

PRINCIPLES OF *Design*

DESIGN: AN INTENTIONAL SERIES OF DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES OR EVENTS WHICH MOVE THE GROUP TOWARDS CONSCIOUS GOALS

Everything a leader does should be intentional.

The facilitator should be constantly aware of the impact of his/her choices on the group, and of the consequences of design decisions.

GOOD DESIGN IMPLIES:

Clear and articulated goals.

Shared risk and involvement.

Ongoing diagnosis of the group in its evolution, and a constant sensitivity to the basic needs of the members.

Intentional and developmental sequencing: build up, climax, closure.

The involvement of the group in an interactive process with the facilitator.

Flexibility to ensure that the design is right for the group's needs NOW!

Variations in structure, pace, setting, energy level, group size, facilitator style, group vs. individual focus.

Think diagnostically:

Diagnose all the time, then adapt as you have new data. Generate and use data through the design. When in doubt, ask. If the design isn't working, find out why and change!

MEETING *Design*

THE AVERAGE MANAGER SPENDS 3 - 4 HOURS A DAY IN MEETINGS.
THEY OFTEN LEAVE FEELING UNPRODUCTIVE,
FRUSTRATED, OR UNSUCCESSFUL.

Why Meetings Fail:

- The same people predictably dominate.
- Leaders have unclear objectives.
- They are often predictable, boring and humorless.
- Creativity and risk-taking are not built in.
- Mistrust and unfinished business create defensiveness and frustration.
- Meetings are too cognitive/information focused.
- Involvement and participation are not encouraged.

The Effective Meeting Should:

- Have clearly stated outcome goals.
- Ensure that every agenda item is designed to meet specific goals.
- Use engaging collaborative processes that allow everyone to feel that they made a contribution.
- Vary the format to encourage creativity and risk-taking.
- Reduce dependency and resistance through participation and real responsibility.
- Be fun, enjoyable, and unpredictable.
- Take the time to review the meeting process at the end of the session.

Suggestions for Better Meetings:

- Take the time to plan the meeting.
- Clearly articulate desired outcomes.
- Seek new and creative alternatives for design.
- Critique the meeting at the end.

Vary:

- Physical setting and room arrangement.
- Working group size (use threes, pairs, fives, etc. in your design).
- The people that are working and speaking together.
- The risks being taken by participants.

DESIGNS

Pair and Share

Two people discuss an issue/question and then report out.

Threes discuss and report out

Same as pair and share with three people.

Inner / Outer (fish bowl)

Half of the group is on an inside circle; half around them on the outside. While the inside group works, the outside only observes. After a set amount of time the inner group goes to the outside and the observers work on the task for the same amount of time.

Collapsing/consensus design

Create ideas. Condense list to the best 5. Collaborate with another group -- come up with the best 5 of both groups. Report out.

Poker chips/paper clips

Each person gets 5 poker chips for a meeting. If you speak, you use one chip (for talkers you may want to limit each poker chip to one minute speaking time). No buying or trading chips allowed!

7,1,7,1,7,1,7

The meeting goes for seven minutes and then there is one minute of silence which is repeated for the length of the meeting. The center one minute could be used to check in on how people are feeling.

Whip

The group is in a circle; each person answers a given question in turn (going around either to the right or left). No one else should respond or talk while someone is speaking.

Brainstorm

No evaluation or judging of what is said; just listing everything that is said.

Index cards (anonymity)

Each person gets a card and answers a question. They can then be shuffled and handed out to group members to be read; you can read them or have someone else read them.