

# FACILITATION SKILLS FOR MORE COLLABORATIVE MEETINGS

SHERI WILKINS, PH.D.  
INNOVATIVE EDUCATIONAL SOLUTIONS LLC

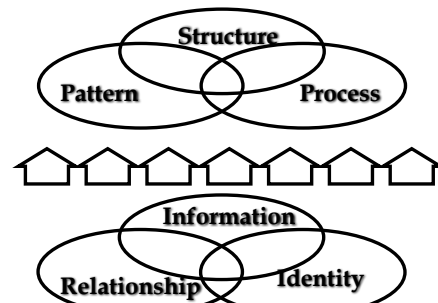


## OUTCOMES

- LEARN INTERMEDIATE AND ADVANCED SKILLS THAT LEAD TO MORE SUCCESSFUL FACILITATION
- LEARN FACILITATION TOOLS THAT CAN BE USED IN A VARIETY OF MEETINGS
- DISCUSS PRINCIPLES, OR AGREEMENTS, THAT NEED TO BE IN PLACE IN ORDER FOR COLLABORATION TO SUCCEED
- BUILD A SUPPORT SYSTEM FOCUSED ON ARTFUL FACILITATION
- PRACTICE SPECIFIC FACILITATION SKILLS
- HAVE FUN!!

## OVERVIEW

- CURRENT STATE
- INTENTIONS
- PRINCIPLES
- TENSIONS
- STRATEGIES
- TIPS



**The System**

2-3

Synectics LLC

Credit to Steve Zuleback

## CURRENT STATE – APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

- IN GROUPS OF THREE, DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING:
  - IDENTIFY A TIME WHEN A MEETING WENT REALLY WELL.
  - TAKE A THIRD-PERSON VIEW AND ANALYZE THE MEETING FROM THAT VANTAGE POINT.
  - WHAT SEEM TO BE THE CONDITIONS THAT LED TO SUCCESS?

50-52

## CURRENT STATE

- OFTEN WE APPROACH MEETINGS WITH:
  - UNCLEAR OUTCOMES
  - INSUFFICIENT PRE-WORK
  - UNDER-DEVELOPED TECHNIQUE



## DISCUSSION QUESTION

WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT YOUR INTENTIONS FOR THE MEETINGS YOU FACILITATE, WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE HAPPEN? WHAT ARE YOUR HIGH LEVEL INTENTIONS?



## INTENTIONS (GOALS/OUTCOMES)

- WHAT SHOULD OUR OUTCOMES BE?
  - STRONG SENSE OF COLLABORATION
  - FOCUS ON CLEARLY STATED AND UNDERSTOOD OUTCOMES
  - WIN-WIN
  - OTHERS?



IN ORDER TO MEET OUR INTENTIONS...  
WE MUST ADHERE TO CERTAIN PRINCIPLES OF "BEING."

## PRINCIPLES (WAYS OF *BEING*)

- HOW DO WE NEED TO APPROACH THIS WORK?
  - HONESTY AND VULNERABILITY
  - POSITIVE PRESUPPOSITIONS
  - MUTUAL RESPECT
  - OPENNESS AND A DESIRE TO UNDERSTAND
  - OTHERS?

58

## DISCUSSION QUESTION

WHAT GETS IN THE WAY OF MEETING OUR INTENTIONS?



## TENSIONS (ROADBLOCKS)

- WHAT GETS IN THE WAY?
  - PAST INTERACTIONS
  - PRIDE
  - SELF INTEREST
  - DISTRUST
  - OTHERS?



## STRATEGIES & FACILITATION TECHNIQUES

- OBSERVATION AND LISTENING SKILLS
- PERCEPTUAL POSITIONS
- META-MODEL AND HIGH QUALITY QUESTIONS
- BUILDING/BREAKING RAPPORT
- POINTS OF FOCUS
- VOICE PATTERNS
- HANDLING DIFFICULT GROUP DYNAMICS
- LADDER OF INFERENCE
- NEGATIVE VISION
- AFTER ACTION REVIEW (AAR)



## Communication Presuppositions

- ❖ Each person's experience is uniquely different.
- ❖ The meaning of communication is the response you get.
- ❖ Underlying every behavior is a positive intention (it may be deeply buried)
- ❖ Experience has a structure. Change the structure and you change the experience.
- ❖ There is an interconnected relationship between you and others that goes on over time.
- ❖ The element of a system which has the most flexibility (choice) has the most control (ability to influence) within the system.



Synectics LLC

Credit to Steve Zuleback

## Gaining Permission as a Facilitator

- Connection around values and beliefs leads to rapport
- Rapport leads to relationship
- Relationships lead to Permission
- Permission allows you to pace and lead



Synectics LLC

Credit to Steve Zuleback

## Ways to Build Rapport with Others

- NON VERBAL PATTERNS (physiology)
- VERBAL PATTERNS (language & speech)
- MENTAL/EMOTIONAL STATES



Synectics LLC

Credit to Steve Zuleback

## BUILDING RAPPORT

- GET INTO GROUPS OF THREE
- DECIDE WHO WILL BE A, B, AND C
- PERSON A – PREPARE TO SHARE A SHORT STORY WITH PERSON B
- PERSON B – PRACTICE ACTIVE LISTENING AND RAPPORT BUILDING
- PERSON C – OBSERVE THE INTERACTION AND TAKE NOTES
- BE READY TO SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE!

## Group Cues

1. Breathing pattern in group
2. Leaning in versus leaning out
3. Eyes in the group (point of focus)
4. Noise in the group
5. Pace of the group
6. Rapport in the group

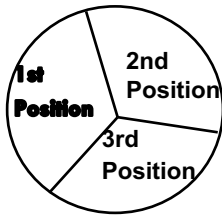


Synectics LLC

Credit to Steve Zuleback

## Perceptual Positions

100% of your **conscious attention** is distributed around these 3 positions: 1st + 2nd + 3rd = 100%



**1st Position:** SELF focused

**2nd Position:** OTHER focused

**3rd Position:** SYSTEM focused



31-32

Synectics LLC

Credit to Steve Zuleback

## POINTS OF FOCUS – MICHAEL GRINDER

1 <sup>st</sup> Point	Looking down	When under attack; Transitions; Creating a conversation in a team
2 <sup>nd</sup> Point	Looking at the other person	Maintain relationship; focusing on the future; solutioning
3 <sup>rd</sup> Point	Looking at the paper, the screen, a flip chart, etc.	To objectify difficult information; to specify a problem; to focus the attention on the problem
4 <sup>th</sup> Point	Gesturing away while maintaining eye contact	Discard the idea rather than put on a "parking lot"

39-41

## The Meta Model of Communication

### Clarifying Unspecified Nouns

What \_\_\_\_\_ specifically?

### Clarifying Unspecified Verbs

How \_\_\_\_\_ specifically?



34-35

Synectics LLC

Credit to Steve Zuleback

## Asking High Quality Questions

- ❖ Questions that aren't answered by a "yes" or a "No"
- ❖ They are not answers 'disguised' as questions (Don't you think you should.....)
- ❖ Cause the person to seek and find their own answers.

### Some Examples

- ❖ What's upsetting about this situation?
- ❖ What would you like to have happen?
- ❖ How will you know you have achieved what you are after?



Synectics LLC

Credit to Steve Zuleback

## Handling Difficult Group Dynamics



In your trio, please identify the most difficult "group dynamic" that you experience when working in groups.



152-156

Synectics LLC

Credit to Steve Zuleback

## Handling Difficult Group Dynamics



What are the specific behaviors that you see/hear that's evidence of this dynamic?

Think of a time that you exhibited this behavior, what was going on for you or in the group that prompted it?

Given what was just said, what insights do you NOW have about the meaning of this & other difficult behavior in groups?

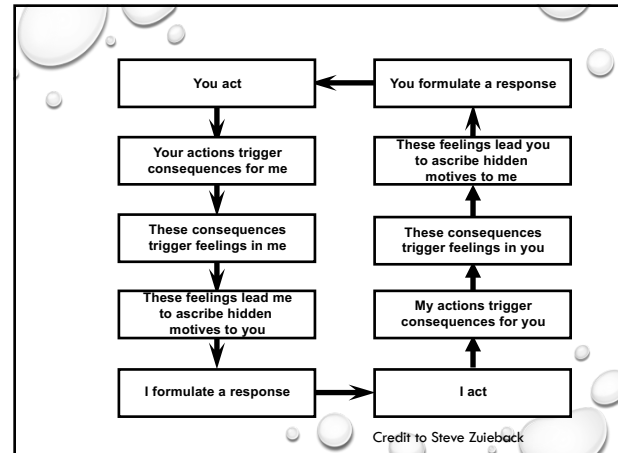
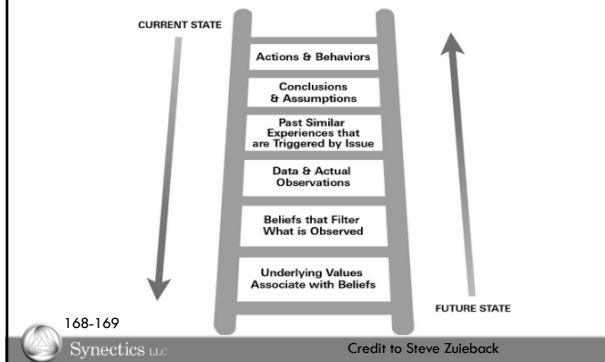
What specific strategies could we use to deal with this behavior & maintain respect for the individual?



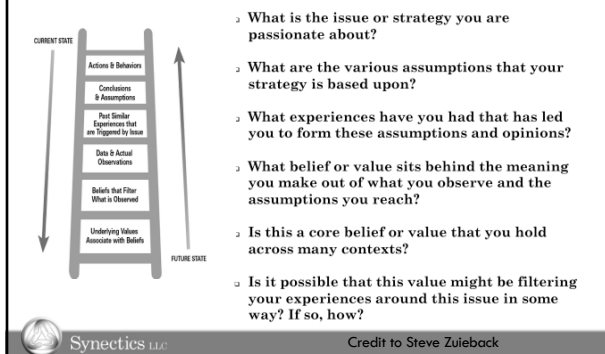
Synectics LLC

Credit to Steve Zuleback

## Ladder of Inference – Argyris and Schon



## Moving Down the Ladder of Inference Sequence:



## Two different cultural filters

	<b>Credible</b>	<b>Approachable</b>
Body	Rigid	Flexible/bent
Back of neck/spine	Straight vertical line	Head slightly fwd
Head	Still	Bobbing
Sentence flow	↵ ↵	↵
Intonation at sentence end	→	↗
Frozen hand gestures	Used	Not used
Direct eye contact	Rarely	Often
Smiling	Rarely	Often
Palms	Down	Varied

The bottom left corner has 'Synectics LLC' and the bottom right corner has 'Credit to Steve Zuleback'.

## NEGATIVE VISION PROCESS

- USE ONLY IF THE GROUP IS STUCK IN CONFLICT OR APATHETIC
- STAND AT THE FLIP CHART AND ASK THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS
  - WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS ACCOMPLISHED ON OUR TASK?
  - WHAT WILL BE THE SPECIFIC CONSEQUENCES – FOR OUR CLIENTS, FOR YOU PROFESSIONALLY?
  - WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES TO YOU IN YOUR HOME LIFE IF THIS SITUATION PERSISTS?
- HAVE THE GROUP REFLECT ON WHAT THEY HAVE SAID

190-193

## DOING THE WORK

- TIPS FOR (VIRTUALLY) SEAMLESS FACILITATION:
  - MAKE IT VISUAL (EDGE TECHNIQUE)
  - CAPTURE CONCERNS
  - LINK TO VALUES
  - KEEP YOUR COOL



## IEP MEETING STRATEGY: MAKE IT VISUAL

- CHART STRENGTHS AND NEEDS
- LINK NEEDS TO GOALS

## IEP MEETING STRATEGY: CAPTURE CONCERNS

- CHART CONCERNS
- CHECK WITH PARENT/ADVOCATE/ATTORNEY TO ENSURE THAT YOU'VE ACCURATELY CAPTURED THE STATED CONCERN

## IEP MEETING STRATEGY: LINK TO VALUES

- LISTEN TO WHAT IS REALLY BEING SAID
- ASK QUESTIONS TO DEEPEN YOUR UNDERSTANDING
- FOCUS ON THE LEVEL OF VALUES – DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN INTENTIONS AND STRATEGIES

## IEP MEETING STRATEGY: KEEP YOUR COOL

- BE AWARE OF PERCEPTUAL POSITIONS
- USE THE THIRD POINT OF FOCUS
- USE HIGH QUALITY QUESTIONS
- BREATHE
- PACE AND LEAD

## How to Stay Out of Hot Water



Separate the issue from the presenter – go visual

Use Credible Voice Pattern

Go 3<sup>rd</sup> Point of Focus

Capture all the concerns of person and continue until they acknowledge that you understand their position

Break and breathe

Use 2<sup>nd</sup> Point of Focus and Approachable Voice Pattern to build relationship

Credit to Steve Zuleback



Synectics LLC



## How to Stay Out of Hot Water

1. Break and breathe twice: to lower your own breathing & raise capacity
2. Go visual
3. Get it off to the side
4. Third person language, credible and third point for the issue/problem
5. Separate problem from solution
6. First/second person language, approachable and second point of focus for solution and future
7. Use specific descriptions, avoid interpretations/generalizations
8. Acknowledge and join to the group then create amnesia



Synectics LLC

Credit to Steve Zuleback