Liberate your Structure: Unleash Creativity and Participation in Meetings

Liberating Structures (LS) Workshop Part II

Presented by CAPSHR
College of Health Sciences
Center for Civic Engagement
Social Justice Initiative
Department of English
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Thank you for being here today!

**Introductions**

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UTEP Alumna Interdisciplinary Health Sciences
Structures are Everywhere

- Do we notice them?
- Are we conscious of how they impact performance and results?
A Toolbox for Innovative Community Engaged Scholarship
Over-Controlled Presentation/Lecture

- Too uniform
- Engaging only one person or a select few in shaping direction
- Flow in one direction
Under-Controlled
Open Discussion

• Unstable relationships
• Anyone can jump in
• Flow too random to shape direction
Distributed (tight & loose)
Liberating Structures

- Distributed control, flow from any point, any direction
- As the action unfolds, direction is shaped by participants themselves out of local interaction
User Experience Fishbowl $+ W^3$

Share know-how gained from experience with a larger community

“Fish” hold a natural conversation within the bowl.

“Observers” outside of the bowl listen for emergent insights, patterns, questions, etc.
On Wednesday, October 12th we conducted the first part of this workshop—an introduction to Liberating Structures. Based on your experience as a participant

- Round 1: What happened?
- Round 2: So What? Why was it significant? What about it did you value?
- Round 3: Now What? What actions did you engage in as a result? Did you try anything new? Did you change anything in your daily life or facilitation?
Whole Group Harvest

• What did you notice about the fishbowl structure?
• The What, So What, Now What structure?
• When would you use these structures in your work?
1. **Space**
   - Two concentric circles
   - Sitting

2. **Participation**
   - Inner circle speaks
   - Outer circle listens
   - Whole group harvest

3. **Configurations**
   - 4-5 inner
   - Larger outer
   - Whole Group

4. **Time allocation**
   - 5 minutes per round

5. **Structuring invitation**
   - Make sense of an activity that happened in the past
   - Experts from different areas share perspectives on same subject
   - What, So What, Now What
Why and When?
Fishbowl & W³

- Alternative to panel presentation
- Alternative to update reports
- Down-to-earth explanations of phenomena
- Build skills in listening, storytelling, pattern-finding, questioning, and observing
- Allow for unexpected ideas to emerge
- Debrief at the end of a meeting
- Bring new participants up to speed
- Distinguish between objective and subjective aspects of an event
- Opportunity to name and commit to next steps
9 Whys

Make the purpose of your work together clear

“[S]he who has a why can endure any how.”
–Friedrich Nietzsche

Structuring Invitation: Why do you do the work you do?
Sequence of Steps

• Pairs sitting in chairs, face to face
• Take turns being the interviewer:
  – What do you do? 1 minute to think about and make a short list.
  – Why are you a professor of ___________? Why are you a student of ___________? Why do you work at ___________? Why is that important to you? And why is that? Why? 5 minute verbal exchange.

• When bell rings, repeat round with partner—switch interviewer roles.
Powerful Purpose

• “For values or guiding principles to be truly effective, they have to be verbs.”—Simon Sinek

• When the bell rings, stop and record any insights in this form: I exist to _(verb)_ so that _(answers why)_. Or my organization exists to _(verb)_ so that _(answers why)_.
My Purpose

I exist to create safe and supportive environments so that people feel they can collaborate in meaningful ways and break through obstacles.
Troika Consulting

Get practical and imaginative help from colleagues immediately

Structuring Invitation: What is your biggest challenge in achieving your purpose? What is your 15%?
Why and When? Troika/15%

• Refine skills in asking for help
• Refine listening skills
• Build trust through mutual support
• Create conditions for unimagined solutions
• Work across disciplines or silos
• Use 15% solutions to add to understanding of what is possible—most unnoticed source of influence
Psychology should be just as concerned with building strength as with repairing damage.

Martin E.P. Seligman

Gratitude Punctuation

“Gratitude Night”
Three Things

1. Identify three good things that have happened
2. Note these things down on paper
3. After each statement indicate why you feel good about these things

Example: “Bumped into Dave – haven't seen him for ages. I’d forgotten how much he makes me laugh.”
Today’s Debrief

Rapid Networking and Idea Exchange

Pairs (2 minutes each round)

Answer:

• What did you see, hear, do today that inspired you?
• Do you see yourself making any changes in your organization?
For more information on Liberating Structures:

www.liberatingstructures.org

To participate in a local community of practice:

ldura@utep.edu
Call to Community

• We invite you to add to the menu!!

  Do you or your agency employ a unique approach to your work that may be useful to others?

  We would love for you to add to the Food for Changed Thought Menu!

  Email Jennifer (Jenna) Lujan at jmlujan@utep.edu or Eva Moya emmoya@utep.edu