

# **THE FACILITATED LEADER**

**Using All The Voices For  
Strong Organizations And  
Communities**

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## **THE FACILITATED LEADER**

### **For Those Interested in Making a Difference while Making a Profit**

Facilitation is the sustaining of opportunities, resources, encouragement and support for the group to succeed in achieving its objectives, and to do this through enabling the group to take control and responsibility for the way they proceed. The facilitating leader is a facilitator with a vision. The use of facilitation finally answers the question of how to motivate people. The answer is not about motivation. It is rather about inspiration. To produce or arouse a strong feeling is the only direct path to quality, effectiveness, health, profitability and personal well being. I have never been successful in generating high sustainable levels of motivation as a leader. I have been able to create authentic environments that reach into individuals and free what is best about them. We who are living in environments that inspire have virtually been able to do away with regulatory quality checks, abolish watch dog forms and reporting mechanisms, and focus on doing the job right rather than short term concerns of profitability, quality control, or human resource management.

## **THE LAWS OF FACILITATED LEADERSHIP**

There is much to be discussed in the following pages, however there are only two laws to practice in order to attain the power of a facilitated leader.

### **First Law of Facilitation:**

Ground your work in the connections that are common between us. Discovering and rediscovering the common ground of diverse groups is the key. When we build foundations, which strengthen the deep connections that engage us, the energy and contributions so cheerfully given overwhelm us.

### **Second Law of Facilitation:**

The goal is to build together and therefore we ask, do, learn, think and act, together. Every time there is a secret there is harm to the relationship and association of a strong group. The second law requires that we increase our vulnerability in order to increase your energy. This facilitated association propels us to understand what we are trying to be? The act of learning, planning & doing together collectively sanctions the vision of what is now possible. The sustainability of all of us is vested in the associational realities of each of us. How the “we” can be different because of the “us” is answered in daily results of us doing all together.

### **THE FIVE COMPETENCIES OF FACILITATED LEADERSHIP**

Obeys the two laws of facilitation and you will surely succeed in every way. I did not say that all would go perfectly well. The point of the laws is to be able to face the normal chaos of human systems from the healthiest stance. Embedded in the laws is the expectation that each person continues to develop potency in total quality involvement. The following five competencies form the foundation of total quality involvement. There is never a time when these skills are mastered. They must be preformed, understood and refined as a life long quest.

#### **Listening:**

Understanding that comes with listening in an open and quiet way equips the facilitator with an awareness of the feelings and emotions that are the core to what is being said. It gives the leader grounding for the choices being made regarding group process. The facilitated leader puts her agenda on hold until she has complete understanding of the other. This understanding requires knowing the individual and knowing the group. The danger here is asking questions under the guise of understanding when in reality the question is being asked as a way of advocating for the questioners position.

### **Questioning:**

Authentic inquiry is the key to this competency. The facilitator inquires in order to learn. Facilitator's knowledge is enhanced for information to make choices. Skill requires the sense of actuality and lack of falsehood. The facilitator is truly questioning from a yearn to know perspective. The atmosphere is felt to be safe because the exercise is one of acceptance leading to understanding. The facilitator has continuous awareness as the realities of approval (you must shape your behaviors, beliefs and contributions to support what I the leader require of you) constantly work their way in.

### **Communicating:**

Thoughts feelings and ideas are communicated clearly and in relation to what is of importance to the group. This complex communication is only accomplished through understanding. Understanding has two components. The first is to be understood. This requires a mature and authentic person to speak from personal experience and a personal feeling base. The use of "I" statements, even though this is almost cliché today, is the surest starting point. The understanding created through being authentic, listening and questioning give the facilitator freedom. Freedom to be genuine without concern for imposing on the group or individuals beliefs and culture. Liberty to shape decisions grounded in the whole system.

### **Adapting:**

Changing conditions are the celebrated pattern for our environment. When the facilitator is aware of how things are changing choices are freely made to adapt actions accordingly. The freedom to change ones mind is always preserved by the facilitator. In fact the facilitating leader habitually employs tools that cause a mind change. Adaptation is a skill you build to act as a barometer. When a time comes that adapting isn't happening this is a warning of stagnation, group think and lazy facilitation. The best adaptation

environment is facilitated by being proficient in the tools developed by Dr. Edward Bebono.

### **Reviewing:**

This process is concerned with listening, questioning and communicating with others what is happening now. This keeps all grounded in the present and able to move on. By briefly going over a subject again, the facts are summarized and thus fixed in memories. Facilitators create exercises that are intended for study of this kind. The synthesis that occurs during this period strengthens the first law of facilitating. Abstract entities are combined to form a single and unified entity. The impact of reviewing is to cause a strengthening of purpose in solidarity, celebrations of the heart, and to lay the foundation for future (usually within the next few moments) formative disruptions.

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FACILITATING LEADER**

Every time you set out to accomplish an objective through supervision, you have the opportunity for a unique and fulfilling experience.

In this statement, the word unique deserves special emphasis. That is because the rich mixture of varying content (employees with distinct needs and life experiences, and your own leadership / supervisory approach) creates the potential for infinite variety and unending challenge. For this reason, it is unlikely that everyone will agree on one best way to supervise and lead people.

Leaders create an environment, eco-system, and atmosphere of self-discovery. Each interface is an opportunity to challenge professionals to think. The key is to sustain an environment in which people are free to take risks. People must feel this reality in all interactions. The result is that people grow as opposed to finding fault. All responses to

challenges are encouraged. The following are tips to guide the eco-system of a conscious leader:

- **Focus on the employee** as doer and learner.
- Set aside your ego. The purpose of managing is to **evolve community** and individual behavior, not to make the leader look good.
- Be a coach not an authority figure or expert. By guiding employees to answers, understandings and insights, an atmosphere **encouraging honesty and creativity** is generated. You must not have all the answers.... Even if you are sure you do.
- Stay on course. What is the high order goal being approached here? **Stay aimed** at visions and away from side issues of war stories. With clarity of purpose comes clarity of indicators of excellence.
- Maintain an atmosphere of focus, **awe and understanding** on the multiple outcomes. Avoid praise or scorn.
- Ensure each discussion has content that is practical and has a clear **quality of usefulness**.
- Cause open minds by discovering the **individual need** for completing the task, researching new methods, learning new knowledge, etc.
- Inspire with **personal authentic feelings** the need to complete projects or tasks. Demonstrate your passion and energy for the work that accomplishes the purpose.
- Live as an impressive **questioner and listener**.
- **Never stop developing** and explaining your visions.
- Promote and advocate for **participation**...even partial.
- Understands the difference between sentimental team intimacy and seeking to deeply know each other and self.

## BUILDING THE HABITAT FOR WHAT WANTS TO EXIST

**Respect is the behavior; trust is the result; learning is  
the vehicle that makes it all happen.**

-Jordon Paul

The facilitating leader is the intervening element that gives birth to the emerging force of the group. What is born are generations of actions and complexly patterned production processes. The consciously, fine tuned facilitating leader is the factor that causes there to be a natural habitat for the organic structure we know as the work group. The facilitating leader is the pilgrim of the group insights and undiscovered knowledge and intuition. By reporting what is there the means of accomplishing the group purpose take charge. The facilitating leader is a catalyst that is always affected by the growth and change generated.

An obvious path toward the nurturing of organic human structures is for learning to be present. The acquiring of knowledge and skill is critical and is expected for any environment the facilitating leader functions in. However, in order to create a natural habitat expectations must move beyond learning to around-the-clock discovery. This learning suggests that the new information acquired is surprising to the learner. Incorporated within daily routines are both learning and teaching events. Many types of learning are available. I support and encourage them all. Participatory learning is a powerful and efficient tool. It is one tool to assist in the prevention of *The Band Wagon Effect*. This effect occurs when an idea emerges and gains unfair, monopoly qualities. The idea monopoly is paralyzing to human organizations and is a fact of the economy of ideas without processes that democratize the flow of ideas.

## **Participatory Learning**

The Participatory Learning process recognizes that a power imbalance now exists. Therefore the early stages of the process are exclusive to people who are living an experience they wish to change.

The methods used to accomplish Participatory Learning are time honored adult education principles. Facilitation is the tool used to:

- Promote the production of collective knowledge and build a sense of group ownership of the information.
- Promote collective analysis for the ordering of information in ways useful to the group.
- Promote critical analysis of the ordered information to determine the root causes of problems and issues, with a view to finding solutions to them.
- Promote the building of relationships as part of the collective problem solving.
- Link reflection and evaluation with action, taking time to ask who, what, why, where, and when.

**In short, Participatory Learning is the vehicle for people to pose problems, identify causes, discuss possible solutions, and take and evaluate actions. This is accomplished through the creation of an environment in which people feel comfortable and free to speak, or sing, or draw, or perform a drama. This process builds a sense of trust, support and solidarity among people who share the same problems but may not know it until they talk with each other.**