



September 2010

Global Flipchart

**Member of the Month
September 2010**

**Gillian Chambers
Kingston, Jamaica**



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What is your name?

Gillian Chambers but I prefer Gill.

Where are you located?

Kingston, Jamaica

How long have you been a member of IAF?

I became a member of the IAF in 2004. I'm a CPF and a CPF Assessor.

Tell us a little about the organization you work for...What is its name? What does it do?

The company I work for is a small training, facilitation and consulting company that my partner and I started in 1998, not long after we moved to Jamaica from the UK. The name of the company is Jamalysha Training Company Ltd – named after our children Jamal and Alysha. We work with our clients in the areas of organisational and personal development and also offer e-learning through a

partnership with Skillsoft. Our clients are many and varied and include public and private sector as well as community development organisations.

What are your jobs within the organization?

I train, facilitate and consult with clients to help them (and myself) become more efficient at whatever they do. I work with groups of varying sizes, and I work one-to-one as a coach. I facilitate strategic planning sessions, visioning exercises, meetings etc. as well as train in areas such as communication, teambuilding and customer service.

How do you use facilitation in your line of work?

As an external facilitator, I use facilitation all the time with my clients. The group process skills I've learned and continue to learn, help me to develop my technical and language skills and so for example even when I'm not actually facilitating a session with a client, I try to be aware of my language and frame

what I say in a way that builds and supports, rather than judges.

Share a recent facilitation experience – what did you do, how did you do it, with whom did you do it?

One of the things my company is committed to is helping to make the Jamaica education system better. As a result we do quite a bit of work with schools at a reduced rate or pro-bono in the areas of strategic planning and staff development. A few weeks ago I was involved in a planning session with a small private primary school. The Principal started the school out of her house with a small number of children approximately 8 years ago. She had a very clear vision and firm ideas as to how the school should be. It has been successful over the years and grown to approximately sixty children plus a dedicated staff.

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International Association of Facilitators
14984 Glazier Ave,
Suite 550
St. Paul, MN 55124
office@iaf-world.org
+ 1 800 281 9984
(toll free, US & Canada)
+1 952 891 3541
Fax +1 952 891 1800
Gary Rush, Chair
iafchair@iaf-world.org
The Global Flipchart is IAF's monthly newsletter
Karyn Dumble and Sharon Cathers, Editors
globalflipchart@iaf-world.org

Facilitating the planning process provided the group an opportunity to revisit the vision, to see where they fit into it, how it manifests daily and to 'tweak it' where necessary. They were excited and thankful for the help in Jamaica crafting the way forward for the new academic year and beyond. Furthermore, their departmental plans dovetailed nicely into the overall strategic plan for the school. They identified a list of core values and took the opportunity to analyse their current situation. It was interesting to see the group produce so much work in a few hours that was collaborative, reflective of the school and current. We all had fun and for them, it was a great opportunity to be on the other side of the flipchart!

If you could share one thing you've learned with other facilitators around the world, what would it be?

How do I choose one?! That our profession is an honour and a privilege to be a part of and that as we become more and more proficient at facilitation, what we are 'being' in the moment is more important than what we're doing. Be real and authentic and know that this is a journey not a destination, full of bends, potholes and road-signs all designed to make us better.

Thank you! Gill, it's great to get to know you and your facilitation practice in



Conference Programme Now Available Online

<http://www.iaf-europe-conference.org/program.html>

We are proud to present this year's exciting and extensive IAF Europe Conference programme.

The programme follows our conference themes of **Rites, Myths, Magical Tools** and **Paradoxes**. We are confident that there is something for everyone. Whether you are an experienced facilitator or just starting out. Whether you want to focus on tools and techniques or the psychology and theory of facilitation, your needs will be met.

We are also offering a wide programme of leisure activities and networking opportunities. This year's conference provides a good balance of education and recreation.

You may now register online for the conference in Helsinki . Please book early if you would like to take advantage of the all inclusive package, accommodation on-site is now limited. The all inclusive conference fee includes; the full conference, all meals and accommodation.

The conference only option includes full access to the conference and materials, lunches, dinners and refreshments.

IAF Members All-Inclusive	625.00 Euro
Non Members All-inclusive	675.00 Euro
IAF Members Conference Only	525.00 Euro
Non Members Conference Only	575.00 Euro

If you would like to reduce the cost of your stay why not share a twin room with a colleague - please contact us for further details conference@iaf-europe.eu

We look forward to meeting you at the IAF Europe Conference in Helsinki

(Mis)adventures in Facilitation

My most disastrous facilitation experience (out of 20 years littered with them) was with the Board of Directors of a national professional development association. This strategic planning session was in the early fall several years ago. I had been off all summer and was feeling quite rusty.

A couple of Board members just could not refrain from having loud side-conversations. Instead of taking the matter to the group as a whole, or approach the participants during a break, I simply became irritated and irritable, and kept breaking up the side conversations in an increasingly aggressive manner as the day went on. The situation became personal!

Needless to say, at the end of the session, the group as a whole torched my behaviour and attitude. However, they did say that they had achieved a lot and that the meeting had met their needs. A couple even said that they had appreciated that I broke up the side conversations. That did not, of course, excuse my behaviour, or the fact that I had allowed myself to get hooked in by the situation. But at least the session had a constructive result in terms of a solid strategic plan.

There were three positive outcomes of this experience (although, no, I never got any further work from the association). First, I was dramatically confronted with my own behaviour and its inappropriateness. (I hate looking in the mirror, but often it is unavoidable.) Secondly, I was attracted to Larry Dressler's excellent book and workshop ("Standing in the Fire: Leading High-Heat Meetings with Clarity, Calm, and Courage") at the IAF Chicago Conference last April. (This resulted in a book review that will appear in a future issue of the IAF Canada Newsletter.) Thirdly, a friend and I were discussing my experience with this Board session, and she too had recently had a similar experience (although her department had been much better than mine). Well, we got a little silly and decided that our difficulties were really all the clients' fault, not ours. This led us to develop a little workshop entitled "When Clients Go Bad" which I have led at several IAF Conferences in the past and possibly again at upcoming ones. The workshop's purpose, of course, is not to shift responsibility, but to enable a focused conversation around how we work with clients and how we can avoid some of the kinds of "disastrous" experiences that you are in the process of collecting.

-John Butcher, CPF, Canada

Have you had a (mis)adventure in facilitation that you're willing to share? Send it to globalflipchart@iaf-world.org and help prevent a fellow facilitator from making the same mistake.

Method of the Month

The Method of the Month is a monthly feature of the Global Flipchart. Since the untimely demise of Jon Jenkins, his wife and working partner Maureen has stepped into this role.

Assumption Articulation

In the Northern Hemisphere, this is the time of year for back to work and back to school as summer ends and autumn begins. As things begin anew, you may find your participants carrying old assumptions that may not work so well any more. And of course, this may happen anytime, not just in September! So the Method of the Month this time is Assumption Articulation. It was developed by Robert Harris, and is taken from the website <http://www.virtualsalt.com/crebook4.htm>

Purpose

To bring to awareness assumptions being made about the situation in a problem solving process and to check their validity. Assumptions that are not valid can be dropped or changed.

Steps

Context

1. Bringing to awareness the assumptions about the problems and the situation in which the problem operates is an often overlooked but important process in the problem solving process.
2. Assumptions are always present and necessary.
 - a. They set limits on the problem and potential solutions.
 - b. They reflect operating values,
 - c. They simplify the problem.
3. Assumptions are self-imposed and not imposed by the situation.
4. Once assumptions are articulated then we can ask each assumption; “Is it necessary?” “Is it appropriate?”

Surfacing Assumptions

5. Write out a clear and as detailed as possible statement of the problem.
6. Write the focus question in the centre of a flipchart paper.
 - a. List all the aspects of the problem.
 - b. List all the constraints caused by the problem.
7. (1) Ask individuals to list 10 assumptions that we are making about the problem.
8. Put up all of the unique assumptions on a white board or flipchart paper.
9. (2) Put up the list on the last page (see below). You can have the group create their own list. Ask if this reminds us of any other assumptions that should be examined. Put these on the flipchart of assumptions.
10. (3) Look at the focused question, its aspects and constraints. List assumptions being made with them.

Examining Assumptions

11. Assign groups to examine the assumptions:
 - a. Write out the assumption as a sentence.
 - b. Ask is this assumption needed to do the project?
 - c. Ask if it is not necessary is it suitable?
 - d. Prepare a report to the larger group.
12. Have groups report their conclusions.
13. Discuss particularly those that are being recommended to be changed.

The IAF Methods Database is run as an independent organization under agreement between the IAF and the IAF Methods Database. If you have any questions about the Database, please contact editor@iaf-methods.org

Message from your Global Flipchart Editors

Thank you to John Butcher for fearlessly sharing a facilitation “disaster” story with us. What we learn from stories like this – whether reading them or living them out loud – is that all of us have days when we could have performed better, been more patient, or just plain done things differently. John was gracious enough to allow us to use his name. We chose to accept that offer so that we could acknowledge two of the outcomes he identified – the upcoming book review in the Canadian newsletter and the conference workshop that has been previously offered and may be available to attend again at future IAF conferences.

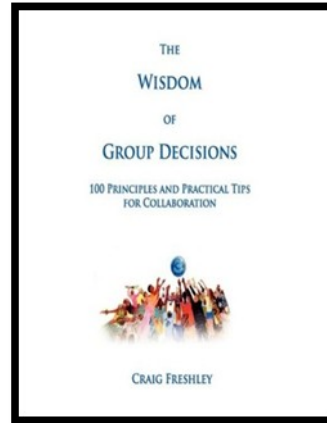
We would also like to extend a thank you to Jerry Mings for his review of Craig Freshley’s book. It is an interesting approach and the addition of the mind map as a visual tool for guiding us through its contents. We have another book review all set to appear in October’s Global Flipchart - Linda Mather has reviewed Alex Grimsley’s Vital Conversations for us. Next month, we also plan to share with you the first of the ongoing articles on using technology in facilitation.

We welcome letters to the editor and plan to continue to share facilitation anecdotes as they are shared with us. If you have feedback on Global Flipchart, we’d love to receive it.

Yours in ink stains,
Sharon Cathers and Karyn Dumble
Editors, Global Flipchart
globalflipchart@iaf-world.org

BOOK REVIEW

The Wisdom of Group Decisions by Craig Freshley



Publisher: Good Group Decisions (May 2010)
 Hardcover: 144 pages
 Language: English
 Price: \$21.06 CDN (Amazon)
 ISBN-10: 0978865723
 ISBN-13: 978-0978865726

Books are like tools in the wood shed of life. Some tools are used in the everyday task of creating pieces of work. Others are used to refine skills and create specialized pieces of work. Then there are tools that stretch your creativity and skills to make you a better person at your craft. It's not always easy to find a tool that will push both creativity and skills at the same time. However, when you do find one, it takes time, dedication and reflection to experience the depth of the tool.

Craig Freshley's book, The Wisdom of Group Decisions is a tool that provides facilitators with an opportunity to reflect and deepen their understanding of groups and group decisions. It is a guide one can use to develop a deeper appreciation of the IAF competencies "guiding the group to appropriate and useful outcomes" and "building and maintaining professional knowledge". Beyond the competencies, it is a solid book to enable one to personally reflect on the groups and group decision making.

The book is divided into five sections. The first section of the book is an introduction. The author provides insights on the importance of collaborative decision-making along with the challenges associated with decision-making from both a global to a personal perspective. The second section consists of 100 individual thoughts on group decision-making. Each thought is divided into two parts: In Principle and a Practical Tip. The thoughts include topics such as Moral Compass, e-mail, Rules First, Take a Break, Structure Sets you Free, Hands Off, Define the Edges and many more. The third section is a one-page summary of the thoughts organized into the following six themes.

- Attitude and personal growth
- Communication
- Conflict prevention
- Creativity
- Efficiency
- Group technique

The fourth section consists of notes and reference materials for the book. Finally the book concludes with information on how you can obtain and comment on each of the 100 thoughts on the author's website (<http://goodgroupdecisions.com>).

Figure 1 captures the graphic summary of the book.

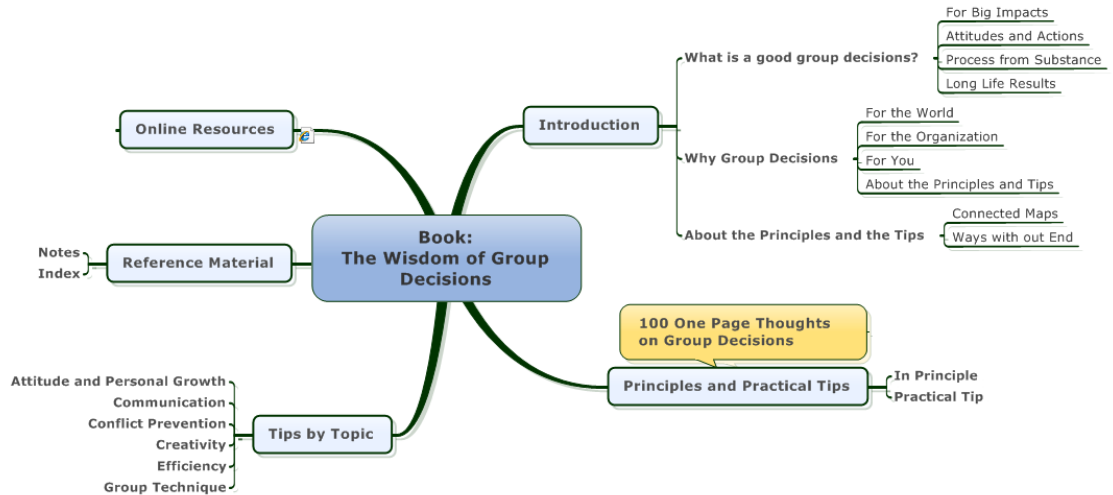


Figure 1- Graphic Summary of the Book

The book is designed not as a cover-to-cover reading experience. Instead, one can read the introduction first, then pick any one of the 100 thoughts to read. As one reads a thought, they will find other thoughts that will complement, challenge or provide insights for use with the group. The material is easy to read and, at the same time, thought-provoking. The author's discussion of collaborative decision-making and linear decision-making is insightful and helpful for individuals who find themselves both as facilitators and participants in group experiences. Finally, the discussion on the lifecycle of the decision was particularly interesting given the importance of enabling groups to make meaningful, long-standing decisions of which they can participate in implementing.

The Wisdom of Group Decisions is a solid reference for any facilitator interested in reflecting and thinking about how to help groups make great decisions. It is a book to can carry around with you and read it anytime. It is also a book that you can read in small pieces, read once in a while, or simply read as you think about the design of an upcoming facilitation. It is a book about thinking, about caring and most importantly about making the decision to care deeply about groups.

In the words of the author, "Making good decisions in groups is hard work, way harder than we typically acknowledge. It is my hope that this book provides at least one or two practical tips to those who take up the challenge."

Jerry Mings is a quality professional and facilitator locate in Oakville, Ontario, Canada. He holds a keen interest in how organizations structure themselves and make the best use of limited resources in times of tremendous demands. You can find him online at "jerry [at] thedesk dot ca" or drop him a line on skype at "ejmings".

Welcome New IAF Members!

We extend a warm welcome to our colleagues from around the world who joined or returned to IAF from August 12 through September 14th. (We only list those members who have chosen to be listed in our online membership directory. If you are concerned about having been included in this list, please contact the office via email at office@iaf-world.org).

Australia

Rob Carolane, Wangaratta

Therese Fuller, Glebe

Bruce Watson, Altona

Canada

Sharon Duguid, West Vancouver, BC

Dina Bell-Laroche, Kanata, ON

Carol Bureau, Oakville, ON

Maureen Cunningham MBA,CMC, Ottawa,O N

Joanne Daykin, Almonte, ON

Tim Fleming,Ottawa, ON

Katherine Murray,Ottawa, ON

Hong Kong

Chi Ming Li

India

Sushil Tayal, Bangalore

Italy

Clare O'Farrell, Roma

Malaysia

William Teo, Kuala Lumpur

Mexico

Jorge Valdés Garcíatorres, PMP, ACB

Saudi Arabia

Adeeb Alshakhis, Dammam

Singapore

Eng Hou Yeo, Singapore

Maureen Haines, Singapore

South Africa

Gorete Welland, Johannesburg

Maryanne Ibekwe, Durban

Sweden

Pia Sassarsson Cameron, Uppsala

Turkey

Engin Tosun, Istanbul

United Kingdom

Ivor Bundell, WINCHESTER

United States

Janet Love, Oklahoma City, OK

Jennifer Lavan, Kensington, MD

John Smith, Alpharetta, GA

Marsha Bracke, Boise, Idaho

Nancy Sharpless, Climax, NC

Virginia Cutchin ,Alexandria, VA

Ellen Embrey, Springfield,V A

UPCOMING IAF EVENTS

Conferences

15 October 2010 - Europe
Helsinki, Finland

22 November 2010 - Australia
Hobart, Tasmania

12-15 April 2011 - North America
Denver, Colorado

Certification Events

13 October 2010 - Certification Event
Helsinki, Finland

30 - 31 October 2010 - Certification Event
Kennesaw Georgia

12 - 13 November 2010 - Certification Event
Ottawa, Canada

22 - 23 November 2010 - Australia
Hobart, Tasmania

13 December 2010 - Certification Event
Geneva, Switzerland

26 May 2011—Certification Event
Rossum, The Netherlands