



**THE SPIRIT
AND
PRACTICE
OF
FACILITATIVE
LEADERSHIP**

Facilitation Manual & Coursebook



Acknowledgements

The Spirit and Practice of Facilitative Leadership was co-designed and co-facilitated by Forever Sabah Institute (FSI). The programme on facilitative leadership, methodologies and practice was held on 18–20 January 2022 at KampOng, Tenghilan.

FSI | Forever Sabah Institute is an integral part of Forever Sabah (FS): the transition towards a diversified, equitable circular economy in the Malaysian Borneo state of Sabah.

A significant suite of activities for FSI is “Forever Sabah Institute For Forever Sabah” (FSI4FS), under which FSI designs and offers learning activities for staff, teams and partners from the Forever Sabah web. Other programs are generated through formal and informal partnerships, requests or relevance for specific learning and offers of teaching/sharing.

FS | Forever Sabah is a 25 year programme to support Sabah’s transition to a diversified, equitable, circular economy.

Forever Sabah, a civil society entity, serves as a collaborative social movement rather than a bureaucracy or NGO. It is an initiative rooted in local aspirations, built by an enthusiastic team who believe in utilising Sabahan knowledge and experience, and working with others and across sectors to build a better Sabah.

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Do you have any questions or reflections? Do get in touch.

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Introduction

On 18–20 January 2022, Forever Sabah Institute (FSI) organised its second iteration of The Spirit and Practice of Facilitative Leadership programme designed for us to explore the philosophy, purpose and principles of facilitative leadership.

In the programme, we will understand facilitative leadership in contrast with other leadership styles and models through conversation and exercises. At the same time, we will learn about, discuss and practice a selection of facilitation methodologies and tools, while testing those methods in different scenarios and group dynamics to understand their application and effectiveness as interventions within sectors and systems.

HOW TO USE THIS COURSEBOOK?

This coursebook and facilitation manual is a documentation of “The Spirit and Practice of Facilitative Leadership”, and published with the intention of it being a free resource for learning and training.

The coursebook can be used as guidance to allow you to facilitate your own facilitative leadership programme within your own community or setting. Sessions and activities listed here are intentionally designed to allow for flexibility when adapting the content for both personal and non-commercial use.

Programme Overview

In this programme, participants are provided a foundational understanding to facilitative leadership as a practice and tool for intervention. The programme touches on several methodologies used in the practice of facilitation, but places emphasis on Community Building Technologies (CBT).

The facilitation methods are introduced through speaker sessions with Cynthia Ong, Sumitra Pasupathy and Carmela Ariza, while participants are able to put those methods into practice and facilitate their own sessions based on topics chosen by themselves.

Programme Structure

Each session in the programme is structured in a similar way so that you and your co-facilitator may easily guide participants through a series of activities centred around a core theme.

How to facilitate the programme, its sessions and activities?	
Preparation	Set up the room for participants to sit in a circle. If a screen is in use, set up seating in a U-shape.
	Prepare materials and tools needed for the session and its activities.
	Prepare refreshments for break.
Welcome	<p>“Welcome” activities include an introduction at the beginning, as well as an “Intention Setting” at the start of the programme. At each subsequent session, facilitators should take note to include a “Check-in” with participants at intervals.</p>
	<p>Intention setting is a ritual of commitment and saying it aloud allows participants to form an understanding of why they have shown up, as well as a reciprocal relationship within the circle.</p> <p>At the start of the programme, welcome participants by asking each and every one to set their intention for the programme. As a facilitator, ask participants the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Their names ● One main reason for being at the programme today <p>Watch how to prepare and align for a programme with “Intention Setting”: https://youtu.be/d-NKoOWYtCM</p>
	<p>A Dialogue Walk is an activity where participants are paired up together for a conversation. The purpose of this activity is to get participants warmed up for the</p>

	<p>programme. As a facilitator, get a topic of conversation ready. Then, pair participants together and have them go on a 15-minute walk wherever you are, while discussing the topic. Watch how dialogue walk was conducted here: https://youtu.be/uEz9UeOmL-U</p>
	<p>The purpose of setting Ground Rules is to have a prepared set of guidelines that you and participants can follow throughout the programme and should be set at the beginning of the programme.</p> <p>To establish ground rules, facilitators will have to note the diverse backgrounds and opinions of participants to create space for respectful discussion. Meanwhile, the other task as a facilitator is to ensure that everyone has a say in the decision-making process.</p>
	<p>Subsequently, facilitators should check-in with participants at intervals throughout the programme.</p> <p>During check-in, you may ask participants to simply state how they're feeling then allow space for everyone to share.</p>
Sessions	<p>"Sessions" in The Spirit and Practice of Facilitative Leadership are divided into seven main sessions, conducted over the course of three days.</p> <p>As a facilitator, your role during sessions is to introduce the speaker, as well as facilitate sharing and discussion between the speaker and the circle of participants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduce the speaker and provide an overview of the session. ● Speaker presentation. ● Facilitate Q&A and Discussion.
Chapters	<p>Within this coursebook, Sessions are further broken down into "Chapters". You will notice that at the end of each Chapter, video links are provided for you to view a demonstration of how the Session and/or Chapter was conducted as it was presented during the programme.</p>

	<p>You may view the entire YouTube playlist now:</p> <p>https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PL8PcGK5jB-EPkff7eB-WNnSsaJIRtSvFJN</p> <p>Or as you go along in this coursebook, click on the individual links that show up in its corresponding Chapter.</p> <p>Note: The videos are a representation of the programme when it was conducted live. Therefore, both Bahasa Malaysia and English languages can be heard in the videos.</p> <p>Meanwhile, clicking “View Chapters” on the YouTube player or “Show More” under each video will display links</p>
<p>Lesson Activities</p>	<p>“Lesson Activities” that come under every session are interlinked. Therefore, activities have to be facilitated in the sequence that is presented in this manual.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prepare participants for the activity with instructions. ● Provide an overview of the activity. ● Close each activity with a dialogue.

Lessons and Activities

SESSION 1 Changemaking Through Facilitation

Introduction

In this first session, Forever Sabah Chief Executive Facilitator (ChEF) Cynthia Ong gives an overview of what it means to inspire change through facilitative leadership.

Speaking through personal experiences, she takes us through her reasons behind advocating for a facilitative approach in leadership. Cynthia also introduces us to the principles and purpose behind facilitative leadership by using the Forever Sabah ecology as an example. Then, guides us toward the practice of facilitative leadership.

Chapters in this lesson:

- 1. Introduction to the Facilitative Approach*
- 2. Principles, Purpose and Practice of Facilitative Leadership*
- 3. Conventional Versus Radical: Seeing Facilitative Leadership as the Alternative*
- 4. Facilitative Leadership Methodologies and Approaches*

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, we should have formed a core understanding of facilitative leadership and begin to see facilitation as a tool to enact change.

Chapters

Introduction to the Facilitative Approach

The Oxford Dictionary defines the word “facilitate” as “to make (an action or process) easy or easier.” However, the act of facilitation is anything but easy, as it involves an understanding of group dynamics, the sensing of individual needs, and the ability to inspire success in a group, amongst others.

On the contrary, we might even be more familiar with leaders taking on a top-down approach where it is simply a matter of telling subordinates what to do. An autocratic style of leadership may even be the default in many settings, and without the requirement of having all voices at the table, can be an “easier” process.

Subsequently, facilitative leadership is about creating and leading a space for many voices to be heard, and acknowledging that each voice carries its own set of unique qualities and potential. The spirit and practice of facilitative leadership describes the combination of attitudes, mindset and approaches, as well as the action of leading a community through a facilitative approach.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY FACILITATIVE LEADERSHIP?

“Malaysia’s – and perhaps the wider region’s – leadership culture has its foundations in more patriarchal systems. I’m the benefactor, you’re the beneficiary. I’m the patron, you the patronised. We have been in this very entrenched hierarchy of how we behave, how we run institutions, how our legal systems and policies work.

To disrupt this top-down single decider model, my intervention has been to use all manner of facilitation. Really, just bringing all the voices to the table. Creating formats and spaces where those diverse voices can be heard. Where difficult conversations can be had. And shared issues and concerns can be discussed in as graceful and open a manner as possible. Literally just changing the format has been very powerful.” – *Cynthia Ong, 12 May 2020. Interview with Corin Murafa, Forbes.*

Read More: [“What Does Forever Look Like? Facilitative Leadership Shows The Way”](#)

Watch Introduction to the Facilitative Approach: <https://youtu.be/umTqhrLUraI>

Key Takeaways:

- The spirit and practice of facilitative leadership describes the combination of attitudes, mindset and approaches, as well as the action of leading a community through a facilitative approach.
- The facilitative approach is not necessarily an easier process, compared to a traditional top-down approach to leadership.
- Facilitative leadership acknowledges all voices at the table.

Principles, Purpose and Practice of Facilitative Leadership

1. Principles

In general, facilitative leadership focuses on processes with the belief that the process or journey is more important, or as important as the goal itself. In that process, there are some principles that define facilitative leadership. Those principles are:

- *Diversity*
An emphasis on diversity pays attention to the value of distinctive skills and unique qualities in an individual or a group. It is rooted in the belief that everyone has a voice.
- *Equity*
Equity makes sure that each person's voice is equal to everyone else and helps create a space where all voices are encouraged, heard and challenged.
- *Inclusivity*
Inclusivity is to ensure the inclusion of each person regardless of differences in culture, religion, gender, leadership styles, personalities and etcetera. With inclusivity, the belief is, also, that leadership can look different for everyone.

At the core of these principles is the belief that a facilitative approach can make a group go above and beyond because it emphasises the adage “the whole is the sum of its parts.” By taking all ideas, perspectives and intelligence into consideration, facilitative leadership takes part in the act of cultivating “collective genius.”

Subsequently, a group becomes infinitely more effective and resilient as the facilitative approach utilises each team member's leadership qualities and leans into the power of collective decision making, rather than having one leader make all the decisions.



2. Purpose

While leadership styles can vary from person to person, the purpose of a facilitative approach remains the same, that is:

- *To convene and draw people together*
The first purpose in facilitative leadership is to gather people around an issue, problem, situation or opportunity.
- *To grow relationships and partnerships*
When you are intentional in your approach to others, relationships will naturally evolve to become collaborative partnerships through facilitation.
- *To tend to process*
Facilitative leadership focuses more on the process than the end-goal. With this purpose, some questions that would emerge are: Am I being inclusive? Is the group diverse? Is there equality within the group?
- *To synthesise*
To synthesise pays emphasis to diverse opinions and perspectives combined to form a connected whole, that would eventually create a synthesised solution.

3. Practice

The practice of facilitative leadership refers to the application of its principles and purpose in your day-to-day life, whether it is in your community, work, or even with family and friends.

The practice also refers to the how to and tools of facilitative leadership, while methodologies is the method for facilitating. We will learn five different methodologies in Facilitative Leadership Methodologies and Approaches (page 14).

Watch Principles, Purpose and Practice of Facilitative Leadership:

<https://youtu.be/umTghrLUral?t=353>

Conventional Versus Radical: Seeing Facilitative Leadership as the Alternative

1. Conventional Versus Radical: Seeing Facilitative Leadership as the Alternative

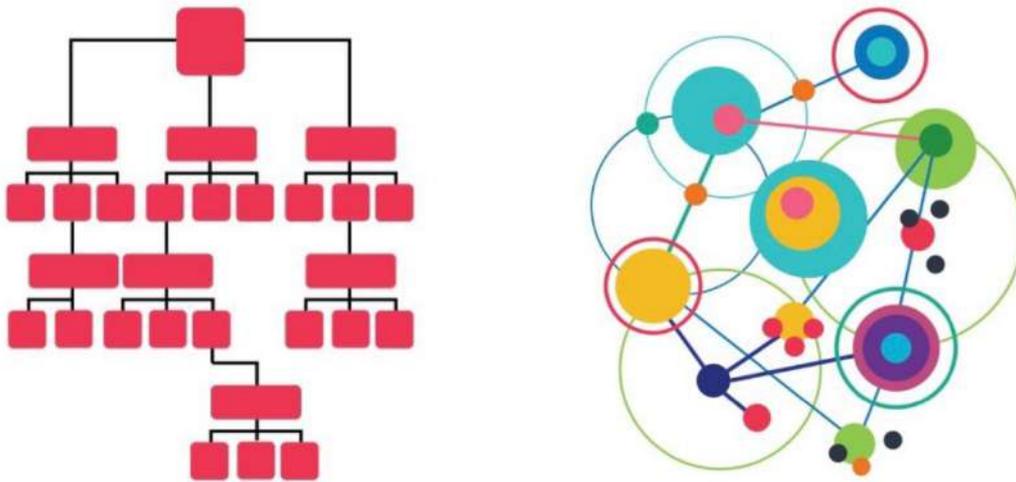


Diagram 1

On the left is a common type of organisational chart with a hierarchical structure.

On the right is a kind of organisation chart that can be represented by the facilitative approach.

The individual can do many good things, but to do really great things you need an organisation. Therefore, leadership in an organisation is representative of the organisation itself.

Typically, an organisation will have a structure that is hierarchical, where a single person or “head” calls the shots. On the other hand, the facilitative approach seeks to dismantle that structure, and in turn create a more holistic and collaborative environment.

However, this does not mean one approach is better than the other. Conventional and radical approaches to organisation can have its pros and cons, respectively. And depending on the situation, one approach may be more effective than the other.

2. The Graph of Complexity

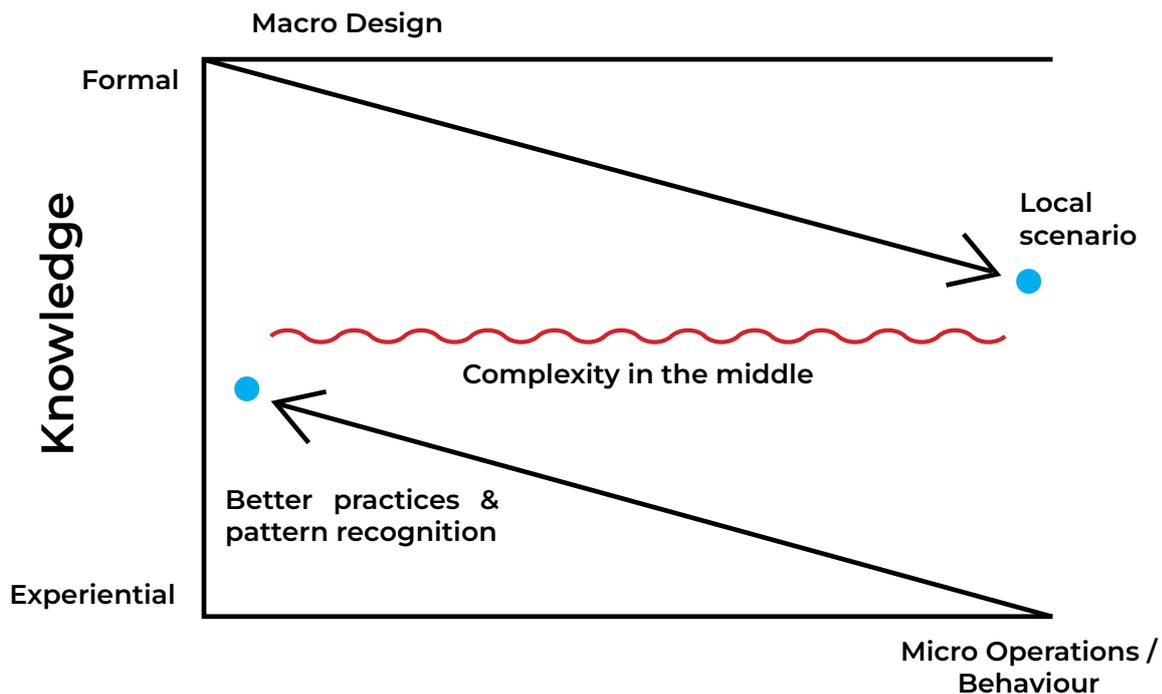


Diagram 2

Macro design typically stops at a local scenario, and micro operations stops once better practices are achieved. But in between micro operations and macro design is a middle space of complexity.

Diagram 2 above describes systems of behaviour. At the bottom is experiential learning, or learning through experience. Meanwhile, formal learning is the kind of education that a person gets in a classroom.

With formal knowledge comes macro design or a “big vision” or “big picture” solution to a problem. However, formal learning can only lead to an understanding of one or a few local scenarios, but not an understanding of behavioural patterns at a micro-operations level. Vice versa, experiential learning or learning through experience can only get you to an understanding of better practices.

For example, the [Sabah Agricultural Blueprint 2021-2030](#) is macro design, and whilst it can outline goals and policies, it will not be able to inform the behaviour of farmers tending to their fields and buffaloes at a micro-operation level. There is a stark disconnect between the top-level leadership and the bottom-level citizens.

Between the space of macro design and micro operation is complexity. It is within this middle space of complexity that facilitation works to bridge the gap between macro and micro, or between seeing the big picture and particular behaviours.

Watch **Conventional Versus Radical: Seeing Facilitative Leadership as the Alternative**: <https://youtu.be/umTghrLUral?t=985>

After learning how facilitative leadership can look different, you might want to reflect on:

- What are some examples of conventional leadership and hierarchy that you can observe in your life?
- Imagine yourself in work, what kind of leadership would you rather work with?
- In what areas of your life do you view yourself as a leader?
- How do different individuals or groups in your organisation interact?

Facilitative Leadership Methodologies and Approaches

There are many methodologies and approaches to facilitation. Depending on the context or the situation, some approaches may be more suitable than others. It is up to the facilitator to decide on which methodology is best for their context. These methodologies can even be adapted or hybridised, as we will learn in later sessions of this programme. Some of the methodologies are:

1. Community Building Technology (CBT)

“Community” in Community Building Technology (CBT) refers to the spirit of community and the feeling of belonging that includes a sense of safety. Community in this context does not need to be tied to geographical location or proximity. It is possible to facilitate a group into feeling a sense of community. CBT will be the main methodology we will learn in this programme, and will be further explored in Session 3: Introduction to CBT.

Learn more:

- Website: “Community Building.” The Foundation for Community Encouragement, 2021, https://www.fce-community.org/community_building.
- Book excerpt: [Chapter 3: The True Meaning of Community](#), Peck, M. Scott. *The Different Drum: Community Making and Peace*. Touchstone, 1998.

2. Open Space Technology (OST)

Open Space Technology (OST) is a method of organising that was founded on the idea that a meeting can be one “large coffee break.” In OST, groups of five or more than 2,000 convene around a central theme, but with no agenda. Instead, groups are made to set the agenda, then organise parallel working sessions in what is called “The Marketplace”, as we would learn in Session 5: Facilitating Conversations Using OST.

Learn more:

- Article: “What Is Open Space Technology?” OpenSpaceWorld.ORG, <https://openspaceworld.org/wp2/what-is/>.
- Video: Camp Stomping Ground. “Open Space Technology Introduction.” YouTube, 19 May 2015, https://youtu.be/M_jhcvCYBbg.
- Video: Poupard, Jean-Philippe. “Open Space Technology : Facilitation of a complex business issue.” YouTube, 25 March 2011, <https://youtu.be/UTE09COe7Mw>.

3. Appreciative Inquiry (AI)

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) describes itself as a positives-based approach to organisational change and leadership development. It employs the “4D Cycle” of Discovery, Dream, Design and Destiny to identify strengths and the “best of” an individual or organisation to create or enhance strategic action.

Learn more:

- Article: Cooperrider, David. “What is Appreciative Inquiry? Examples & Resources for the Appreciative Inquiry Process.” Center for Values-Driven Leadership, 9 May 2017, <https://cvdl.ben.edu/blog/what-is-appreciative-inquiry/>.
- Article: Moore, Catherine. “What is Appreciative Inquiry? A Brief History & Real Life Examples.” PositivePsychology.com, 5 2 2022, <https://positivepsychology.com/appreciative-inquiry/>.
- Online course: “Introduction to Appreciative Inquiry - The Appreciative Inquiry Commons.” The Appreciative Inquiry Commons, <https://appreciativeinquiry.champlain.edu/learn/appreciative-inquiry-introduction/>.

4. World Café

World Café is similar to OST in that it allows participants to set their own agenda, and move from one agenda to another at their own will. This method of facilitation

grounds itself on seven principles that aims to foster active engagement and collaboration. Meanwhile, the World Café format is highly flexible and can be adapted to many circumstances.

Learn more:

- Article: Margulies, Nancy, and Avril Orloff. "A Quick Reference Guide." The World Cafe, 2015, <http://www.theworldcafe.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Cafe-To-Go-Revised.pdf>.
- Video: ImageGeneration. "Art of Hosting - World Cafe." YouTube, 22 October 2011, https://youtu.be/YG_6iBcyP7w.
- Video: Impact & Adapt Ltd. "How to Facilitate a World Cafe Session." YouTube, 28 June 2019, <https://youtu.be/blmYMj88b20>.

5. Theory U

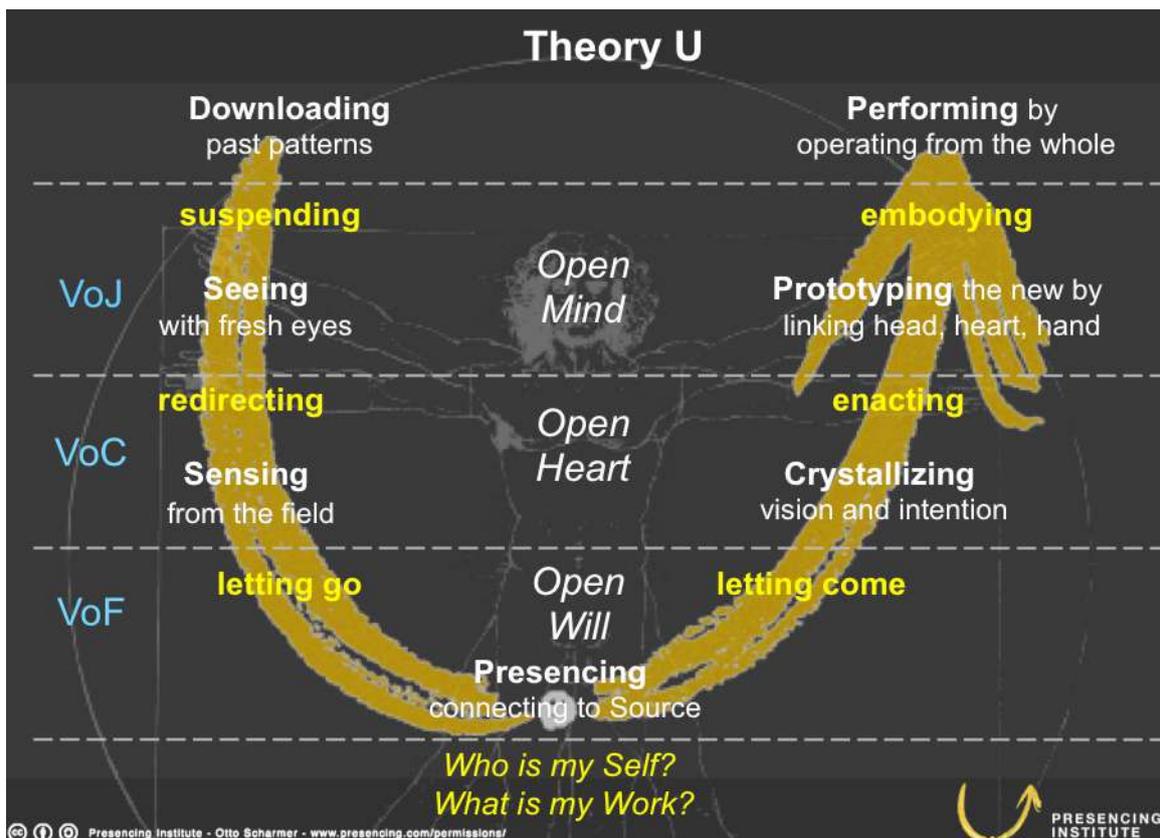


Diagram 3

“The U” has five movements that are Co-Initiating, Co-Sensing, Presencing, Co-Evolving and Co-Creating. Each movement corresponds to an Open Mind, Open Heart or Open Will, respectively.

In Theory U, groups and individuals journey through five movements of “the U” to create change. The founder of Theory U, Otto Scharmer, developed the model with colleagues at MIT after interviewing 150 persons across sectors including business, science, technology and culture. He posits that change is as much dependent on the inner world of an individual, as with the individual’s external environment.

Learn more:

- Video: “Theory U - Learning from the future as it emerges | Otto Scharmer | TEDx-TUHH.” YouTube, 26 October 2016, <https://youtu.be/GMJefS7s3lc>.
- Video: Presencing Institute. “Intro to Theory.” YouTube, 14 September 2018, <https://youtu.be/11inAHNdnSc>.
- Website: “Theory U.” Presencing Institute, <https://www.presencing.org/aboutus/theory-u>.

Lessons and Activities

Activity 1: What Do We Care About?



Aim: In this activity, we select a theme or topic to practice skills of facilitation later in Session 4 - The Practice of Community Building Technology (CBT).

Tools: Sticky notes, whiteboard and marker pens

Facilitation Instructions:

1. Begin by asking participants to think of a few topics or issues that they care about.
2. Instruct participants to write down the topics or issues on sticky notes. Write each topic separately, on different pieces of sticky note paper. This is so that the group may cluster the topics or issues into themes later on.

3. Get participants to stick all their written notes on the whiteboard.
4. Once that is done, review what was written.
5. After the review, start “clustering” the topics by posing questions to the group. For example, you may ask participants how they feel about grouping the words “stress” and “anxiety” under the theme of “mental health”.

Facilitation note:

Do note that this process can get messy and chaotic especially if there is a large group of participants. You may want to include a co-facilitator for this activity as you gather feedback from participants.

6. Take note and group similar or relevant topics together under a larger theme that emerges in the process.
7. For the purpose of clarity, you should arrange the sticky notes into “groups” on the board and make sure to write down the theme on top of each group for all participants to see.
8. Once the themes are defined, select four of the “best” themes. As a facilitator, you will have to ensure that the group has achieved a consensus on all the themes listed.
9. Participants will use the four themes selected as practice topics for facilitation in a later session and activity.



SESSION 2

Why Facilitative Leadership is Crucial in a Complex World

Introduction

In this session, participants have a conversation with Ashoka Global Partnerships Director, Sumitra Pasupathy on her thoughts regarding facilitative leadership. The session begins with Sumi's telling of her own personal journey with facilitation and social entrepreneurship.

For Sumitra, "choosing facilitative leadership is more pressing and urgent right now" as the world advances quicker, and changes become more complex. Later in the session, she answers questions, as well as states the three things she believes are essential in the practice of facilitative leadership.

Chapters in this lesson:

- 1. Why I Choose Facilitative Leadership: A Personal Story by Sumitra Pasupathy*
- 2. Making Systems Change and Innovation Visible*
- 3. The Qualities in a Facilitative Leader*
- 4. Why Facilitative Leadership Matters*

Learning Outcomes

By listening to an experienced facilitator and changemaker, we learn to discern what kind of patterns and choices that we can make to build our capacities in facilitative leadership.



Chapters

Why I Choose Facilitative Leadership: A Personal Story by Sumitra Pasupathy

Facilitation note:

For this section, facilitators can invite speakers to draw from their own experience of facilitative leadership to share with participants. It is wise to use moments of sharing from speakers to build interaction between the guest speaker and participants as well.

As a young Malaysian, Sumitra was struck by the experience of being rejected from a prestigious government scholarship to study abroad. Then 17-year-old Sumi was told by a “very important gatekeeper to many of the government scholarships” that “you are not one of us.”

She described the moment as “a real awakening” to why she chose her career path. “I didn’t realise until I was 49-years-old that that had a really dramatic effect on me in terms of creating a sense of belonging,” said Sumi. With the benefit of hindsight, Sumi realised that moment forced her to think and act differently.

After graduating from university, Sumi began her career in Europe doing innovation work, or finding “new ways of doing things” for 10 to 15 years. The other intersection with the work was “in relationships” in the private sector and Research and Development (R&D) environment, said Sumi.

“There was a lot of support for new ideas in rich countries in Europe and the US, the Global North. There is a lot of wealth and new ideas and innovation. But in the Global South, or developing countries, innovation is very, very difficult,” said Sumi.

By the time Sumi came back to Singapore 10–15 years ago, in her 30s, she was still passionate about injecting change into the system. So, she focused her effort into working with the education system and children as a social entrepreneur in Singapore.

But her challenge then and to this day was that people did not want to change things. And she found this to be true especially on her return to the Global South. “The resistance to new ways of doing things in the education system [in Singapore] is significantly high.”

WHAT IS THE GLOBAL NORTH AND THE GLOBAL SOUTH?

In simpler terms, Global North typically refers to “developed or first-world” nations located within the Northern hemisphere. Meanwhile, Global South refers to the “third-world” or “developing nations” in the Southern hemisphere.

However, the terms “developed”, “developing”, “first-world” and “third-world” countries are now commonly rejected terms, and can be offensive as use of the terms paints a hierarchy between Western nations and the rest of the world. In other words, the language “first world versus third world” and “developed-developing” assumes the legacy of a coloniser-colonised relationship between nations.

In many respects, Global South nations can be equal in development to Global North nations. Yet, many argue that labelling based on geography is also incorrect as some higher income nations like Australia and New Zealand are located within the Southern hemisphere.

Read more on this: [“Memo To People Of Earth: ‘Third World’ Is An Offensive Term!”](#) by Marc Silver.

Meanwhile, she found that funders and partners especially struggled with giving more resources for innovation, new ideas and creating new solutions. “[Funders] were very skeptical,” said Sumi. With that challenge, Sumi joined Ashoka.

“The first thing I learned from [Bill Drayton, the Founder of Ashoka] is the simple idea that... everyday citizens can take action to solve problems. We just don’t need big NGOs and governments to do that,” said Sumi. “The simple idea was that: make the change you want to see visible.”

What is Ashoka? Ashoka is a global organisation that was founded in 1980, and has presence in over 95 countries. Its mission is to “identify and support the world’s leading social entrepreneurs, learn from the patterns in their innovations, and mobilize a global community that embraces these new frameworks to build an ‘everyone a changemaker world’.”

Learn more about Ashoka:

<https://www.ashoka.org/en-sg/about-ashoka>

Watch Sumitra share her personal journey: <https://youtu.be/dMRSczfpXOM?t=89>

Key takeaways:

- Moments and experiences in your personal life can inform you of the purpose and action you want to make in your life.
- There is a stark difference in approach to innovation between the Global North and Global South.
- Making change can begin with you.

Making Systems Change and Innovation Visible

“I joined Ashoka to make systems change and innovation visible,” said Sumi. To her, the field needed to be lifted and she saw the opportunity in Ashoka to create an abundant network around Southeast Asia.

“That’s when I met Cynthia, and that was the start. So we started making it visible and connecting the lightbulbs in Southeast Asia that were driving big change,” she said.

While Ashoka has had presence in Southeast Asia for 40 years, particularly in Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand, Sumi made some observations about social entrepreneurship and systems change in Southeast Asia in her early days at Ashoka.

According to her, there was a lack of appetite for innovation. So, then the question of “how do we drive bigger change?” emerged. Meanwhile, non-profit organisations in Southeast Asia were mostly left unsupported, whilst coping with unstable political systems hindering progress towards systems change.



There was no funding ecosystem or collective impact system as well. Meanwhile, there would be large philanthropic spaces that would command wealth, but miss out on big, audacious ideas. The disparity is when there are young changemakers making bold moves, but not having funding partners that can walk down the journey of social change with them.

With a situation like this, power is not equally distributed and is not in the hands of the people creating the change or the communities. Instead, power remains in the hands of the wealthmakers. “Eventually I raised money. But because they didn’t understand systems change, innovation or the need for facilitative leadership,” said Sumi.

Eventually, Sumi burnt out in 2017. “Maybe three years ago, I said: well, I don’t get it, you have a group of people with great ideas and great solutions, but how come there isn’t as much funding, partnership and support to make those great ideas visible?”

In that struggle, Sumi began looking into her inner journey in 2018. “I began working on my own inner journey, and my own reason ‘why’ I’m doing this stuff,

what actually gets me here, why am I excited about this,” said Sumi.

“It’s becoming very clear to me that our inner sense of who we are matters, and where are we acting from. Are we acting from this sense of strength? Or are we acting from this deep trauma that I encountered from before?”

“Did I start my organisation because I wanted to belong? Or did I start because I wanted ego and titles and to be seen as the person doing the change?”, said Sumi. That inner work and asking those questions, she believes is what’s important in influencing others and in discovery for impact.



Watch Sumitra talk about the struggle to make systems change visible:

<https://youtu.be/dMRSczfpXOM?t=492>

Key takeaways:

- There is a lack of appetite for systems change in the context of Southeast Asia as nations struggle with unstable governance systems.
- There is disparity in beliefs and value systems between wealthmakers and community movements that make bold moves toward change.

The Qualities in a Facilitative Leader

Having shared her personal journey, Sumi surmises that facilitative leadership requires these three qualities in a person:

1 An inner sense of who we are and what's our intrinsic motivation behind our work

Our inner sense and motivation will affect how we relate to others, the effort and our expectations on results and outcomes. The quality of this factor requires a deep listening to your own self. You might ask yourself:

- Why am I doing the work that I do?
- What is the inner motivation behind the work?

2 A connection to unusual allies

There is a need to bring more unusual allies into every space of conversation. Unusual ally could be a person that you've struggled to bring to the table with you, or someone you might think you are incompatible with.

Creating dialogue with these allies might make them see new strategies and help them see differently, think differently and do differently. These allies can point to the things we don't know that are in our blindspots, or obstacles that hinder progress.

Some questions to reflect on are:

- Who is unusual to me and how do I bring them into the space that I want to create?
- How do I make deep systemic and innovative changes visible to my unusual allies?

3

Make the facilitative approach mainstream

There is a role for anyone that chooses facilitative leadership to make the approach mainstream for all civil society organisations. The approach needs to be practised by all manner of individuals that make up civil society.

Although “partnership”, “collaboration” or “collaborative practices” are popular buzzwords in the changemaking space, there is an observation that people still lack organic, genuine connections. The quality of interaction or interface matters.

Authentic collaboration ensures that partnering individuals or organisations are able to align values and goals to create truly win-win solutions.

Watch The Qualities in a Facilitative Leader:

<https://youtu.be/dMRSczfpXOM?t=1014>

Key takeaways:

- There is a lack of appetite for systems change in the context of Southeast Asia as nations struggle with unstable governance systems.
- There is disparity in beliefs and value systems between wealthmakers and community movements that make bold moves toward change.

Why Facilitative Leadership Matters

Why does facilitative leadership matter? Why is it urgent and why is it pressing? The world is changing at a pace that is unprecedented, and truly exponential. Climate change and technology are part of it. As a result, we can't help but wonder what our role is in these emerging and complicated systems.

As systems get more complex, the facilitative approach iterates the importance to have more conversations that include unusual allies for fast decision-making, and to take self-correcting approaches. Facilitative leadership can pave the path forward and becomes something that more of us can embrace.

Given the role of a facilitative leader, you might want to reflect on:

- How would I get more resource providers or funders to bring more change makers to the table?
- What would it look like to make eye-to-eye conversations with collaborators and partners?
- What does equity look like between yourself and everyone else at the table?

Watch Why Facilitative Leadership Matters:

<https://youtu.be/dMRSczfpXQM?t=1294>

Watch the Q&A with Sumitra: <https://youtu.be/dMRSczfpXQM?t=1405>

SESSION 3

Introduction to Community Building Technology (CBT)

Introduction

Community Building Technology (CBT) is a method of facilitation that attempts to answer the question of how do we build a sense of community, and foster the feelings of compassion, interest and care that could eventually lead to solving problems together. In this session, Cynthia provides a quick overview of the methodology with theory that will guide us toward practice.

Chapters in this lesson:

- 1. Introduction to Community Building Technology***
- 2. Four Stages of Community Building Technology***
- 3. The Importance of Facilitation & Guidelines***
- 4. Community Building Guidelines***

Learning Outcomes

To build a sense of community by fostering compassion, which enhances conflict resolution skills.

Chapters

1. Introduction to Community Building Technology (CBT)

The spirit of community refers to a sense of togetherness that a group of people might have that's not necessarily tied to geographical proximity, location or culture. The methodology itself evolved from many years of studying group experiences which lead to the founding of The Foundation for Community Encouragement in 1984 by psychiatrist M Scott Peck and 11 others.

In his study comprising diverse and random individuals, Peck found that people behave in a particular way when grouped together, and groups will go through similar stages before becoming a community. Thus, there are certain things that one is able to do through facilitation that can guide a group towards a sense of community, even if the group is unable to get there themselves.

“There is a yearning in the heart for peace. Because of the wounds and rejections we have received in past relationships, we are frightened by the risk of disarming ourselves. In our fear, we discount the dream of authentic community as merely visionary. But there are rules by which people can come back together, and by which the old wounds can be healed. It is the mission of FCE to teach these rules-to make hope real again-to make the vision actually manifest in a world which has almost forgotten the glory of what it means to be human.” — *M Scott Peck, Founding Dream*

Learn more about The Foundation for Community Engagement:
<https://www.fce-community.org/>

Watch Introduction to Community Building Technology (CBT):
<https://youtu.be/9OGDGzfV-7w>

2. Four Stages of Community Building Technology (CBT)

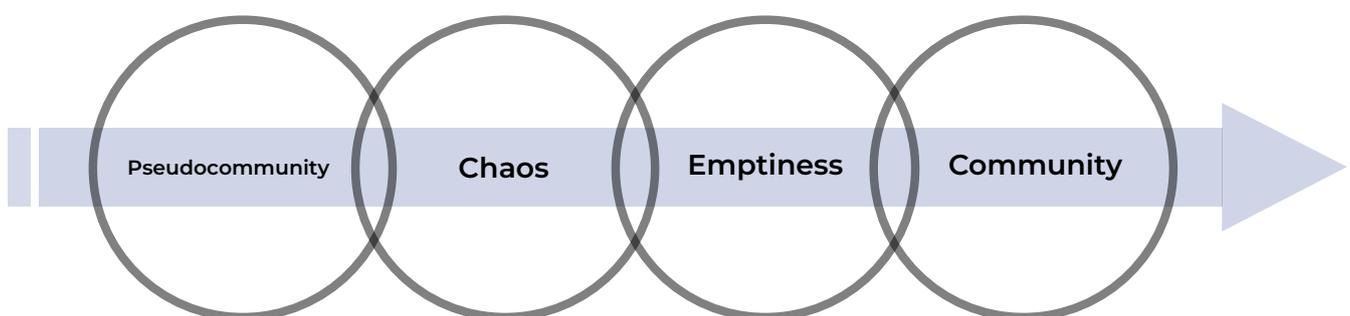


Diagram 4
Four Stages of Community Building Technology

In CBT theory, there are four stages in the process towards the final stage of community. There four stages are:

PSEUDOCOMMUNITY

- In this initial stage, groups pretend that they are already a community or have a false sense of belonging. Individuals in the group tend to have a superficial understanding of differences, thus have no cause for conflict.
- Here, conversations are initiated on a surface level without any meaningful value.
- Some example scenarios would be when people are at a party and engaging in small talk: “Hi! How are you?”, “Yes, I’m okay. My son just entered university.” Or “Hi!”, “Nice dress!”

CHAOS

- After a while, a group will tend to naturally transition into the chaos stage (with or without guidance or facilitation). This stage is where individuals in the group may start feeling uncomfortable and noticing individual differences.
- Reactions to these differences create annoyance, arguments, blame, preaching, and a want to fix and convert mindsets, amongst others.
- M Scott Peck describes this stage as “an irritable and irritating, thoughtless, rapid-fire, and often noisy win/ lose type of process that gets nowhere.”

EMPTINESS

- With facilitation or guidance, a group can transition to the next stage called ‘emptiness’. As a facilitator, the question often is: how can I tip a group over from chaos into emptiness?
- Sometimes in the group process, there may be one person who offers their vulnerability on the ‘altar.’ For example, an individual may speak about a death or loss they have experienced.
- This stage is much deeper, authentic, emotional, vulnerable, spacious, and quiet. The group will experience more silences in between.

- Also, this stage involves the individual emptying the self from judgments, prejudices and expectations which lead to a level of compassion and understanding.

COMMUNITY

- At this point, individuals in the group begin to feel a sense of compassion for one another and a greater level of tacit understanding emerges.
- The atmosphere of the space becomes subtle, softer and comfortable.
- Once a group has learned to build shared literacy, language and understanding of community are able to identify chaos and emptiness, then find their way back to a state of community.

Watch Four Stages of Community Building Technology (CBT):

<https://youtu.be/9OGDGzfV-7w?t=118>

*The content of this chapter is adapted from an excerpt in the book **A World Waiting to be Born** by M. Scott Peck (Bantam Books, New York, 1993).*

3. The Importance of Facilitation & Guidelines

There are only a few things to be certain of in the CBT process that are facilitators are only guides only and the 11 guidelines meant to aid facilitators and communities to move through the four stages of CBT.

The facilitation process is a journey. While it would be great to reach the Community stage, it is better for groups to be able to perceive the characteristics and dynamics of a group at each stage, and endure the transition between stages.

Meanwhile, Pseudocommunity and Chaos stages are natural phenomena, but Emptiness and Community stages require facilitation. In an unguided setting, leaders are more likely to organise communities into compartments and roles as a way to cope with the chaos and disorganisation. It is not bad per se, but it hinders a group from discovering other possibilities.

Facilitating a group to experience all four stages allows each person in the room to turn inward, and go through an inner journey, while holding the hands of others.

4. Community Building Guidelines

The 11 guidelines in Community Building Technology (CBT) are:

- Be on time for each session.
- Say your name before you speak.
- Speak personally and specifically, using “I” statements.
- Be inclusive; avoid exclusivity.
- Express displeasure in the group, not outside the circle.
- Commit to “hang in there.”
- Speak when moved to speak; don’t speak when not moved to speak.
- Be responsible for your success.
- Participate verbally and nonverbally.
- Be emotionally present with the group.
- Respect confidentiality.

Watch The Importance of Facilitation & Guidelines here:

<https://youtu.be/9OGDGzfV-7w?t=850>

Watch Community Building Guidelines here:

<https://youtu.be/9OGDGzfV-7w?t=1241>

SESSION 4 The Practice of Community Building Technology (CBT)

Introduction

In the Practice of Community Building Technology (CBT), we are led into the practice of our facilitation skills using CBT. Activities in this session allow participants to be facilitated, as well as act as facilitators themselves in adherence to the 11 guidelines of CBT. After that, participants convene in a bigger circle to share, discuss and reflect on the facilitation process.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of practice, we will be able to get a sense of how facilitation works, as well as observe the movement of the four stages within CBT.

Lessons and Activities

Activity 2: Preparing for Practice

Aim: In this activity, facilitators will demonstrate to participants facilitation through Community Building Technology (CBT).

Tools: Marker pens, mahjong paper, laptop, LCD projector and screen

Facilitation note:

As a facilitator, you may use this opportunity to learn or revise on CBT techniques. Meanwhile, it's important to remember that in CBT, the role of the facilitator is to hold space for participants to take the reins. As much as possible, facilitators do not intervene in the group process, but take a step back instead.

Facilitation Instructions:

1. Before beginning the CBT demonstration, facilitators will need to create posters for the 11 CBT guidelines. You may choose to write the guidelines on mahjong paper and stick it on a board or project the guidelines onto a screen. Keep the guidelines visible throughout the entire session.

2. Next, set the space by arranging chairs or cushions in a circle. As much as possible, be mindful that everyone in the circle will be able to see and sense each other's presence.

Facilitation note:

Sitting in a circle is a subtle cue for people to let their guards down and promotes a sense of inclusivity and equality. In a circular seating arrangement, everyone can see each other. And unlike sitting in rows, you cannot hide behind another person.

3. Ideally, you will have two other co-facilitators, which makes a total of three persons holding the space. Any more than three persons is too many.

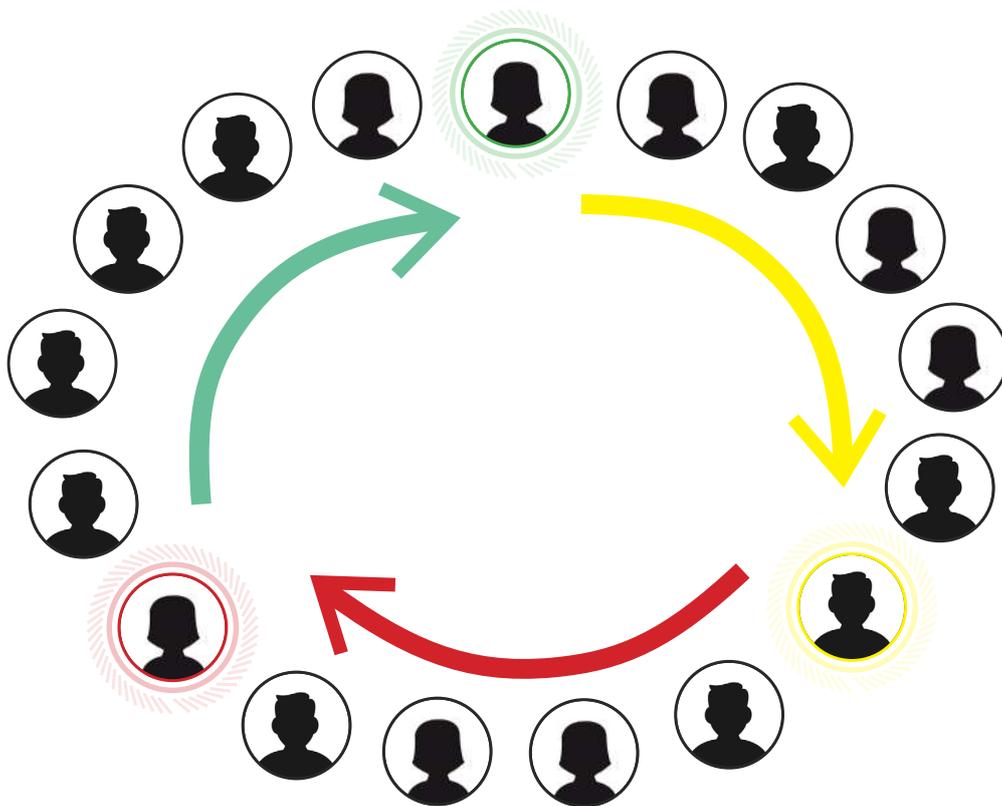


Diagram 5

The ideal seating arrangement for facilitators in CBT

4. In the circle, co-facilitators will have to sit apart but still be able to see each other. Each facilitator is assigned to about $\frac{1}{3}$ of participants.
5. The first facilitator will begin the demonstration by welcoming everyone to the space.

6. Next, you and your co-facilitators should offer a brief overview of what will happen in the space. Here are some things you and your co-facilitators can say:
 - Offer a short explanation of what you and your co-facilitators have done to set the space (in reference to Steps 1 to 4).
 - Read aloud the CBT guidelines and let participants know that the guidelines ought to be respected.
 - Indicate that the space is open to participants, and that it is a safe space to be vulnerable.
7. The entire demonstration should not take more than 10 minutes

Facilitation note:

It's important in the demonstration, for you as facilitator, to adhere to CBT guidelines as well. That means saying your name before you begin to speak, even if it is to explain a matter to participants.

Activity 3: Getting Into Practice

Aim: In this activity, participants will become facilitators using the CBT methodology. Each group is to spend an hour facilitating their own session based on the assigned topic.

Time for this activity: 8-10 hours



Facilitation note:

It's best to allocate a full day to conduct this activity as it is time intensive. At the same time, facilitators should take note that it is normal for participants to experience heightened emotional awareness as they move through the four stages of community.

Facilitation note:

Before the start of this activity, you and your co-facilitators should have arranged participants into eight groups of two-three persons based on **Activity 1: What Do We Care About?** (see: page 17). There should be two groups assigned under one topic, while each topic will constitute its own session. The groupings will look something like this:

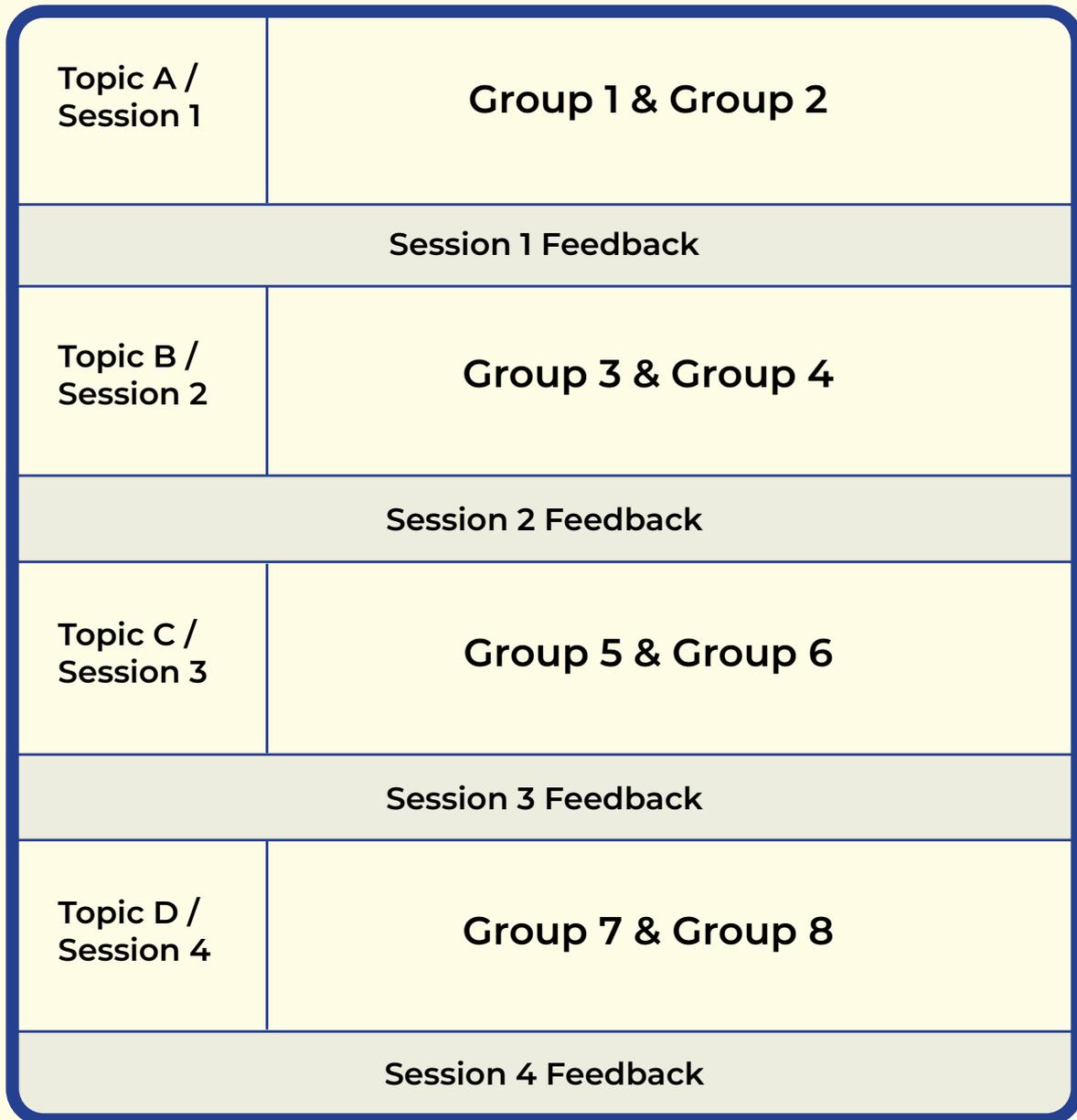


Diagram 6

Each group should have at least an hour to facilitate, while feedback can be 30 minutes or more.

Facilitation Instructions:

1. Before participants take on the role of facilitators, they should be notified of their assigned groups a day before practice.
2. Participants should be given time to prepare for their respective sessions as facilitators. The time provided for preparation may differ from group to group, but it should not be less than an hour.

Facilitation note:

As a facilitator, you may invite participants to approach you as they prepare to conduct their own session. Meanwhile, it is important for participants to know that they do not need to be “content experts” on their assigned topics, but instead be able to hold space and practice deep listening.

3. Next, instruct participants to be responsible for setting the space as in **Activity 2: Preparing for Practice**. Remind participants that there is no need to bring pens, paper or laptops to take notes for CBT practice. Instead, everyone should only bring themselves to the circle.
4. Each group will be provided with an hour to facilitate. Therefore, each session should run up to two hours. (Refer to Diagram 6 above for sequencing.)
5. After each session is done, allocate 30 minutes or more for the facilitating group to receive feedback from other groups.
6. Once every group has completed, reconvene as a large group to discuss and reflect on the facilitation process.
7. Some questions you, as a facilitator, may ask the large group are:
 - Was it easy or difficult to adhere to the CBT guidelines? Why?
 - Were you able to feel the group move from the pseudo-community stage to emptiness?
 - What are your personal reflections on being a participant versus being a facilitator?

Watch a brief process of Activity 2 and 3 here:

<https://youtu.be/OTvfAHtMGeg>

Notes on facilitation:

- CBT is not about leadership. It is about holding space. Therefore, a facilitator should become “invisible” as the group moves through the four stages of CBT.
- Aside from its guidelines, be mindful that CBT is not a strict process and facilitators are allowed to have different styles of facilitation.
- When in session, facilitators can remove their facilitator hat to express their opinions or feelings. But this should only happen very rarely as a facilitator’s singular role is to remind participants of the 11 CBT guidelines.
- Facilitation is not a practice of being a moderator as in a forum or seminar. A facilitator is to hold the hands of all participants as they explore the space.
- Silence is normal, sometimes even necessary. Do not attempt to fill the silence. Instead, commit to hanging in the emptiness, or the “abyss.”
- You will find that the more sophisticated a group is, the less intervention is needed from a facilitator.



SESSION 5

Facilitating Conversations Using Open Space Technology (OST)

Introduction

In this session, we get a more in-depth overview of Open Space Technology (OST). Like Community Building Technology (CBT), OST is a method of facilitation that also has little structure and is guided by only four principles and a single 'law'.

Chapters in this lesson:

- 1. Introduction to Open Space Technology (OST)**
- 2. Four Principles of Open Space Technology (OST)**
- 3. The Law of Two Feet**
- 4. Bumblebee & Butterfly**

Learning Outcomes

In this session, we take part in the OST process to learn its principles and function.

Chapters

Introduction to Open Space Technology (OST)

In the mid-1980s, consultant Harrison Owen founded Open Space Technology (OST) after he observed that participants attending his conferences showed more creativity and energy during coffee breaks, outside the formal session. Thus, OST was conceptualised to carry meetings that resembled "one large coffee break" where people were free to enter or leave a discussion at will.

OST meetings are the opposite of rigid and structured. It describes itself as dynamic and fluid, while the methodology can withstand the participation of five to more than 2,000 people. Its strengths are that it is flexible, so anyone is free to set any kind of agenda; it allows participants to be creative; it allows crossover between views, ideas, opinions and sectors; and builds a sense of community.

The process is only guided by four principles and one law, which we will get into later on. Meanwhile, the process requires an allowance in time for participants to take as long (or as little) as they need to expend or release energy and effort. Depending on the number of participants, this process requires a lot of space for participants to break out into groups in a function called “The Marketplace.” We will discover, too, some roles that a person may take on in this process.

The Four Principles of Open Space Technology (OST)

The OST process is guided by four principles which simply are:

Whoever comes is the right people.	The group present is always the right group. There is little to worry about whether or not the “right person” is contributing, or not at all. Everyone’s participation is valuable, and every view is welcomed.
Whatever happens is the only thing that could have.	This principle is a reminder to be present and let go of expectations. More often than not, it is easy to get caught up in achievement-focused gridlock. But nothing is ever predictable, so be prepared to be positively surprised instead. Trust the process.
Whenever it starts is the right time.	While this principle may seem antithetical to conventional wisdom of “be punctual”, it is a reminder to the statement that learning and creativity can happen anytime, anywhere. Things will start when they are ready, and whenever ‘it happens’ is the right time.
When it is over, it is over.	Naturally people are able to sense ‘the end’ or a finality to situations and things. How often do we sit in meetings to only feel the tension of boredom and unease? If an end comes early, let it be. There is no reason to waste time after a moment has passed.

The Law of Two Feet

The Law of Two Feet states that everyone has two feet, so it is up to each participant to use their feet and responsibly. Therefore, the success of any open space event is dependent on the participation of each and everyone.

Some things to remember with the Law of Two Feet are:

- Be prepared to use your feet.
- Take your feet where you feel you may contribute. Move to a place where you can make a difference.
- If you must depart, do it after honouring the people you have met and the space that you have occupied.



Diagram 7
The Law of Two Feet

Bumblebee and Butterfly

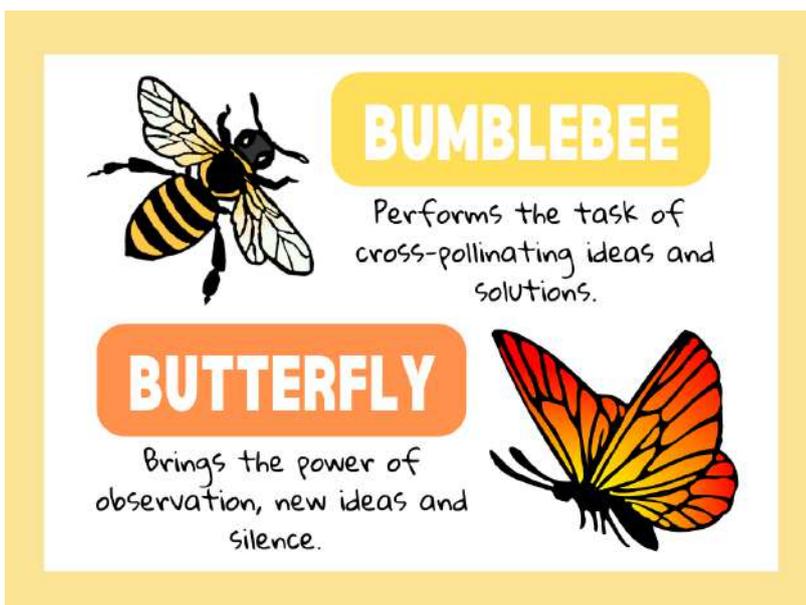


Diagram 8
Bumblebee and Butterfly

There are certain roles that people, quite naturally, take on in any kind of social situation or event. OST describes two such roles as being the “Bumblebee” or “Butterfly”. These are not fixed, and any person can interchange between these two roles.

Bumblebee: These are persons that fly from group to group, and just like the 'bumblebee', they cross-pollinate ideas and discussions. Those in this role are busy, curious and interested. The metaphor is used to encourage movement and suggests that ideas are carried from one group to another to create new thoughts or solutions.

Butterfly: These are the listeners in the group or may sit out a session. Just like butterflies, they float around as interesting conversations emerge around them. The role of the butterfly reminds us that there is power in silence and observation. While not explicitly talking, butterflies carry deep thoughts to add to the pool of ideas and small input from them can be transformative in nature.

Meanwhile, a third role, **“The Host”** or **“Initiate”** emerges from this process as well, as we will learn during the practice of OST (see: Activity 4, page 42). This person will play a function when setting the agenda and act as convener for a discussion to take place.



Read more:

- [“A Brief User’s Guide to Open Space Technology | OpenSpaceWorld.ORG”](#) by Harrison Owen.
- [“OPEN SPACE TECHNOLOGY NOTES”](#) by Michael Lindfield.
- [“Open Space Technology”](#) by Meadowlark Institute.
- Owen, Harrison. Open Space Technology: A User’s Guide. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2008.

Lessons and Activities

Activity 4: The Marketplace

Aim: In this activity, we will learn the process and function behind Open Space Technology (OST) through direct participation.

Tools: Whiteboard, marker pens, paper and mahjong paper

Facilitation Instructions:

Facilitation note:

In OST, “The Marketplace” is a key feature that describes participant-led breakout sessions that all happen at the same time. In this way, participants get to practise their respective roles as Bumblebee or Butterfly, as well as The Law of Two Feet.

Facilitation note:

Before beginning, facilitators should have set a theme or topic for the Open Space event. It is up to facilitators to allow a session for participants to choose their theme, or fulfil the prerequisite by deciding on a theme beforehand.

In the context of our programme on 18–20 Jan, we decided on the topic of “Mental Health.” However, understand that this activity within this programme should be about the practice of facilitation, rather than being a generative discussion on the topic.

1. To set up “The Marketplace”, facilitators will create posters with the Four Principles, the Law of Two Feet and the Bumblebee and Butterfly and post them where it is visible for everyone to see.
2. On a whiteboard, facilitators will list down all the venues and/or spaces available for The Marketplace breakout sessions.
3. To begin, facilitators will describe to participants the theme of the gathering today, but make no mention of an agenda.
4. Next, facilitators will open the floor for participants to set the agenda. In this step, facilitators are to provide a few moments for participants to list down the issues on paper they would like to discuss under the topic of the gathering.

Facilitation note:

Once the floor is open to participants, the facilitator's goal is to provide space for them to self-manage the entire affair. The facilitator's only role at this point is to coordinate logistics—that is to make sure there are enough rooms and time for the breakout sessions to take place.

5. At this point, the roles of participants will begin to emerge.
6. Instruct those that have taken up the role of “host” or “convener” to give their agenda a short title and pick a room for their discussion to take place.
7. Other participants will naturally take on the role of “bumblebee” or “butterfly” once the breakout sessions begin.
8. Invite each host to stand up in front of the group, say what their issue is and where and when it will take place. Ask the host to post that paper to the wall.

Facilitation note:

Alternatively, facilitators can introduce the “Community Bulletin Board” instead of having each group physically present their ideas. With the “Community Bulletin Board”, groups will write down the content of their discussion in bulletin format and post it onto a board for everyone to see. This format may work for much larger groups of over 50 people. Groups can be flexible in adopting any method, so long as the results of discussion are recorded and presented.

9. Provide hosts with marker pens and mahjong papers. Remind hosts that they will be responsible for taking down notes through the discussion that they will have.
10. Once all the issues are up, invite the rest of the participants to sign up for as many or as little sessions as they want within a reasonable timeframe. You may say: “The Marketplace is now open. Everybody is invited to join as many groups as you wish. From this moment on, you are in charge.”



Watch Facilitating Conversations with Open Space Technology (OST):
<https://youtu.be/qv9Bzem1PI8>

Watch Activity 4: The Marketplace here:
<https://youtu.be/gDARfUT7mZQ>

SESSION 6

An Introduction to Facilitation Tools

Introduction

In this session, facilitator Carmela Ariza shares her views on Open Space Technology (OST) and introduces us to the concept of “The Groan Zone” in group dynamics. In short, “The Groan Zone” is typically a time when groups face difficulties in working together. Following that, Carmela shares three tools or approaches to facilitate teams and/ or groups out of “The Groan Zone” and into a harmonious place. Finally, she ends her session with a personal story of how facilitation has helped her growth as a person.

Chapters in this lesson:

- 1. *More Perspective On Open Space Technology (OST)***
- 2. *Building Shared Understanding: What is “The Groan Zone”?***
- 3. *Facilitation Tool #1: Finding Out The Grey Areas***
- 4. *Facilitation Tool #2: Delegation Poker***
- 5. *Facilitation Tool #3: Energy Mapping***
- 6. *How I Grow with Facilitative Leadership: A Personal Story by Carmela Ariza***

Learning Outcomes

In addition to learning more about Open Space Technology (OST), this session will equip us with tools that can help in our practice of facilitation.

Chapters

More Perspective On Open Space Technology (OST)

As we learned briefly in the previous Session 5, Open Space Technology, or OST, is a methodology of facilitation that allows participants to create and set the agenda themselves. According to Carmela, OST can also be described as a philosophy as participants liberate themselves from the idea of needing to be “managed.”

Some other characteristics to describe OST are:

- OST is very freeing for the individual, and it is not a method that is restrictive. For example: OST can allow a person to take a nap during the process. As such, a person can wait for the inspiration to arise, before

rejoining the larger group.

- In contrast to other approaches, participation in OST is open and free-for-all, and that includes the choice for participants to leave when they want to. Whereas for other approaches, participation is usually structured and there are strict rules for leaving.

Carmela uses Dr Doolittle as an analogy to describe facilitation. According to her, facilitation feels a lot like what Dr Doolittle does as the 'cast of characters' in a room are extremely diverse. Different species of animals are interacting. Yet, they can understand each other.

"It's the same with humans. We are so diverse and it's so hard to bring all of us together to come to a point of shared understanding, shared meaning, shared values, shared direction, shared vision, shared goals and etcetera. And that's where facilitators step in."

Building Shared Understanding: What is "The Groan Zone"?

TOOLS FOR BUILDING A SHARED FRAMEWORK OF UNDERSTANDING The "Groan Zone"

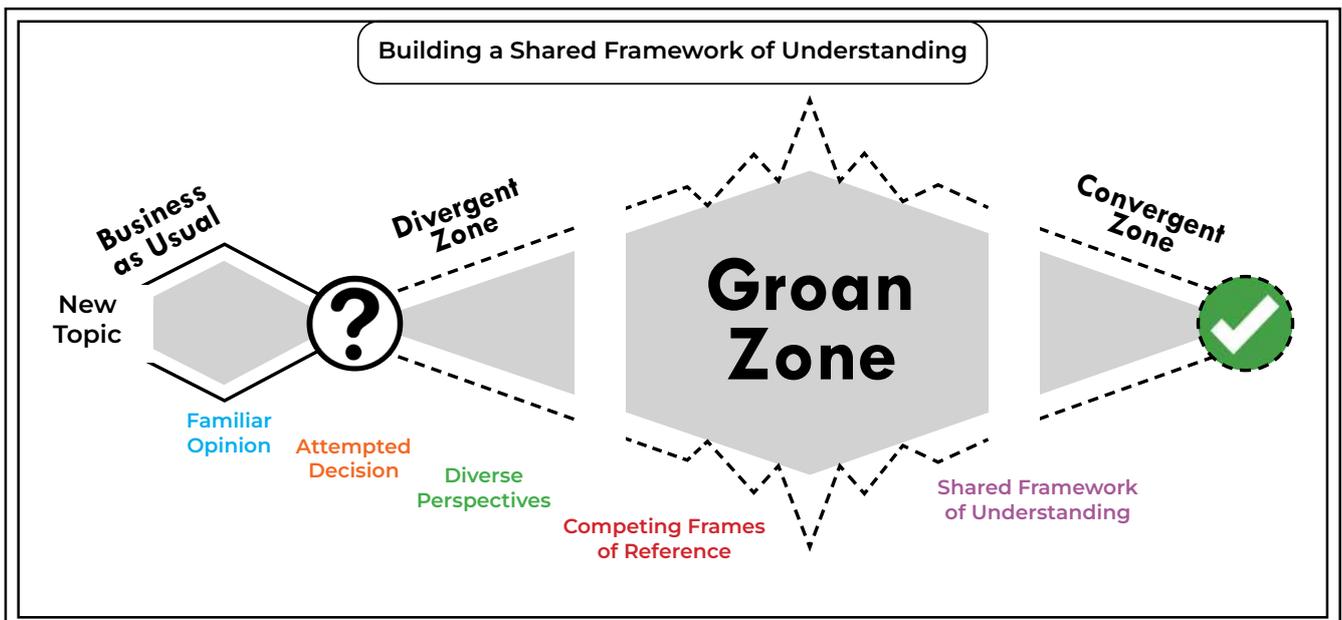


Diagram 9

"The Groan Zone" is the unpleasant space that exists between people in groups before they can share an understanding.

Based on “The Facilitator’s Guide to Participatory Decision-Making” by Sam Kaner, Carmela describes two different zones a group enters during a decision making process which are “The Divergent Zone” and “The Convergent Zone”, respectively.

The Divergent Zone

- The Divergent Zone happens at the beginning of a business discussion and this is where there is a diversity of opinions and views—a divergence.
- This is a zone characterised by it being ‘business as usual’, and where most solutions or proposals that emerge here are typically unstable.

The Convergent Zone

- Therefore, a group would want to seek convergence or enter The Convergent Zone, where they have found common ground.

Between The Divergent and Convergent Zones is The Groan Zone. The biggest question that facilitators will have is: how do you cross The Groan Zone from the Divergent Zone to reach The Convergent Zone? There is no shortcut.

The Groan Zone is stressful and uncomfortable. It is the experience of groups where some are grinding their teeth, over-mulling a situation, emotional and angry. Many projects end prematurely because of The Groan Zone.

Yet, The Groan Zone is a normal part of the process. And those that can tolerate The Groan Zone are far more likely to reach The Convergent Zone and discover resolution. Meanwhile, there are some facilitation tools that we can use to guide us towards The Convergent Zone.

What happens in the Groan Zone when the differences are between people? Do you have to resolve it first then go back on the path of Convergence or leave that personal issue first to one side?

If interpersonal issues surface in the discussion, the group actually has to decide if this has to be tackled as a group or bilaterally or between the two persons or whoever who are involved on their own. As a facilitator, I’m just a midwife you know. I am helping people give birth, or give birth to their ideas, rather, opinions and solutions and I’m not the one to decide. But if this comes up as one of the concerns then you can facilitate the group to decide on whether the issue is to be addressed together with a manager or they should deal with this on their own. But if this issue affects the work of the others and this becomes

a collective issue then you may use it as an opportunity to discuss as a team and use facilitation tools to help you understand the “Groan Zone.”

Watch Conversation with Carmela | Q&A:

<https://youtu.be/WKYJe80A-lo?t=2900>

Watch Building Shared Understanding: What is The Groan Zone?:

<https://youtu.be/WKYJe80A-lo?t=214>

Facilitation Tool 1: Finding Out The Grey Areas

Participants in a group often assume that there is shared understanding when working on a project together that often leads to conversations that start with “this is what you said in the last meeting.” In situations like this, Carmela’s tool was to get project partners to list out the grey areas to help the groups to thresh out issues.

For example, Carmela was facilitating a project team that worked with cacao. The project was targeting between 100,000–150,000 cacao farmers to increase their income, productivity and eventually become organic-certified.

But since the inception of the project, the project partners were stuck in The Groan Zone. They were not progressing for a very long time and had many issues. “As a facilitator, I found it was so heavy every time I had meetings with them,” said Carmela.

As a facilitator, the approach you can take is to ask project partners, independently of each other, to list down all the grey areas in the project. After the exercise, you as facilitator would consolidate the feedback onto a document and use that as a point of reference to guide the group back into a cooperative space.

The questions a facilitator may ask the group can be:

- What are the topics that are unclear to them?
- What do you understand about what the other person has said?
- What is the decision on the topic?
- What requires a discussion and/or agreement?
- What are the implications and/or possible consequences if the groups are in disagreement over a topic or issue?

What is unclear for project partners is part of The Groan Zone. What Carmela found is that The Groan Zone is very powerful in building shared understanding, therefore imperative to make it part of the group process. What emerges through the process is a lot of 'a-ha moments'.

Watch Carmela describe Facilitation Tool #1 Finding the Grey Areas:
<https://youtu.be/WKYJe80A-Io?t=586>

Facilitation Tool 2: Delegation Poker



Delegation Poker is a simple card game that groups can play to determine decision-making processes.

Delegation Poker is a simple tool to help teams decide who should make decisions and at what level should those decisions be made. The simplicity of the tool allows Delegation Poker to be used in many different scenarios.

Delegation Poker describes seven ways to make a decision, which are:

<p>TELL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager tells the team what to do with no input from team members. • Manager decides, then informs the team.
<p>SELL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager decides, then informs the team to persuade them into a decision. • Still no input from the team. • Role of a manager is to just persuade the team of his/her decision.

CONSULT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager makes a decision only after gathering the team's input.
AGREE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team and manager discuss, then decide together.
ADVISE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team decides only after gathering the manager's input.
ENQUIRE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enquire is the opposite of Selling. • Team decides and persuades the manager on the decision.
DELEGATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The manager fully delegates all tasks to the team, and the team decides. • There is no input or participation from the manager.

Why and How to Use Delegation Poker:

The Groan Zone can happen because of different perspectives on how a decision should be delegated, and to what extent people have to be involved. This kind of dynamic hinders a group from progressing.

Delegation Poker is a useful exercise to determine when and how members of a group want to be involved in a decision making process. It can be used in a scenario as simple as the planning of a Christmas party where the manager wants out on the planning, but the team have agreed that it should be a team-and-manager effort, for example.

Depending on the scenario, each scenario can create a spread of different choices. With this understanding, facilitators can guide the group back into a consensus on the process.

Watch Carmela describe Facilitation Tool #2 Delegation Poker:

<https://youtu.be/WKYJe80A-lo?t=818>

Facilitation Tool 3: Energy Mapping

Two types of situations exist in a team setting. There are situations that increase the energy of a team, such as when you're having parties and everyone's having fun. Maybe when someone is caring for your personal needs and wellbeing. Or when the finance team is quick in processing your cash advance requests.

Conversely, the other type of situations are those that decrease the energy of the team. It could be the central office, finance or admin are so rigid in their processes that they are unable to understand that it is difficult for field coordinators to produce receipts. Or any such kind of situation that brings up levels of stress and frustration.

As a facilitator, one tool to help is to have project teams describe what types of situations they face that can increase or decrease their energy, which affects productivity. Your role as a facilitator, then, is to analyse the feedback.

Here are steps to map the energy of your project teams:

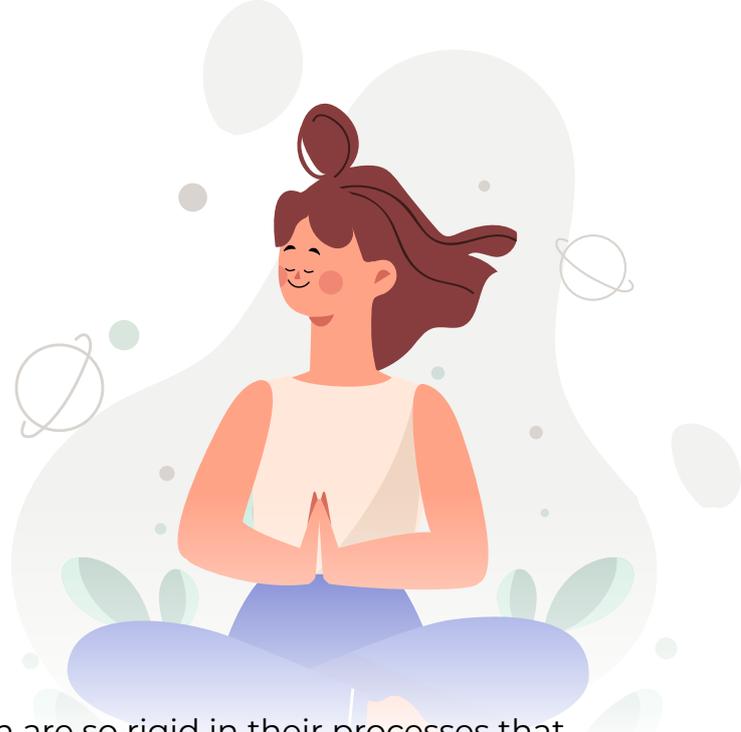
Step 1: Describe the situation.

Step 2: Name the factors, people, constellations and dynamics that add or take away energy.

Step 3: Determine the impact and end result.

Step 4: Ask if the positive impact is transferable to other situations or context. In a situation that takes away energy or has a negative impact, ask if it is a one-time occurrence or likely to happen again.

Step 5: Ask, what can the team do to sustain the positive impact/ energy?



Watch Carmela describe Facilitation Tool #3 Energy Mapping:
<https://youtu.be/WKYJe80A-lo?t=1354>

How I Grow with Facilitative Leadership: A Personal Story by Carmela Ariza

“I will be a hypocrite if I say that it does not offer benefits, in terms of positive things, that help me grow,” said Carmela, when asked about her work as a facilitator. “It’s not a very rosy answer, like ‘I want to save the world’”, she added.

For Carmela, she believes her practice is what helps her grow personally and spiritually through meeting different people around the globe and by listening to their success stories. She draws inspiration from these connections.

Recently, Carmela had facilitated a strategic planning session for a large university in Mindanao, the Philippines. On that note, she said: “I just learned that by helping others people in their journey, like in that example, I’m able to help put together, including myself, our thoughts, our visions, our dreams, for the university, for the students, for the academic sector, for the Philippines and because their vision includes ASEAN, for the region and beyond.”



Her work in facilitation is driven by the view that she can help bring together people that can envision a world that is inclusive, and that is helping vulnerable communities. In that sense, she is also growing in the values that she wants to nurture in herself.

“I think the world needs a lot of compassion and my work is helping point the flashlight, shine the beam on certain issues and topics that need the attention to certain groups and people. And that’s where I see my role is now,” she said.

She believes that facilitation, too, is to increase wisdom in the world as it provides the opportunity to answer the question of ‘whose side are you on.’ Instead of being neutral, she says that you can be multipartial as a facilitator because a facilitator is there to give a voice to both sides of the table.

“I say ‘multi-partial’ because I give a chance to everyone to share their voice and views. Maybe in that way I can increase compassion because I allow people to be heard. It’s difficult as a facilitator because you know that you also have your own values and advocacies,” she said.

Trust is also very important, Carmela says. She is happy to serve if a client can trust that she can journey with them through the process. “In my experience, you can really help in this job—to help people come together and to resolve issues and to give voice to what needs to be heard in this world. In this suffering world, we need a lot of compassion,” she said.

A note on climate change and biodiversity loss from Carmela:

“I think the issue of biodiversity loss is so great. I feel like Leo Di Carpio in Don’t Look Up shouting, like how can we make people hear and listen that we cannot thrive when biodiversity loss is just continuing. This one makes me cry. For example, we just had a big typhoon here in the Philippines. In fact, we are staying at a hotel because the lifeline services are not back yet, nor electricity, Internet or water. So, the issue of the increasing intensity of typhoons is real and the impact on humanity is very much felt. To add to this is the COVID-19 pandemic.

The effects of climate change and biodiversity loss are real issues. But I don’t know how our decision makers, leaders and business people are taking this. Because this is not a problem in just one place or one group of people that experiences it.

So, I think we should go back to ourselves and ask ourselves what is important. What is really important in your work? How does your work contribute not just for yourself, but for the children because whatever we do, they will inherit.” — Carmela Ariza

SESSION 7

Advocating for Your Wellbeing

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic and isolation measures have led to poorer mental health across the board, thus necessitating us to find ways to advocate for our own wellbeing. Meanwhile, after having gone through the skills to become a facilitative leader, participants are invited to this session to reflect on their support systems with the question of how do we take care of ourselves in order to sustain our respective journeys as changemakers? The question, too, necessitated an exploration of community and where we are as a community.

Through a series of exercises, participants identify their own web of support, then later create their own support pods and visualise how these “support pods” interface in the larger Forever Sabah network and what that could mean for us. At the end of the session, we spend some solo time reflecting on our past and emerging selves in a short journaling practice.

Chapters in this lesson:

- 1. Activity 5: Identifying Your Own Web of Support**
- 2. Activity 6: Mapping Your Support Pod**
- 3. Activity 7: Envisioning Greater Support**
- 4. Activity 8: The Field of Journaling Practice**

Learning Outcomes

We learn how to improve our wellbeing and strengthen resilience through exercises in reflecting on, identifying and creating our own support networks. Later, we use journaling as a reflective tool in accessing a deeper level of self-reflection and knowledge.

Chapters

Activity 5: Identifying Your Own Web of Support



Aim: We ask who are the people that dwell in key areas of our lives to visualise our own personal support systems. This reflection will help us create our own support network across an organisation in Activity 6 & 7.

Tools: A4 paper, colour pens & markers

Optional:

Facilitators would consider to prep the participants with a simple meditation or breathing exercise. This allows them to sharpen their five senses and enhance mindfulness to better prepare in assessing their lives.

1. As this session directly addresses the issue of mental health, facilitators can begin by explaining the importance of taking care of our own wellbeing and reaching out to others for support.

Facilitation note:

In Step 1, facilitators can introduce the concept of a Support Pod, which functions much like a support group.

At Forever Sabah, the idea of a Support Pod was conceptualised as a platform to build support systems for project teams and partners.

In this session, the guided exercises Identifying Your Own Support Pod, Mapping Your Support Pod, Envisioning Greater Support, and The Field of Future Journaling are meant to kickstart a support network function that can evolve beyond this programme and create a sense of community.

2. In our lives, we depend on others for many things. For example, to meet our social needs, to vent, to get a sense of safety, finances, legal help, etc. As a facilitator, you will guide participants into understanding this aspect of our

individual lives.

3. Next, guide participants to identify which individuals in their lives that can offer or have offered these varieties of support. Spend a few minutes in this reflection.
4. Lastly, invite participants to share their reflections on the exercise.

Activity 6: Mapping Your Support Pod

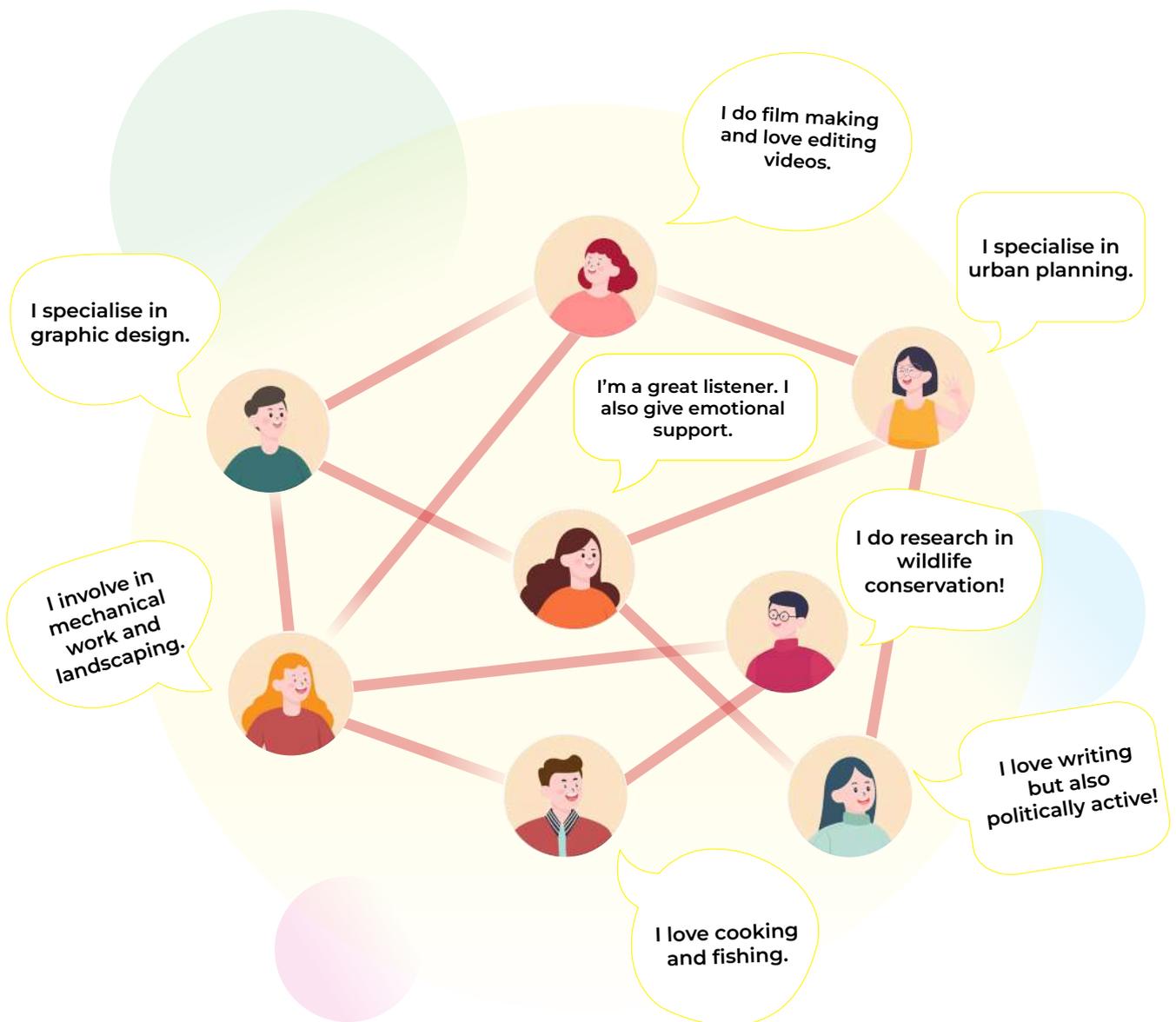


Diagram 10
Support Pod or Sup-Pod

Aim: After knowing what our personal support systems look like, we reflect on our own strengths and make an assessment on what we can offer to others. Then, we illustrate ourselves within a small support group.

Tools: Mahjong paper, markers, coloured pens

Facilitation note:

In this process, facilitators can gently remind participants about both the importance of reaching out to others and to give back by supporting others. Make note of how everyone is different and each person is on their own unique journey of self-discovery. Guide participants into realising their own individual talents and reaffirming their own self-worth.

1. Facilitators are to divide participants into several groups of up to six persons.
2. Then, each group is given a mahjong paper and several colour pens and permanent markers.
3. Get participants to draw, write or illustrate what they can offer to the group, while encouraging discussion amongst themselves. Encourage this exercise as the beginnings of their Support Pods.
4. Participants are free to express what they can offer to the group. This includes:
 - Personality/ characteristics (friendly, empathetic, listener, mature, giving advice, good companion)
 - Professional capacity (administrative, designing, legal work, leadership, management, elephant trekking, etc)
 - Hobbies/ skills (cooking, fishing, pottery, landscaping, watching movies, wall climbing, etc)
5. Generate a conversation through the illustration on what support was offered and how it can be helpful to themselves or others.
6. Lastly, encourage each group to present their illustration and any reflections on the process.

Activity 7: Envisioning Greater Support



Aim: We integrate learnings from Activities 5 & 6 in order to visualise greater support and connection for teams and communities within the context of Forever Sabah.

Tools: Sticky tape

1. All groups are guided to make a space in the middle of the room, and perceive the empty space as a future that we would like to envision and manifest.
2. Facilitators instruct participants to bring all of their illustrations from the previous Activity 6: Mapping Your Support Pod. Get participants to place the mahjong paper illustrations side-by-side up to the creativity of everyone involved, as long as the illustrations make one big picture.
3. Afterwards, all participants are invited to get into the space and stand in a circle around the illustrative work.
4. While walking in a slow circle, facilitators will guide them to read and reflect on the illustrations done by everyone. As a facilitator, you may use your creativity to aid participants in envisioning their place within this larger web.

Facilitation note:

In this process, facilitators can remind participants of the smaller group process involved in the previous activity. Gently guide participants to bring that same mindset to this activity and to use that same visualisation process, but for a bigger scale. The intention is to show participants the possibility of a wider net of support and begin envisioning a community within Forever Sabah.

5. Finally, participants are to go back to their seats. At this moment, facilitators give space for them to share their thoughts and reflection throughout the entire process since the Activity 5: Identifying Your Own Web of Support.

Facilitation note:

In this process, while giving participants space to share, facilitators should be mindful of the importance of silence, which can allow participants to breathe vibrancy into their thoughts and reflections. Allow them the moment to dwell on the idea of having a Support Pod.

Activity 8: The Field of Journaling Practice



Aim: This guided journaling exercise is meant to allow participants to step into a deeper level of reflection as questions are crafted to allow communication with past and emerging selves.

Tools: Notebook or paper, pen

Facilitation note:

It is highly recommended to program this as a closing activity to end the programme in a presencing state of mind to bring the current self into the future.

Facilitation note:

In this process, facilitators emphasise on the answers that emerge immediately on the participants' mind. It is to ensure participants reflect as they write instead of thinking critically. Therefore, gently remind them to write as soon as the answers come up. Do not give a question too much time to answer and instead allow it to just flow.

1. Instruct participants to find a quiet space for themselves, distancing a few metres from one another, in an area that allows them to have a space to walk two metres in front of them.
2. Ask participants to sit down and get comfortable with their chosen space.
3. Read the set of questions slowly and clearly. Pause after each question to allow participants to note their answers. You can find the set of questions below:

1 Over the past days and weeks, what did you notice about your emerging self and what is wanting to be born?

2 What did you notice about wanting to be born in your context or community?

3 What about your current work and/or personal life frustrates you the most?

4 What about your current work and life inspires and energises you the most?

5 Watch yourself from above (as if in a helicopter). What are you doing? What are you trying to do in this stage of your professional and personal journey?

6 Watch your collective journey from above: what are you trying to do collectively in the present stage of your collective journey?

7 Look at your current situation from the viewpoint of you as a young person, at the beginning of your journey: What does that young person have to say to you?

8 Imagine you could fast-forward to the very last moments of your life, when it is time for you to pass on. Now look back on your life's journey as a whole. What would you want to see at that moment? What footprint do you want to leave behind on the planet?

9 From that future point of view: What advice have you given to your current self?

10 Now return again to the present and crystallise what it is that you want to create: your vision and intention for the next 3-5 years. What vision and intention do you have for yourself and your work? What are some essential core elements of the future that you want to create in your personal, professional, and social life? Describe or draw as concretely as possible the images and elements that occur to you.

11 What is our collective highest future possibility? What could we be an instrument for? What could we collectively create within the next 3-5 years?

12 What would you have to let go of in order to bring your vision into reality? What is the old stuff that must die? What is the old skin (behaviours, assumptions, etc.) that you need to shed?

13 Where do you find the seeds of tomorrow in your context and environment NOW?

14 Over the next three months, if you were to prototype a microcosm of the future in which you could discover "the new" by doing something, what would that prototype look like?

15 Who can help you make your highest future possibilities a reality? Who might be your core helpers and partners?

16 If you were to take on the project of bringing your intention into reality, what practical first steps would you take over the next 3 days?

4. After the journaling session, kindly ask the participants to stand up and make sure that there are no obstacles in front of them and that they are able to walk a few feet safely.
5. After the safety check, ask participants to close their eyes. Facilitators describe an imaginative door in front of them whilst closing their eyes, and describe the door as a portal to the future.
6. From here, facilitators ask participants to reflect whether they are ready to step into the door as they step into the future.
7. Lastly, facilitators should note that they can step into the future anytime when they feel ready by walking a few steps forward whilst imagining themselves opening the imaginative door.
8. After a while, facilitators can instruct participants to open their eyes slowly and be relaxed.

Watch the process of Activity 6, 7 and 8 here:

<https://youtu.be/uCGWO6FmC2A>

Watch Activity 8: The Field of Future Journaling here:

<https://youtu.be/RhxTNTCjCJo>

The Field of the Future Journaling Practice is adapted from the Presencing Institute's Theory U toolkit. You may explore further here:

[Tool: Field of the Future Journaling Practice](#)

Appendix

List of resources and materials referenced in this coursebook including access links (if any), in order of mention:

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Power To The People

6-8 DECEMBER

Archetypes & The Hero's Journey

7-9 NOVEMBER

Decolonizing the Psyche & Knowledge

12-14 SEPTEMBER

Living Seascapes, Sharks & Rays

22-24 AUGUST

Segama, Water, Women & Wellbeing

17-21 OCTOBER

Cultural Revival

JUNE





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