keep the participant on-track?

D. Ask the participant if the group can discuss the topic at a future meeting and make note of the topic on a "parking lot" page?

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A group of operational experts have assembled. Their supervisors are present as well. The issues in operations must be fully understood. Do you:

A. Ask supervisors to leave the room while staff identify the operational problems?

B. Split supervisors from staff and have them write their concerns on separate flip chart pages?

C. Bring notecards so everyone can anonymously record concerns, and then sort the cards by type?

D. Defer the agenda item until a meeting at which supervisors will not be present?

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A focus group of 15 people have assembled to review the draft project proposal. One of the participants seems upset and indicates in a loud, insistent voice that he cannot accept one of the project goals. Others seem uncomfortable with this behavior. Do you:

A. Let him continue until he finishes?

B. Interrupt with "This sounds important to you; can you help us understand the reasons behind your feelings?"

C. Ask him to use a softer voice?

D. Call a break in the meeting and have a private one-on-one conversation with him?

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Everyone had lunch after an intense morning session. Thirty minutes into the afternoon, the group is facing a difficult decision in the warm room. No one, including you, understands how to frame the discussion. Do you:

A. Suggest everyone take a short nap?

B. Have everyone standup and draw a picture of the problem on the dry erase board?

C. Take a ten minute break ?

D. Call it a day and schedule another meeting?

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Step into Facilitation

- Tap resources; observe and mimic

- Learn to swim - get wet

- Practice - peers and friends

- Plan, prepare, execute, evaluate, improve

"We participate in creating the future, not by trying to impose our will on it, but by deepening our collective understanding of what wants to emerge in the world, and then having the courage to do what is required."

-Joseph Jaworski

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Serve and Lead

Start from the Heart.

- Listen
- Empathize
- Heal
- Be Aware
- Persuade

- Conceptualize
- Have Foresight
- Steward
- Commit to Grow People
- Build Community

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- Office of Quality Improvement – *Facilitator's Toolkit* http://go.wisc.edu/2822lz
- *Gamestorming – a Playbook for Innovators, Rulebreakers, and Changemakers* by Dave Gray, et al
- *Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making* by Sam Kaner, et al
- **Stakeholder Management Class** go.wisc.edu/2k5s37
- **Business Analysis Online Training & Resources** http://go.wisc.edu/jhksoq

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Recap

- Facilitation as a valuable tool
- Overcome fear and team member conflict

Your Action Item

Step into your role as a facilitator

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