

IAF EUROPE NEWSLETTER

March '10



Join us in Helsinki, Finland, Oct. 15-17 for the 2010 IAF Europe Conference. To find out about this month's other great stories, see the Index on page 3.

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Europe is one of seven regions within the International Association of Facilitators. The IAF Europe team members volunteer their time to plan and support activities and services for IAF members living in Europe, supported by Entendu Ltd.. Contact us at pamela.lupton-bowers@iaf-europe.eu; gary.purser@iaf-europe.eu; kristin.reinbach@iaf-europe.eu; rosemary.cairns@iaf-europe.eu, or speak with Ben Richardson or Nicki Cadogan of Entendu at office@iaf-europe.eu.

ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER

The IAF Europe Newsletter is published monthly by the IAF Europe Regional Team for members of the International Association of Facilitators living within Europe.

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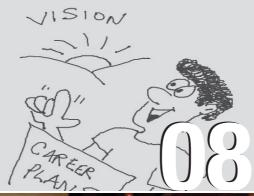
Anne Radford, Dave Rees, Ben Richardson, Thea Shahrokh, Penny Walker

Cover picture:

On September 26, 2009, two months before COP 15 got underway in Copenhagen, 4300 people in 38 countries gathered in groups of 100 as part of the unique World Wide Views on Global Warming consultation. This picture shows the UK event, which was managed by Involve researcher Thea Shahrokh, author of the fascinating article about this process that appears on pages 4-7. (Cover photo, and photos on pages 4-7, courtesy of Involve.)

Please send your contributions to your Newsletter to rosemary.cairns@iaf-europe.eu















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Citizen deliberation in a globalised world

By Thea Shahrokh

Traditionally, deliberative democracy was only possible at a small scale, with micro-deliberations in minipublics most commonly addressing community-based issues; leaving the polls to be the main mechanism by which to hear the voice of the wider public.

In recent times, the evolution of public participation has explored ways to increase citizen deliberation by creating new processes and reshaping old ones; the idea being not just to increase the amount of deliberation, but to improve the quality and the inclusiveness of such processes. A number of driving factors have meant that over the past decade we have seen an increased shift towards both deliberation in policy and towards greater citizen involvement in decision making.

As the society we find ourselves in is a global one, citizen deliberation with policy makers has become ever more important. Trade, the economy, the environment, politics and social relationships are some of the many subject matters that entail a global audience; and

consequently require global governance structures. When decisions are being made that will affect the global citizen, how can we ensure that citizens themselves have a substantial impact on policy making and resource planning?

This combination of a move towards deliberative engagement at the local and national level and the further establishment of global decision making ultimately means that there has been a natural progression towards global policy deliberations.

Large-scale citizen deliberations are a means by which the needs of decision makers and the public can be met. They are particularly useful with regards to issues that are complex in nature and where meaningful, in depth dialogue is needed to gather the collective wisdom of a constituency of users. Strategically designed, the model enables large groups of citizens to simultaneously participate in intimate, face-to-face deliberation and contribute to the collective wisdom of a very large group.

Deliberative events allow dialogue

By looking at the innovative application of this type of participation in Europe we can see that these deliberative events have allowed the public to engage in an authentic and representative dialogue. For example, the 'Meeting of Minds' partner consortium which played a pioneering role in the development of a deliberation model at the European level; as well as the 'European Citizens' Consultations', run in 2007 and 2009, which involved 30-100 citizens from each member state contemplating the future of the European Union.

There are important common themes to the different approaches towards citizen deliberation at the international level. For example, participants tend to be selected in ways that move beyond those who usually take part: for example, by using outreach approaches and through random or quota sampling. Participants are consistently supplied with balanced and accurate information and are allowed time to discuss and understand the arguments and come up with their own views.

The key mechanism for deliberation in all of these processes is still face to face engagement, with the more recent examples using online engagement as a supporting aspect. As a result of this working formula these deliberations have independently inspired decision-makers as they prepared to make choices on complex issues.

Most recently, however, the World Wide Views consortium has shown that it is possible to bring a global sample of citizens together and, despite their initial lack of knowledge, have an intense dialogue which leads to a better understanding. In this case, the deliberation was held on climate change. Thus, on September 26th 2009, just two months before the COP15 Copenhagen climate change talks, 4,300 people, sitting in groups of 100, in 38 countries across the world discussed action on climate change, one of the most difficult global issues facing modern decision makers.

Discussing climate change

The citizens at each meeting reflected a demographic distribution of their country. They were also screened for their involvement in the area of climate change, with experts, scientists and stakeholders being excluded from the selection. All meetings consisted of the same format in order to ensure quality assurance: 100 citizens divided into tables of 5-8 people, were led by a head facilitator and group moderators through a





programme divided into four thematic sessions and a recommendation session.¹

The themes for the sessions were: climate change and its consequences, long-term goal and urgency, dealing with greenhouse gas emissions, the economy of technology and adaptation. Participants voted on 12 questions that were defined by scientists and stakeholders prior to the event, thus making international quantitative comparison possible. The method also contained authentic citizen expressions in terms of suggestions for action at the national and international level.

Nascent in the World Wide Views process was the innovative use of technology to establish a global internet based cooperation and electronic communication of the results. A special web tool was designed for the purpose of near-instant collection and presentation of the results from the WWViews meetings. The tool allowed for statistical presentation and comparison of results between countries/

regions and various international groupings.² The use of communication technology hence made it possible to record large numbers of discussions and opinions at the same time.

Citizens ahead of their governments

As a result we were able to make an immediate analysis of the voting from the UK event in comparison to all of the different countries and regions involved in the process. The UK event resulted in a number of important and exciting consensus decisions on difficult issues. For example, UK citizens felt that any deal in Copenhagen needed to be equitable for least developed countries, that strong enforcement mechanisms to reach carbon targets were needed, and that the government must make more ambitious cuts to carbon emissions in its response to climate change.³

The Danish Board of Technology was responsible for the development of the method, the web tool for preparing the question.

² www.wwviews.org.uk

³ 'The Road to Copenhagen', (2009), Involve.

Importantly, the deliberation established that once provided with information and space to deliberate, a larger majority wants the government to move further than its current commitments - in contrast to what the polling of uninformed members of the public would suggest. In fact, an initial analysis of the global results emphasised that governments pushing for weaker targets in Copenhagen were working against the wishes of their citizens; globally, citizens see the problem of climate change as urgent and they want large-scale action to deal with it.⁴

Besides its many successes, however, the WWViews process was always projected to face difficulty in a number of areas when it came to implementing the strategies for influencing policy. This was as a result of the global nature of the project and the fact that it was the first deliberation of its kind. As a pilot and a platform by which future deliberative processes can learn and grow from, WWViews was never meant to be the end result.

The WWViews process represents a massive evolutionary leap in terms of its scope, ambition and complexity. At Involve, we see this as something worth celebrating. The steps it has taken to move deliberative methods forward are exemplary, and the project has established that deliberative processes will play a vital role in good global governance in the coming decades.

However, despite wanting urgent, large scale action by government on climate change, the results from WWViews established that there is still considerable scepticism about how the government will do this. With specific focus on addressing climate change, governments will only start to lessen this distrust and gain national consent for policies that promote strong individual action to reduce carbon emissions if they hold mature conversations with the public.

Thus, one thing is certain, WWViews is by no means be the final step in global deliberation. Further progressing and understanding the developments that have got us to this point is an essential part of enhancing this important emerging field and thus bringing citizen deliberation to a global scale.

The photographs on pages 4-7, and the cover picture, show participants in the WWViews UK event (Photo credits: Involve)



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and quantitative



analysis. Thea managed the UK event of the World Wide Views on Global Warming process.

Involve is a charity specialising in understanding public engagement in all its forms. Involve provides advice, training, research, events and networking services to organisations and individuals interested in public participation. The organisation focuses on the practical reality of public participation

Involve, alongside a number of the WWViews partners are studying the implications of WWViews as part of an international research consortium. An extended version of this article is contributing to an anthology on the WWViews process provisionally titled, 'Global Deliberation – a World of Opportunity', being put together by the National Consumer Research Centre in Finland.

⁴ The Danish Board of Technology was responsible for the development of the method, the web tool for preparing the question.

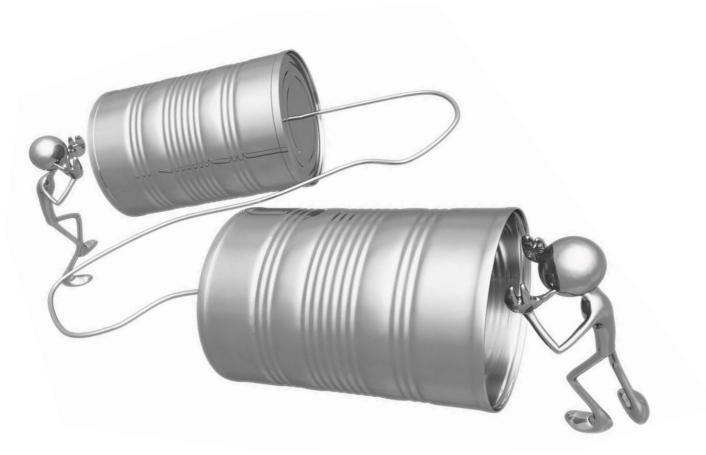


Image credit: sxc.hu

Knowing you, Knowing them – the secrets of hidden communication

By Justin Collinge

en was a successful director of an award-winning medium sized company. I liked him enormously and we got on really well. He agreed that it would be great for me to come and do some training with his people and we agreed possible content. And then it got stuck. For some reason, I could never pin it down to an actual date.

Has something like this happened to you? Where all the ingredients are right and yet it still doesn't quite gel?

Have you known facilitation where everything was as you'd want it and yet the desired result is not happening and you're not sure what to do about it? Where people simply aren't agreeing even though they should be? Where despite agreement at the decision level there's no agreement at a deeper level?

We all have a set of filters that cause us to notice

what we notice and ignore the things that we don't believe to be important at that time. If we didn't have those filters we wouldn't be able to function, we'd be overwhelmed by the information pouring into us.

Stop for a moment and notice the toes on your left foot. As you become aware of them, you'll realise that the sensations were always available to you but you were ignoring them, filtering them out as not currently of importance. If you were on a tight-rope above a canyon, I believe you would be more aware of the sensations from your toes!

The filter systems we have developed during our lives are fascinating and of huge help and importance when understanding how we communicate. Knowing both how you filter and those you are facilitating changes everything.

"Away from" rather than "towards"

In the case of Ben, one of his strong filters is 'away from' rather than 'towards'. That is to say, he is motivated by wanting to avoid pain and mistakes and seeks to make sure he doesn't miss opportunities. The opposite of this is someone who is motivated by reward and who seeks to ensure he gets everything coming to him.

It can seem a subtle difference and it can make a big difference knowing it. In Ben's example, I was frustrated that we weren't actually getting on with it. (Please notice the way I wrote that – I'm quite 'away from' orientated too. I didn't write how keen I was to grab the opportunity). So I wrote to Ben using language that worked with his filter:

"This is an opportunity we mustn't miss. The possible loss of a great developing friendship and working relationship would be a real shame if we don't make it work. The potential money and good will you're losing because of the issues outlined not being dealt with is too important to ignore. Just imagine the fun, satisfaction and further step towards perfection that we won't be creating if we don't do this".

That entire paragraph is 'away from' language. And Ben's response? He picked up the phone straight away and booked me in! (In case you're concerned about me being manipulative you might like to know that I shared with him what I'd done and he loved the insight he had into how he looks at things)

Identifying your filter

What about you? Are you more towards or away from? And how would you know? Here's an excerpt from my book, 'Knowing you, knowing them', that may help:

Think of a goal you'd like to achieve and write it down. It doesn't need to be very detailed, just a phrase or a word to represent it is enough. It does help to write it down rather than just hold it in your mind.

Now ask yourself why that goal is important to you. Write down the first three things that come to mind and start each one with the word 'because'. - Do it now before you read on.



As you look at your three answers can you see a pattern in terms of Towards or Away From? Did you write reasons that were about what you want or what you want to avoid?

I've just gone through this process and here is what I wrote:

My goal was a financial target to hit by the end of the year – I simply wrote down the amount.

My three reasons for wanting that goal?

- Because I don't want to miss the specific advantages that this goal represents for me
- Because I'd like to earn a little more than I am at the moment
- Because I want to avoid a sense of failure if I don't

In this example, the first and last reasons have a clear Away From pattern. The middle one sounds more Towards. If you have a similar mixture, it can mean a few things:

- You might be a mixture and not strongly one pattern or the other in the context you chose. However, even with a mixed answer, you can usually see a leaning towards one side of the spectrum or the other.
- You might need to think of some more reasons.
- You might have a different pattern hiding behind your phrases.

Digging a little deeper

I regularly ask a follow up question to dig down a little deeper. For example, my middle answer sounds Towards in direction. But what if I ask myself why I'd like to earn a

little more? The answer is a clear Away From — Because I don't like not having quite enough money to do what I want to be able to do. It can really help you to ask these sorts of follow up questions.

However, please remember that this is not true. It's not about who you are; it's about how you behave. This filter is also quite context sensitive and so may be true about one particular area and be different in another area. It's a helpful pointer, that's all.

Also, please remember that there is no intrinsic benefit to one filter over another. Both are important and both can provide vital skills. One is not better than the other.

However, most people tend to feel that their filter is, underneath all the positive and politically correct language, better in some way than the other pattern. I think that's quite a healthy feeling so long as you also acknowledge it to be completely wrong!

Having done this exercise, have you got a feeling for who you are when it comes to the Towards and Away From pattern? If not then try a different goal and do it again or get someone to ask you the question "Why is that important to you?" and notice what answers fall out of your mouth.

Addressing both filters

Once you know your orientation, towards or away from, then you can begin to notice other people's orientation. If you work with others who have the same orientation as you then things will tend to go more smoothly. However, if they don't, you have some work to do to make sure you change your language to suit their needs.

And if you're working with a group, then learning to say things both ways around is a really helpful skill. Here's an example of me doing that for you the reader:

Can you see the possible gains by learning how to do this and the lost opportunity if you miss it?

That sentence will appeal to both filter types. Let me do it again:

 It's really not hard to learn these skills and make a real difference to the way you come across, though if you don't put in the practice of course you'll waste the opportunity being given to you

For more details about this and another eight filters, get hold of a copy of 'Knowing You, Knowing Them' or come along to one of the workshops I'm seeking to hold in partnership with IAF Europe later this year.



That's what I want!

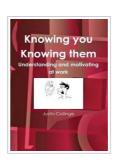
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Justin Collinge is a coach and trainer with Kaizen Training and specialises in helping teams to function at their peak performance levels. He works with many organisations helping them learn and use



the secrets to hidden communication. He is currently in discussion with IAF to organise open workshops and coaching for facilitators who wish to learn how to use their filters to improve their performance.

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Justin's book is currently available on Lulu at http://www.lulu.com/product/paperback/knowing-you-knowing-them/6087730, and soon will be available on Amazon.

Sustaining ourselves as practitioners as the organizational climate changes

By Anne Radford

Organizational Climate Changes

Developing organizational culture in businesses, large charities and public sector agencies used to be managed by OD or HR departments. Now, however, there are few OD departments left and HR departments tend to be more focused on employment and regulation issues. Who picks up this cultural responsibility now?

In recent years, leaders have gradually absorbed this cultural responsibility while carrying out their traditional responsibilities. This brings with it the decision as to what type of culture they want to develop. While targets and goals may be clear, the question increasingly becomes: How to achieve the targets and goals?

As leaders, do they continue with well-known approaches of telling hundreds or thousands of employees what to do and how do it, or do they go with a newer approach of inclusion and participation which sounds messy and where outcomes are not necessarily predictable.

The first option can be quick and deliver short-term results but does not build up capacity to deal with the next round of change. This option also puts enormous pressure on them as leaders to get the strategy right and persuade others that it is right or, if all else fails, to force it through to meet targets and deadlines.

The second option is gradually being picked up more often now for various reasons:

- There is a growing set of worldwide examples showing that inclusion and participation does deliver results – guite often far more than expected.
- Activities like strategic planning and project management are increasingly becoming the vehicles for culture change. Knowledge about markets, customers,



See pages 14-15 for instructions for the Vision Creation exercise (Photo courtesy of Anne Radford)

clients or performance outcomes are being linked to questions about organisational values and the future culture of the organisation.

- In complex systems, everyone has the combined responsibility to deliver good results and ensure they deliver those results in a way that is culturally aligned to the overall aspirations of the organisation.
- A key part of leadership is enabling everyone to sustain success through future organizational changes, and inclusion and participation is a long-term strategy.

View from inside an organization

In the workshop Joep de Jong and I ran at the 2009 World Al conference in Nepal, Joep described the reasons he has used strength-based approaches, and Appreciative Inquiry in particular, as a leader in international businesses.

This commentary is based on a workshop "Sustaining ourselves as AI practitioners: how do we change as the organizational climate changes?" given at 2009 World Appreciative Inquiry Conference Creating a Positive Revolution for Sustainable Change Kathmandu, Nepal 16-19 November 2009 by Joep C. de Jong, CEO, Van Harte & Lingsma, Netherlands and Anne Radford, Al Practitioner and Organisational consultant and the annual Advanced AI residential at Bore Place in August led by Anne Radford.



Participants in the workshop run by Joep de Jong and Anne Radford during the 2009 World AI conference in Nepal (Photo courtesy of Anne Radford)

What sustainability looks like from inside an organization

Sustainability can be seen as survival and the need to continue to make profits. From an AI perspective, however, sustainability is different — as an organic or natural way of development. As we think of a child growing taller and us getting wiser as we get older, we see that sustaining change is a process of development.

Looking at a percentage change year on year is the kind of sustainability that locks us in. There is no paradox when looking at change and sustainability as something to embrace and welcome — it is about growth and development.

Al lets you play in a different way with these two words: change and sustainability. In today's organisations, we have a very limited view of the single bottom line — it is about making money and keeping going — but it can also be about keeping growing from different perspectives. We can focus on finances or look at the value of people or the collective wisdom in an organisation. Taking change and sustainability out of a realm of a single bottom line can be provocative but challenging.

Al and sustaining a culture within an organisation

We in organisations have to become Al or live it — continue to ask questions rather than focus on goals or the target. Living with uncertainty is crucial because you don't know what the outcomes will be. I try to understand the best stories in the room and listen to those. There is no secret answer to sustaining change other than being persistent in asking questions.

What do these organisational changes mean for external consultants?

With these changes, my way of working as an external consultant has also changed. As someone who has worked with approaches that emphasise inclusion, participation and strength-based change for many years, I am delighted that there is significant interest in it now. However, working in this new environment has brought a new set of questions key to developing an effective client — consultant relationship. For me to know how best to work with leaders, I have found it is important for me to:

- Clarify how leaders see their new responsibilities and how they want to address them – for example, is inclusion a means to an end or part of building a sustainable culture in the organisation?
- Understand the leaders' preference for pace and approach in knowing about Appreciative Inquiry as a way of thinking or of working with people in the organisation – is it on an ad hoc basis as situations arise or through in-depth sessions to more fully explore some of the implications of this approach?

It is also helpful to know:

- Whether leaders already have some background in Al? If they do, working with them as a thinking partner means:
 - We can work with each other using the Al principles (such as it matters what we focus on, and the principle of wholeness as in looking at leadership at the immediate team and wider organisational context.)
 - We can look at how to apply the Al principles to difficult or emerging situations and how to link all the

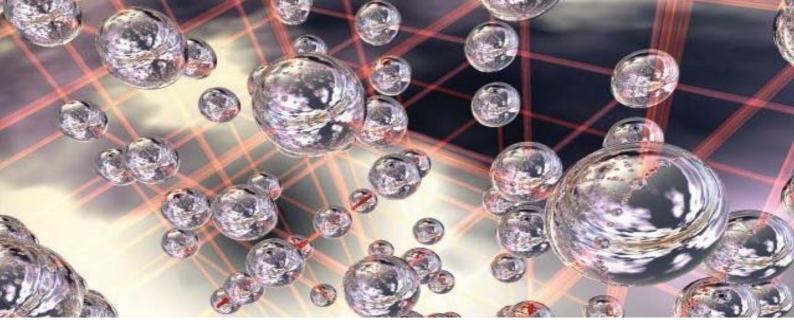


Image from http://softpowernetwork.ning.com/photo/photo/show?id=2080960%3APhoto%3A19

different levels - individual, team, organisation and stakeholder - they work with.

• Whether leaders do not have that background? As a thinking partner, how do I best use the AI process and weave in the theory to model what AI is about? How can our working relationship assist the leader to gain skill and confidence in using the approach with their team, peers, and throughout the organization?

These organizational changes also bring new challenges:

- How do I respond to situations such as being asked to train other consultants working on the same change initiative and who are essentially my competitors?
- How do I train people throughout the business to facilitate engagement sessions in their region of the world during a series of 45-minute telephone conference calls with groups when typically I have prepared people over days not minutes?

My intention as a consultant is to help leaders do their work well. For this, I need to look for the best combination of what is acceptable in the organizational culture and what my best skills can provide. I need to keep their purpose aligned with my highest intent. This means flexing what I do while sustaining my connection with the client as well as sustaining my sense of self as an authentic practitioner.

Sustaining ourselves as practitioners: Not just doing Al — Living it

For some people, doing AI is about using the process – a set of steps or going through the cycle of phases. Living Al is about choicefully turning up at each moment and socially constructing the next moment according to a set of principles.

Living AI is about asking myself whether I am using the principles to the full extent I can. The answer is bound to be no because there is always room for improvement or there are situations where I am closed rather than open to exploring or inquiring. By constantly learning from where I have succeeded and building on that, Al becomes a way of living rather than something I have to apply. In this way, it sustains the best in me as everything else is changing.

The image of Indra's net – each person being that diamond or the pearl - helps to keep me as a sole practitioner feeling connected with others as well as a feeling that I am a soul practitioner which helps me sustain myself.

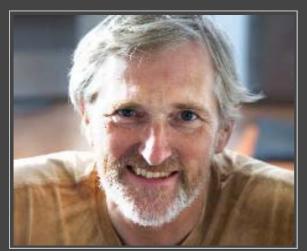
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Anne Radford is an organisational consultant and publisher, as well as a thinking partner with business leaders and consultants on Al and strength-based approaches. She



publishes the quarterly online journal, Al (Appreciative Inquiry) Practitioner www.aipractitioner.com. Visit her website at www.aradford.co.uk

VISION CREATION



Joep de Jona

This exercise, which is based on a questionnaire developed by Begemannconsultancy 'Natuurlijk Veranderen', is about creating an image of your / our future. The questions are intended to stimulate and inspire and everything that emerges is OK! Just like it is OK if nothing emerges!

Sit down and make yourself comfortable. Take some deep breaths and notice your breathing. Try to reach the place within yourself where you feel most comfortable, closest to yourself, and forget what's around you. Try to go to the space within yourself where you creativity flows freely.

Once you have arrived there, try to envision what the ideal organization would look like, for yourself and in cooperation with others. Imagine that everything happens the way you would like it to happen. That you could create the best possible, maybe even perfect, organization in which people find great ways of cooperation.

Envision your ideal situation. What do you see, what do you hear, maybe even smell. See the positive, constructive ways in which you work with others.

Draw or describe what you see / hear / feel on the paper in front of you.



In your ideal situation / organization what are the values that drive you. What values specifically tell you that what you're doing is good

Draw or describe what you see / hear / feel on the paper in front of you.



In your ideal situation In your ideal situation / organization what makes the cooperation with others so successful. Is there a specific structure in the communication that helps you being successful?

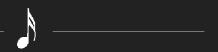
Draw or describe what you see / hear / feel on the paper in front of you.



In your ideal situation When you envision your ideal situation / organization in which way is it being led, facilitated. What characterizes the leadership?

Draw or describe what you see / hear / feel on the paper in front of you.

CREATING AN IMAGE



In the organization that is taking shape what is organization structure that will help you create your deal situation / organization?

Draw or describe what you see / hear / feel on the paper in front of you



In your ideal situation In your ideal situation / organization what is it you would like to achieve as a seam? What do you stand for? What do people say about you and your organization?

Draw or describe what you see / hear / feel on the paper in front of you



In your ideal situation In your vision how is what you being valued. And valued in such a way that feel truly valued, that you and your team / colleagues feel that you are making a difference.

Draw or describe what you see / hear / feel on the paper in front of you



In your ideal situation Now revisit your images and look at what is inspiring you. And when you look at the imagines is there anything you would like to add. If so please add it to your picture.

Draw or describe what you see / hear / feel on the paper in front of you.



Look at the final image you have created. How does it feel? Allow the feeling, the thoughts hat emerge, value / appreciate the energy that helped you create this ideal image of the future. And if there is any specific feedback you want to give yourself, please draw or describe it on the paper in front of you.



Now look around you and observe the wealth of creativity around you, and share amongst each other the richness of what has been created. Possibly you can identify themes that are in common.

OF SUSTAINABILITY

per made in Nepal, they created images of sustaining themselves. The full text of the activity is presented above.

Avoiding the groan fest

By Penny Walker | Reprinted from the environmentalist

It was a heartfelt plea which struck a chord with us all: "The ecoteam champions meeting is a 'groan fest'. The people who come along moan and groan about how bad things are, and we never move forward."

All of us knew what she meant.

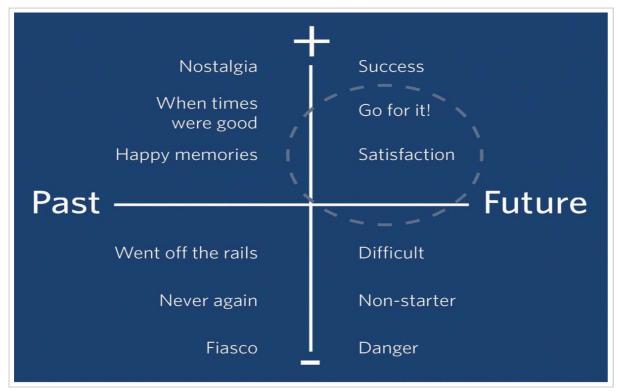
So how do you avoid the groan fest?

Naming the elephant

It can really help to 'name the elephant in the room' by explicitly drawing attention to your perception that the group has got stuck in a pattern of negative thinking, and that you'd like to shift this to something more productive. If people are willing to experiment with a new way of looking at things, then try this short exercise.¹

 On a whiteboard or flip chart paper, draw a two-by-two grid. Put a 'plus' sign at the top, and a 'minus' sign at the bottom. Write 'past' on the left, and 'future' on the right.

- Ask the group for words or phrases which fit in each of the four quadrants. Some examples are given in Figure 1
- Remind the group how powerful words and feelings are, and how they frame our expectations and can skew our analysis of what's possible. Ask where on the map people would mostly like the conversation to be, to be as productive and effective as possible.
- They will probably indicate somewhere in the area shown by the dashed line in this figure.
- Invite the group to notice when they seem to be spending too much time in some other part of the map



Naming the elephant - past, future, good, bad exercise

- and ask people to help direct the discussion back into the area they want to be in.
- Once the group has agreed to shift to more positive, future-orientated conversation, then you can choose from two basic approaches:

	Solving problems	Inspiring solutions
What is within my control and what can I influence, to help	solve this problem?	move us towards this vision of success?

Solving problems

The first approach is to take the complaints at face value, and examine them. By understanding them in greater detail and systematically developing ways to resolve each one, the group can use the meeting to agree an action plan - albeit incremental - which dismantles the barriers which are stopping it achieving its goals.

Inspiring solutions

The alternative is to focus on what the group wants to achieve: instead of letting the negative aspects of present circumstances dominate, ask people to conjure up an image of the positive opposite which they'd like to create. This approach can lead to more creative, transformational thinking, but you may have to allow people to purge themselves of groans before they'll be willing to look to the future.

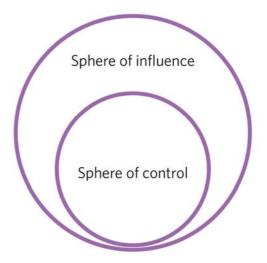
Let's look at both approaches in more detail (figure 1).

Problem solving

Sometimes the first step in moving beyond the groans is to acknowledge them: don't avoid the groan fest, encourage it!2

- Listen carefully to all the complaints, writing them up on a flip chart so everyone can see that they've been heard and recorded.
- When people have run out of moans, and using a different sheet of paper, invite people to work on the solutions to the issues. Begin with asking people what they do want (not just the absence of the things they don't want, but a positive alternative).
- Encourage the 'ideal world' solutions to come out, not just the grudging and compromise solutions.
- Following on from the identification of solutions, ask people to begin to focus on what they can control and

Wider cosmos



Sphere of control, sphere of influence

what they can influence to help bring those solutions about. If people seem to be talking about action in 'the greater cosmos' rather than in their own spheres of control and influence, bring them back to what they can do - not what they wish others would do.

Sometimes the problem is big and complex, and people may need to work on it between meetings, bringing in other people to be part of the conversation. Sometimes the barriers seem so intractable, that they prevent people from being able to see things in a positive light. In that case, you could try focusing on the ideal future instead.

Solutions focus

There are some rather magical questions which can help free people up to imagine in detail the positive future they want to see.

- Q: "Imagine you fell asleep tonight and all of the challenges disappeared by magic, what would be the first tiny signs that the miracle had happened?"
- Q: "If you had a magic wand, how would you want it to be? When/where does this happen already ... even just a little bit?"
- Q: "On a scale of 1 10, where do you stand right now with 10 being the perfect situation?" And when the group respond '3' because they are feeling so low, follow up with "What gets you that high already? What would get you one point higher?"

Appreciative inquiry

This is another approach which is based on noticing existing strengths and success (the top left quadrant).

Break the group into pairs. Ask them to reflect on a time when they did bring about a great change, despite the odds. It could be in their professional life, but it doesn't have to be.

Thinking about that time: What was going on? What did it take, to bring the change about?

Ask them to see what themes emerge from their conversation.

The pairs then get together into fours, which exchange stories and themes.

And finally the key insights from their conversations are shared with the whole group. These insights can inform discussion about how best to move forward.

No pain, no gain

Above all, use the dissatisfaction which people are expressing as a springboard to changing things: if what we are doing now isn't having the results we want, it makes sense to try something different.

So the next time you find yourself in a 'groan fest' meeting, try something new.

References:

¹ Thanks to Eric Brachausen, one of the many generous IAF members who contributed ideas in an IAF Forum online discussion about this situation

- ² Thanks to Teresa Michelsen, Rosa Zubizarreta and Andi Roberts, all of the IAF
- ³ Thanks to Trevor Durnford also from the IAF discussion forum for the Solutions Focus questions and the Appreciative Inquiry suggestion



Image credit: sxc.hu

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

IAF member Penny Walker is an independent consultant, experienced facilitator and trainer, and recognized expert and author on sustainable development. From her base in North London, in the UK, Penny helps large and small companies, NGOs and public bodies to create a better future. She also chairs Growing Communities, a North London social enterprise that grows and sells organic food. Visit her blog at http://penny-walker.co.uk/blog.

In writing this article, Penny was helped out by generous professionals who are members of the Association of Management Education and Development (www.amed.org.uk) and the International Association of Facilitators (www.iaf-world.org). For more about Solutions Focus, see www.thesolutionsfocus.com



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Liz Tayfun, Avalon Consultants with Christopher Cordey, Wholebeauty, Koenraad Van Brabant, Interpeace, and Stefanie Meredith, Independent.



Pamela Lupton-Bowers, PLB Consulting with Alistair Davison, Sarah Clark, Clear thinking Clear Communication, Virginia Guerrero, UNAIDS; and the back of Vyonnie-Amor Lee, WHO.

Resolving problematic group situations

By Pamela Lupton-Bowers

The Geneva Facilitators Network's first meeting of the year, held Feb. 17, started with a bang. Twenty seven motivated and energetic folks met in Geneva to engage with Alistair Olby of Kaizen Training UK as he led us through Roger Schwarz's intervention cycle.

The intention of the session was to share Alistair's experience with the Schwarz model in helping him deal with challenging behaviours, and to have the group explore for themselves how the model could help using both case studies and their own actual facilitation experiences.

The session opened with a brief introduction for pairs to discuss their own experiences and reactions to conflict in a meeting. There was a wide range of experience in the room and so examples ranged from 'avoid it', 'respond but not well, 'respond but feel bad'.

Even the more experienced facilitators admitted that even when they manage the situation, it can be destabilizing and emotionally draining.

We worked in groups of four to use the Schwarz six step model to resolve a series of 'problematic situations'

The Diagnosis Intervention Cycle is

- 1. Observe the behaviour
- 2. Infer meaning

- 3. Decide whether, how and why you might intervene
- 4. Describe the behaviour -check for different views
- 5. Share your inference check for different views
- 6. Help the group or individual decide whether and how to change the behaviour – Explain your meaning and intent – Suggest alternatives and negotiate

As Alastair explained, this model is one of many. It is similar to the basic 'observe, analyse and intervene' model. One of the strengths of Schwarz's model (see the diagram) is the internal 'diagnosis' and external 'intervention'.

Expectations and Process

An interesting discussion ensued and some valuable points were raised.

• The best way to avoid conflict is to effectively set the state of the meeting at the outset.

This is best achieved by agreeing Ground Rules

- Set expectation both for content and emotional state
- Design a good process that offsets potential difficult situations- split up people in small groups bringing them together for plenary about group outcomes



Andrea Miller UNAIDS, Christine Zeigler InterAct, Sina Zintzmeyer Interpeace and Aurelie Andriamialison, UNAIDS, choose their case.'



Cristy Lazar, Independent, Nadia von Holzen, Amanda Cunningham, ITC, and Marcos Val, Mgt Consultant, work through their scenario.



- Build a tool kit of alternative methods you can use if a person or a group goes off the rails. If what you are doing doesn't work, try something else.
- Become comfortable with silence and observation to see if the 'undesired' behaviour is really going to derail the group, or if it is just part of the healthy difference of opinion that is often essential for creative solutions (I call this creative abrasion!)
- Reflect back the responsibility for group function on the members of the group
- Remember that you are not solely responsible and aim to create self management on the part of the group
 Alastair was also a great advertisement for our upcoming
 Graphic Facilitation Workshop 19th March, as he was a student of Graham Shaw.

ABOUT GFN

The Geneva Facilitator Network is an English speaking network for anyone interested in facilitation in the Geneva and Rhone Alp area. We have existed since 2006 and are currently exploring becoming an IAF chapter. Information about all our meetings and workshops for 2010 can be found on www.gfn-net.ch. You can register and sign up as a member. If you are interested in the group rate and combined GFN IAF membership for \$175, contact any of us and we can arrange that for a minimum of 6 people.

Look behind you! The webinar facilitator's non-technical checklist

By Gillian Martin Mehers

Expectations and Process

I am currently in the middle of a purely online sustainability learning project that includes facilitating a number of webinars (10 to be exact) for a big multi-national company

with staff based all over the world.

For this project, I am one of a distributed delivery team from AtKisson Associates which is located in North America, Europe and Asia, because every module features virtual events in all these three regions.

Webinars are the main "person-to-person" component of this programme, so they are the anchor of the learning process (and they need to be good!) I've worked with online learning in the past, such as Horizon Live (an early webinar-like platform, but with no video input or participant audio interactivity possibilities), and even earlier with CD-based, email-mediated distance learning.

This is the first real experience I have had facilitating webinars that have so many bells and whistles. For this project, we are using DimDim (http:// www.dimdim.com/), which provides the slideshow, chat function, audio for presenters, recording, private chat, whiteboard, video link for the facilitator, and more.

For these webinars we are adding the audio interactivity for participants through a call-in conferencing number, which I access by Skype.

Multiple challenges

Needless to say, the first time I facilitated (after a trial run of course) it took me a while to get my head around all the moving parts of this delivery system. At any



Image credit: sxc.hu

one moment, I could be presenting slides myself or advancing the slides for a presenter, tracking and answering chat questions, watching myself on video, private chatting to the technology support person in Stockholm,

looking for my Skype mute button, while trying not to cough or type too loudly, and so on!

AND you have to pay attention on top of it, because you are facilitating after all and may need to bring a point back into the discussion later on. (Don't worry, it gets easier each time to do so many things concurrently - for the video game generation this is probably no big deal.)

I've participated in three so far, and during last week's webinar, anything that could happen seemed to do so technology-wise, testing our creativity, resilience, and Plans B and C on the spot. This morning I facilitated another one, and again, there were multiple, delightful surprises with Dimdim and even Skype at various times within the length of our one-hour event.

Because weird technical things happen during these online sessions, combined with the fact that I need to be fully present in terms of my attention, I find I need to prepare much more than I would have ever imagined prior to this one hour of sitting-at-my-computer facilitation.

As a result, I made this checklist for myself - a nontechnical checklist for facilitating a webinar. It considers things that I have noticed, about my computer, the content, my environment and myself. With these things ticked off, I am ready for (almost) anything - or at least I am not distracted by things I could have anticipated myself!



Non-technical Webinar Preparation Checklist:

My Computer

There are a number of checks that need to be made on your hardware that is not connected to any particular webinar package. For example: (I assume that I have already tested the webinar package and accepted the webinar invitation.)

- Close down all competing programmes that may be running and open documents except exactly what is needed: internet and Skype - (all those extraneous open windows, half written email messages and blog/Twitter/ FB/LinkedIn pages need to be shut down/saved)
- Check that the mute button on the computer is not on.
- Unplug the extra monitor, stick to one (nothing more maddening than having to look two places at once on top of everything else).
- Check that headphone/microphone cables are in the right jacks.
- Make sure you have enough money on your Skype account.

Content

Whether you are the presenter/facilitator or facilitating another speaker, you will need to be able to anticipate the next slides and have your discussion questions/notes queued up and ready to go.

- Have a copy of the printed slide set in handouts (6 per page - latest version of course).
- DON'T staple (it's hard to turn pages with one hand on your mouse/keyboard/pen).
- Print slides one sided (as an exception to the rule turning pages is also noisy).

 Make sure the pages are numbered legibly (so easy to keep in order as you slide them across).

Environment - Ambient Noise

This is critically important, whether you are in a cubicle or a home office - the latter can be even more unpredictable, as is my case. As the facilitator, you have your audio on 99% of the time, so any kind of noise is a big issue.

- Turn your cell phone on vibrate (even if it is across the room).
- Move any other phones like landlines out of the room (they tend to all go off at the same time as someone tries one, and then when you don't answer it, they try the other).
- Put a DO NOT DISTURB sign on the door (with the time frame of your call).
- Lock the door.
- Tell anyone in the house with a penchant for spontaneous hoovering to wait until after your call (nicely so they don't decide that they never want to hoover again).
- Let the cat in (especially if it likes to sit outside the office window behind your computer, meows loudly, has incredible persistence and suffers from bad timing).

Environment - Your Office

- Managing and preparing the space around you is incredibly important and easy to forget until you are right in the middle of your webinar and shuffling through stacks of stuff looking for a pen.
- Clear the desk from EVERYTHING except your slide set, one note paper and pen (everything else will be in your way at some point).
- Add tissues (seasonal)

- LOOK BEHIND YOU! (Use your video for this -move dead or past-prime plant, coffee cups, extraneous rubbish, strange photos, from view behind you).
- Straighten up any pictures on the wall or put up some visual interest behind you (NOTE Business Idea: Backdrops for webinar presenters that cover messy office spaces and add pleasing, unfussy visual interest. Swiss Alps, Tibetan monastery, Caribbean beach view.)

You

You and the slide set are the only thing that people are seeing/hearing for an entire hour, have a heart and think about it from their point of view.

- Think about what you are wearing (top half only). Can you add colour, pattern? (Same consideration as for a stand-up facilitator, but from the waist up.)
- Comb hair
- Apply lipstick (or increase your video contrast controls only half kidding here - nothing like a bland, washed out presenter.)
- Do you need coffee or water on hand?
- Don't forget the washroom (you won't be nipping out during the group work on a webinar)

What else would you add?

When I first started this checklist, I couldn't believe how many things needed to be considered prior to facilitating a webinar. I imagined that if I had my slides prepared I could just sit down, plug in and present.

But there is definitely more to it than that especially if you want to be able to concentrate on the content and dynamics in a virtual environment where you are getting much less sensory input.

In this kind of setting many of your facilitator senses are cut off or drastically reduced -you have no sight to speak of and certainly no visual cues on how people are feeling and following. You also have very little hearing, as most of the time participants are on mute until they want to speak, and certainly none of that sixth sense that helps a facilitator in a face-to-face setting read her participants in order to know how and when to engage them and adjust the process to fit their needs.

So for webinar success, increasingly a feature of a facilitator's work, you need to anticipate and prepare much more than you might expect. Make your own checklist or add to mine - what have I left out?



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

IAF Europe Newsletter columnist Gillian Martin Mehers is director and head of learning at Bright Green Learning @Atadore SARL, in Crans-près-Céligny,



Switzerland. She blogs regularly about facilitation and learning at www.welearnsomething.com

Visit this blog post online to see the interesting discussion that it has evoked - http:// welearnsomething.blogspot.com/2010/02/look-behind -you-webinar-facilitators.html.

You can reach Gillian at gillian@mehers.com.

"Tervetuloa Suomeen" Welcome to Finland

IAF Europe Conference 2010 | Friday Oct. 15th -Sunday Oct. 17th

Finland, the land of 180,000 lakes and islands, has a population of 5.3 million people, 203,000 reindeer, and just one Santa Claus - the real one!

Later this year, many IAF Europe members will see Finland first hand during the 2010 IAF Europe Conference, which will take place between Friday October 15 and Sunday October 17.

The conference venue is the Conference and Cultural Centre Sofia, located 17 kilometers from the centre of Finland's historic capital city, Helsinki. Set on the picturesque Kallahti peninsula, the centre sits in a peaceful and tranquil woodland by the sea and offers spacious and modern conference facilities with a variety of residential and non-residential options. It is located just 22 kilometers from the International Airport.

The Conference Planning Team is made up of members of the Finnish Association of Facilitators (FAFA) who will work alongside the planning team in the United Kingdom to create a valuable learning experience for all participants. As well as helping to select the conference venue, the team is now actively working to finalise the themes and strands of the conference programme.

The Finnish Planning Team includes Laura Elo, Leni Grŭnbaum, Miira Heinio, Piritta Kantojärvi, Reijo Kauppila, Päivi Kutilainen, Jarmo Manner, Pepe Nummi, Mikko Paloranta, Camilla Reinboth, Anna Savileppä, Tytti Siltanen, and Jan-Erik Tarpila. This team of 13 is supported by



Jan-Eric Tarpila, Ben Richardson and Pepe Nummi at the recent planning meeting

Nicki Cadogan and Ben Richardson in the IAF Europe office.

The IAF Europe Newsletter will bring you regular monthly updates on the conference programme and preparations for Certified Professional Facilitator assessments that are planned to take place on Wednesday and Thursday before the conference.

You are invited to register your interest in presenting or contributing to this year's conference by sending brief details of your proposal to the conference office at conference@iaf-europe.eu

You may also call Nicki Cadogan or Ben Richardson on +44 (0)1923 271150. If you live in Finland, you may use the Finnish number 09 2316 5522



IAF German Chapter Update

By Holger Scholz





Markus Püttmann, Holger Scholz, Christian Rieckmann, Christine Wank, Peter Döring, in Kassel on Feb. 9, 2010 (IAF Germany)

The German IAF Chapter was founded last year. We are delighted that Holger Scholz sent us these pictures and this update on the German chapter's activities: We are currently having 9 members in our Chapter in Germany (4 CPFs). Since the foundation last year we have met once in Bad Honnef as well as once during the last IAF Europe Conference in Oxford.

Our activities included inter alia the development of a German Webpage providing information on the approaches and principles of facilitation, on the IAF and the Chapter members, as well as information on training opportunities where you can learn how to facilitate. Please have a look at this webpage at: www.iaf-germany.org

Last Tuesday (Feb. 9, 2010) we had another Chapter meeting in Kassel with 5 people coming from different parts of Germany. We have discussed different potential project ideas and agreed that we would like to update further information on the webpage (now both German and English) with respect to the trainings in the field of facilitation.

Moreover we have discussed the question if we could offer to organize an IAF Europe Conference in Germany."

(A note – Ben Richardson of Entendu has followed up on the German chapter's questions about conference



IAF germany the german association of facilitators

organization. We would be delighted if it will be possible to have the 2011 IAF Europe conference in Germany – we will keep you posted on this possibility.)

Since we are guite young as a Chapter we feel that we are still in the phase of building the foundations for cooperation and future projects as well as providing the basic information and learning opportunities for facilitation in order to foster the approach and the work of the IAF in Germany.

Facilitation here in Germany still is to many a new approach (and term). We were also discussing all the implications and duties which come along a national IAF Chapter.

(A further note – Kristin Reinbach of the IAF Europe Team is exploring the questions about chapters and chapter development. If you want to discuss the chapter question with her, you can reach her at kristin.reinbach@iaf-europe.eu.)



The Australasian Facilitators Network (AFN) in affiliation with the International Association of Facilitators (IAF) would like to invite you to their Hobart conference in 2010: an opportunity to reflect, be challenged, share our knowledge and understanding and to learn from each other.

In times of such rapid change when the world around us is moving at such a pace, when the environment in which we live is pushing back and communities, businesses and governments struggle to realign their lifestyles and explore their choices on a changing planet, we need more than ever to strengthen our adaptive behaviours! As individuals, as communities, as organisations, as professionals we need:

RESILIENCE – to make deliberate and positive choices to adapt, to embrace change and nurture our 'boinginess' (yes, read that one again and ponder it!) As facilitators how do we build our own adaptability and support this in the groups we work with? What are the qualities that enable us to bounce back during challenging times? How can we support our clients to build resilience and adaptability?

CREATIVITY — as facilitators we rely on our ability to create, to bring something new into existence, to support groups and individuals to be the best that they can be at a particular point in time. As professionals we bring to this so many creative skills in rainbow combinations. It is our inventiveness and responsiveness with these skills that enables us to respond to any given context, group or issue. Explore your creative capacities!

GROWTH – not necessarily bigger or grander, but richer, deeper, of more significance and value - as we explore what we have to offer as individuals and as a profession. Building our skills, knowledge and capacities to add value. To have confidence in our abilities and know our limitations and nurture this awareness in others.

We not only invite you to the conference as a participant but welcome proposals for conference and preconference sessions. You can download an Expression of Interest (EOI) form at www.afnconference.com.au.

Alternatively you can contact the conference convenor, Shel O'Toole, at afnconference2010@gmail.com with any queries about proposals or the conference in general. The deadline for EOI's is 10 March.

What a wonderful environment is Hobart to explore these themes; with its inspiring natural setting, its thriving arts community, its rich history of community action and empowerment. Come and be challenged, nurtured, stretched, amused, fed and celebrated at the AFN/IAF Conference in 2010.....so how far south than you've been?

Welcome, new and returning members

(February 2010)

We are delighted to welcome new members who joined IAF in February:

- Matteo Andreacchio, Italy
- Dr. Elizabeth Barrett,UK
- Irene Beautyman, UK
- Stephanie Burns, UK
- Owen Cook, UK
- Beth Cumming, UK
- Becky Evans, UK
- Alec Grimslev, UK
- Ana Herrera. UK
- Jennifer Howie, UK

- Susie Ironside, UK
- Alex Lamberton, UK
- Su Moir, UK
- Lydia Okroy, UK
- Jon Pinkney, UK
- Linda Rodgers, UK
- Nikki Ross, UK
- Sharlene Slattery, UK
- Warren Towner, UK
- Heather Williams, UK

We are equally delighted to welcome back the following members who renewed their memberships during February:

- Sirin Bernshausen, Germany
- Nathalie C. Berthier-Ortmann, Germany
- Nancy Chapple, Germany
- Virginia Diploudis, Switzerland
- Karen Foong, UK
- Ray Goodsir, Netherlands
- Arcan Bülent Güner, Turkey
- Sieglinde Hinger, Germany

- Mairead Kavanagh, Ireland
- Robert Krzisnik, Slovenia
- Sally Murfitt, UK
- Marjeta Novak, Slovenia
- Christine Partridge, UK
- Markus Püttmann, Germany
- Andi Roberts, Spain
- Carol Sherriff, UK
- Simon Wilson, UK
- Barbara Zuber,Germany

Congratulations, new CPFs!

The IAF Europe team extends our warmest congratulations to the three new Certified Professional Facilitators who achieved the CPF designation during the assessment held in the Netherlands in February 2010. They are:

• Willem de Smalen, Netherlands

■ Paul Manders, Netherlands

- Claudia W.M. van de Pol, Netherlands

Workshops and Meetings 2010

Find out more details about specific events listed here by visiting the Workshops and Meetings section of the IAF Europe Forum (http://www.iaf-europe.eu) If you would like to let others know about an event you are organizing. please email rosemary.cairns@iaf-europe.eu.

Find out more details about specific events listed here by visiting the Workshops and Meetings section of the IAF Europe Forum (http://www.iaf-europe.eu) If you would like to let others know about an event you are organizing, please email rosemary.cairns@iaf-europe.eu.

MARCH 2010

- UK Al Network meeting, March 8, London, UK
- Advanced Facilitation Skills, Mar. 9-10, Knaresborough, North Yorkshire, UK (facilitate this!)
- The Facilitation Days 2010, the Swedish IAF Chapter's Leader and Facilitation Conference, Mar. 11-12, Gothenburg, Sweden (Jonas Roth and Malin Moren)
- Asset-Based Community Development Master Class, March 16-17, London UK (Cormac Russell/Jim Diers)
- Facilitating Conflict, March 16-17, Glasgow (Kinharvie Institute of Facilitation)
- Open Space Technology training (en Francais), March 24 -26, Brussels, Belgium (Diane Gibeault)
- Group Facilitation Methods, March 24-25, Manchester UK (ICA:UK)
- Action Planning, March 26, Manchester UK (ICA:UK)
- Community Consultation: Hard choices, engagement and localism, 8th annual conference, March 31, London UK

APRIL 2010

- 9th European Al Network meeting, April 9-10, Bled, Slo-
- Group Facilitation Methods, Apr. 13-14, London UK
- Facilitation Skills Program, Spring 2010, Glasgow, Kinharvie Institute of Facilitation, April 13-14; May 18-19; and June 2-3. (Christine Partridge)

- Making Meetings More Effective, April 21-22, Glasgow (Kinharvie Institute of Facilitation)
- Basic Consultation Processes, April 21, Bedfordshire UK (Consultation Institute)
- IEMA Change Management workshops, Apr. 28, London UK (facilitator Penny Walker)
- Group Work Skills, April 28, Manchester, UK (ICA:UK)

MAY 2010

- Introduction to Group Facilitation, May 11, Manchester UK (ICA:UK)
- Making consultation meaningful, May 12, Devon, UK (Consultation Institute)
- Group Facilitation Methods, May 12-13, Manchester UK
- Maximizing Participation How to Hold Large Scale Interventions, May 13, Glasgow (Kinharvie Institute of Facilita-
- Consultation Before and After, May 13, Bedfordshire, UK (Consultation Institute)
- Group Facilitation Methods, May 18-19, Belfast, Northern Ireland (ICA:UK)
- The Facilitative Trainer, May 26-27, Glasgow (Kinharvie Institute of Facilitation)
- Resilient Cities 2010 Congress, May 28-30, Bonn, Ger-

JUNE 2010

- CPF Certification Event (in Dutch), June 17, Rossum, The
- Group Facilitation Methods, June 29-30, London, UK
- Accountability works! sustaining outcomes in changing times, Jun. 30 - July 1 July, London (The Centre for Public Scrutiny)