

Communication Styles: Move-about & Debrief

As arrive, move about the room, writing down definitions, thoughts & phrases related to each word.
As a large group, review what was written for each word.

- DIRECT
- LEAD
- TEACH
- FACILITATE

In small groups, discuss the following questions:

- *Think back over your experiences and share one time when you have acted in each of these roles?*
- *Which role or style do you naturally identify?*
- *What is the value of each of these styles?*
- *How would each of these styles look in your role as a teacher/leader?*

Leadership Styles

Review the four animal signs around the room. (Lion- “do it now”; Puppy- “lighten up”; Turtle- “let’s work together”; Owl- “do it right”)

Have people stand by the picture they best represent themselves. In your “style or animal groups, answer the following questions. Develop a creative way that best represents their animal (style) type while sharing back the answers to the questions with the large group.

- *How is this animal/person perceived?*
- *What are its strengths/weaknesses?*
- *How do they communicate?*

What is a Facilitator?

We have identified our preferred communication styles and leadership styles. Now we are going to focus on one of those styles-facilitation- and how it can be used with children. A facilitator is some whose focus is on supporting a process or journey. In the case of the role of the teacher as a facilitator it is making the process of learning & the journey of discovery.

Review the following points with the group

- Asks specific questions
- Promotes dialogue
- Looks for meaning & insight
- Honors diverse perspectives
- Creates an inclusive group
- Promotes consensus and group decisions
- Supports the groups action & ownership
- Is reflective
- Empowers others

In small groups, briefly discuss the following quote - thoughts and ideas of what it may look like
A facilitator is “a guide on the side not a sage on the stage.” Anonymous

Facilitation Methods

Applying Methods to our Work with Children:

Give each group one facilitation method to learn and then quickly demonstrate with the group. The focus of this activity is to think about the following methods can be used with children.

- **KWL**
- **Focused Conversations**
- **Open Space**

Additional use: Facilitation Methods can be applied in different groups: staff & parent meetings etc.

Reflection: Group Question - 8 minutes

Give the group a chance to answer the following statements and share their answers

- *In my opinion, being a facilitative teacher/leader means...*
- *I plan on trying...*

How to Use KWL

1. Choose a topic.
2. Create a KWL chart.

K	W	L

3. Ask children to brainstorm what they know or think they know about the topic.

K Column Suggestions

Have questions ready to help students brainstorm their ideas. Sometimes children need more prompting than, "Tell me everything you know about _____," to get them started. Encourage children to explain their associations. This is especially important for those associations that are vague or unusual. Ask, "What made you think of that?"

4. Ask children what they want to learn about the topic.

W Column Suggestions

Ask an alternative question for generating ideas for the W column. If, in response to "What do you want to learn about this topic?" the children are either having trouble coming up with ideas, or are saying, "nothing," try asking one of the following questions instead:

✚ "What do you think you will learn about this topic from the text you will be reading?"

✚ Choose an idea from the K column and ask, "What would you like to learn more about this idea?"

Come prepared with your own questions to add to the W column. You might want children to focus on ideas in the text on which the students' questions are not likely to focus them. Be sure not to add too many of your own questions, however. The majority of the questions in the W column should be student-generated.

5. Have children research their topic and fill out the L column of the chart.

L Column Suggestions

In addition to answering the W column questions, encourage children to write in the L column anything they found especially interesting. To distinguish between the answers to their questions and the ideas they found interesting, have children code the information in their L columns. For example, they can put a check mark next to the information that answers questions from the K column. And they can put a star next to ideas that they found interesting.

Resource: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/KWL_table

What do we KNOW about ___?	What do we WANT to know about ___?	What have we LEARNED ?

How to Develop a Focused Conversation (*in a nutshell*)

"An open, focused, serious, collaborative dialogue of discover where you speak so you can hear"—Howard & Barton

- A four stage series of questions to elicit responses that move from surface to depth
- The leader collects the wisdom of the group
- All thoughts are equal
- Pushes the conversation to the creative and away from criticism
- Determine goal for conversation
- Set opening premise
- Ask objective level question.
- Give each person an opportunity to answer the first question
- Open conversation to more free form dialogue on second question

Resource

The Art of Focused Conversation- R. Brian Stansfield <http://ica-associates.ca/Resources/AFC.pdf>

Focused Conversation Stages and Sample Questions

Objective Stage

Focus: Data

Group Process: Ensures everyone is on the same topic and opportunity to get their voice in the room to promote participation

If This Step is Skipped: No shared vision or image of what group is talking about, lack of connectivity

Sample Questions: What stands out for you? What happened? What do you remember? What questions of clarity do you have?

Reflective Stage

Focus: Feelings & relationship to the data

Group Process: Gets at gut response to information

If This Step is Skipped: The feelings about the information are not addressed

Sample Questions: Strengths/gaps? Liked/disliked? What concerns you? What excites you? What part reminded you of your own experience?

Interpretive Stage

Focus: How this applies to work/life

Group Process: Elicits significance of information

If This Step is Skipped: Limits thinking to reaction not higher order decision making

Sample Questions: What is the importance of this? What new ideas does this give us? What is being recommended? What insights are emerging?

Decisional Stage

Focus: Action, resolution, results

Group Process: Relevance for future decisions

If This Step is Skipped: Conversation lacks closure and real life application

Sample Questions: What have we decided? What can we commit to? How would you articulate our conversation?

TIPS: Supporting Large Groups with Focused Conversations

- If groups are larger than 15, it is recommended to have each table or small group facilitate their own focused conversation and then report back highlights of the conversation to the larger group.
- If the group has participated in multiple conversations or if time is running short the facilitator may need to adapt the questions as needed to support group needs and processing.

How to Use Open Space Technology *(in a nutshell)*

4 Principles and 1 Law

- **Whoever comes are the right people.** (SA context- *it okay if someone is absent that day or if children choose not to participate*)
- **Whatever happens is the only thing that could have.** (SA context- *The results are the results, it is not the adults responsibility to change them*)
- **Whenever it starts is the right time.** (SA context- *Still existing in the daily schedule frame, it may start right away or take some time to gather the group*)
- **When it is over, it is over.** (SA context- *Still existing in the daily schedule frame & staff work schedule, if it ends early children don't have to stay and be "made" to do more*)
- **The Law of Two Feet-** use them to find the right place for you (SA context- *the children get to choose which groups they are going to, how long they stay in that group, and their amount of participation*)

A sample script has been included- this does not have to be read word for word-please use your own words to communicate the concepts.

Set the Stage

Focus: Frame the Context

Invite open space participants

Set the question or theme for the focus

Establish a space that is large enough to accommodate a circle of chairs for all participants and enough private spaces for small group work

Establish the timeframe

Opening

Focus: Open Space and Set the Frame

Give people a chance to introduce themselves and their interest in the topic

Establish the open tone for the work including the four principles and one law-see sample opening

Keep it short, simple & fun

Include the following ideas:

- *Theme*
- *4 principles & 1 law*
- *Quick overview of the process*
- *You are responsible for identifying the issues YOU want to talk about*

Setting the Agenda

Focus: Establish the Agenda and Meeting Groups

Gives the group the opportunity to determine the content and structure of the day-see sample script

Allow children to draw pictures to represent ideas, thoughts, & issues

Include the following:

- *Identify your issue & put it on paper with your name on it*
- *Stand up and read it to the group*
- *Tape it to the wall*

Share with group how long it took the to generate their agenda & the number of topics

Opening Space

Focus: The Wisdom of the Collective Group in Process

Individuals establish their interests and choose where to work -see sample script

Have baskets of items that can be used as "talking sticks" and other fun manipulatives

Include the following:

- *Figure out which group(s) you want to be a part of and where you will meet*
- *Determine a note taker, historian or someone to gather the groups thoughts & ideas*
- *It may be a bit chaotic but it is up to the children and the group to work through the challenges*
- *Remind the group of how long they have to meet and when you will come back together to share their thoughts & ideas*

As the facilitator you may need to "find something else to do" while they work through this section-I like to tidy things up!

Closing & Celebration

Focus: Confirms and Celebrates the Groups Work-

Have each group share what topic(s) they discussed and a few of their ideas.

Start anywhere, and go around the circle allowing each participant, who wants to, the opportunity to say what was of significance and what they propose to do. But do make it clear that nobody has to say anything.

Give people the opportunity to share a song, dance, art, poem, etc that expresses their feelings of celebration related to the work done.

Resource: http://www.openspaceworld.com/users_guide.htm

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Sample Script

This is a sample version of a script used with adults. Please feel free to make this your own and adjust it to the age and group you are working with.

Opening

"Our theme for this gathering is _____. We are going to develop our best thoughts around the issues and opportunities associated with our theme. As we start, I want you to notice the blank wall. That is our agenda. I will ask you to identify any issue or opportunity you see around our theme, give it a short title and write that down on the paper provided. Then stand up in front of the group, say what your issue is, and post the paper on the wall. Make sure that you have some real passion for this issue, and that it is not just a good idea for somebody else to do. For you will be expected to take personal responsibility for the discussion. That means saying where and when the group will meet, convening the group, and sharing the results of your discussion. You may offer as many issues as you like, and if at the end of the day, you do not see your issue on the wall, there is exactly one person to complain to. Yourself.

"Once all the issues are up, everybody will be invited to come to the wall and sign up for as few or as many of the groups as they desire. From there on out, you are in charge. Even though Open Space is truly open, there are some principles and one law that we need to keep in mind. (Refer to the 4 principles & 1 law listed above). We also challenge you to see yourself as a **butterfly**- moving from group to group and getting a "lay of the land" or a **bee**-cross pollinating groups with ideas from previous groups visited.

Setting the Agenda

"Keeping the Four Principles in mind, along with the One Law, it is now time to get to work. Along that line, there is one question to start. What are the issues and opportunities around our theme, for which you have real passion and will take genuine responsibility? And when you have identified an issue or area, give it a short title, write it down on the paper provided and sign it. Leave some room at the bottom for others to sign. As soon as you are ready, stand up where you are, read out your title, and tape it to the wall. Don't wait to be asked. Go when you are ready." For those of you who wondered whether we would have something do, you might take a look at our wall. You might also note that we have generated the items for our agenda in less than ____ minutes.

Opening Space

"When you find one that interests you, where you could learn or contribute, sign your name on the bottom. Sign up for as many as you like, and don't worry about conflicts. We'll take care of them in a minute. It may seem a little chaotic, but it turns out that chaos is the way the fields of the mind are plowed so that new ideas can grow. Some of you may be finding a few conflicts, but it should be easy to work out. It is called negotiation. If you want to go to two groups meeting at the same time, find the group leaders and see if you can get them to merge their sessions or change their times. Of course, if they won't do that, you will just have to make a choice, but that is the way life is. From here on out -- you are on your own. As soon as your group is ready to go to work, go to it. We'll see you all back here at closing."

Role of the Teacher/Leader

The teacher/leader's responsibilities are as follows:

- Create the invitation based on observation and feedback from children regarding important topics
- Frame the Open Space including the 4 principles & 1 law, and topic
- Explain the process for setting the agenda and opening space
- Move out of the way to let the children set the agenda/schedule, determine issues, decide what conversations they participate in, and record the results of the conversations
- Participate as an equal partner to insure that the agency/center's beliefs and policies are represented
- Remind or model participation including being a butterfly or a bee, making choices, and focusing on issues of passion
- Support conflict management, negotiation and problem solving as needed to insure emotional & physical safety
- Facilitate the closing, insuring all children who want to get a chance to participate
- Be open to trying children's ideas even if as the adult you think they may not work
- Be comfortable with chaos and not having total control of the process and end results