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Creating a world to which people want to belong

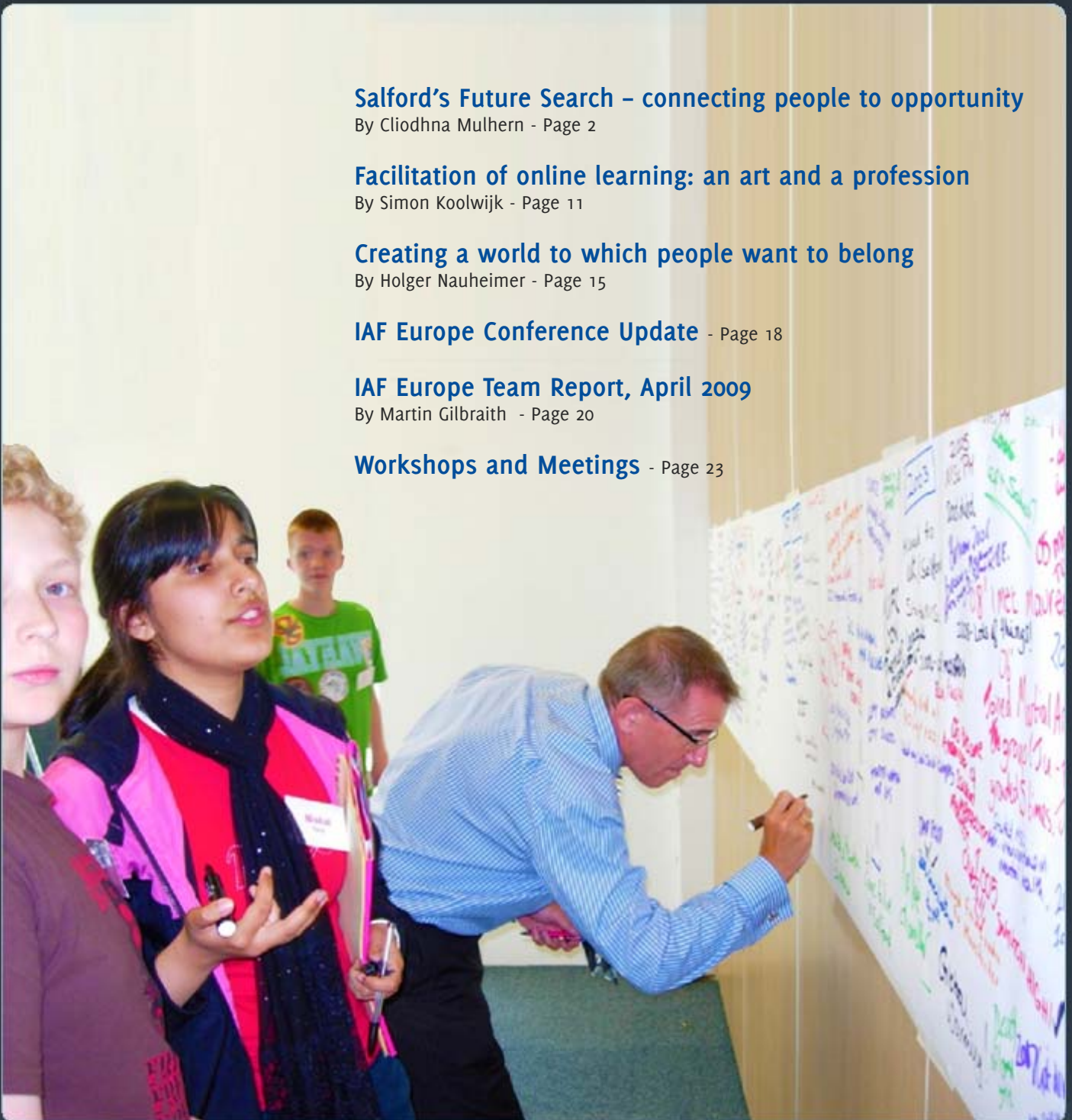
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Young participants receive a national Diana Award from Esther Rantzen and Robin Gibb, honouring their contributions to Salford's Future Search. (Partners in Salford)

Salford's Future Search – connecting people to opportunity

by Clíodhna Mulhern

About Future Search

In 2004, in an echo-chamber of a room in Stockholm, I listened expectantly as Sandra Janoff and Marvin Weisbord, the originators and cham-

pions of the Future Search method, told the following story:

Six blind men go in search of an elephant. When they find it they each take hold of a part of its great body. The blind man who holds the leg

describes it as a pillar, the second who holds the tail describes it as a piece of rope, the next holding the tusk describes the elephant as a spear, the fourth blind man holding the ear describes a fan and the fifth holding the trunk describes the elephant as like a snake. Although none describes the whole correctly, explains the wise man, all are correct about their own parts of the elephant, as each has a different perspective.

I loved the story then and I still do. (I must remember to tell it more often!) It illustrates so simply the value of the Future Search method. We see things in much the same way as these blind men - each of us only sees or experiences our own part. We have a limited understanding of the whole. "Whole systems" approaches, as the name suggests, help us to see the whole, to see the inter-connections...the spaces in between the parts.

Future Search is a unique planning method used successfully world-wide by thousands of agencies from communities to governments. (See <http://www.futuresearch.net>.) Future Search makes it possible - and sometimes even easy - for large diverse groups to understand their shared world, to appreciate one another's perspective, to arrive at common ground, to take responsibility for action, and to develop commitment to doing something when they leave the room.

A Future Search conference is a highly structured planning event, practical and task-focused. It lasts for a minimum of 16 hours over 3 days. The event focuses on the future and on common ground rather than past conflicts and



*Small group work is the key to Future Search's success.
(Partners in Salford)*



Future Search co-creator Sandra Janoff leads the mind mapping process. (Partners in Salford)

problems. It brings together 60 to 80 people in one room or hundreds in parallel sessions.

Participants come from all walks of life into the same conversation - those with Authority, Resources, Expertise, Information and Need. People tell stories about their past, present and desired future. Through dialogue they discover their common ground. Only then do they make concrete action plans.

The process design comes from theories and principles tested in many cultures for the past 50 years. Future Search relies on mutual learning among stakeholders as a catalyst for voluntary action and follow-up. People devise new forms of cooperation that continue for months or years.

Salford's journey to 'whole systems' working

Salford's Future Search was an important step on a longer journey that began in 2006 when a small team of government appointed advisers started to work with Salford City Council and its partners under the umbrella of Partners in Salford, the Local Strategic Partnership. Salford had a track record of experimentation and innovation in partnership working so this venture was not unusual. Our purpose as a team of advisers was to support the partnership in planning for the delivery of its Local Area Agreement (multiagency agreement on local priorities).

To create an environment where this complex partnership could see itself as a system seemed a helpful starting point. So we spent a period of months facilitating a series of linked conversations on various Local Area Agreement themes (for example, worklessness, health, environment) using Open Space in particular. (I was a graduate of the powerful OST Training programme described in the March edition of this journal and can speak up for its effectiveness!).

Hundreds of people across the system participated, sometimes in several of the thematic conversations. This was a busy and lively time in Salford. The experience created an appetite for collaborative working and a growing curiosity about “whole systems” approaches...fertile ground for the more intense whole systems dialogue possible in a Future Search.

In my own experience as a process facilitator and host working with a range of dialogue processes, Future Search calls for a higher level of commitment from “leaders” - not least because of its demanding structure. Part of the skill of the facilitator of systems transformation, therefore, is to know when and where to use different methods. By October 2007 it was clear to me that the time was right for a Future Search.

Salford had not only embraced the principle of whole systems working as part of its transformation process but was customising its own whole systems process called Spotlighting for use at the neighbourhood level. Local leaders, both political and managerial, were persuaded of the value of whole systems dialogue and the highly



Young people played a key role in shaping Salford's vision for the future. (Partners in Salford)

experienced LSP support team was enthusiastic to do the work necessary to make the Future Search happen. This was October 2007. I called Sandra Janoff who was enthusiastic. We agreed to work together. The Future Search took place eight months later.

Planning

Our first step as co-facilitators was to meet with the planning group, 22 people, a diagonal cross section of “the system.” In the course of two (half-day) meetings, several months apart, we agreed on the theme, “Seizing Salford’s Moment: Connecting People with Opportunities”. We also selected the stakeholder groupings that related to that theme with either Authority, Resources, Expertise, Information or Need. Overlaid on this were considerations of demographic and geographic factors before we arrived at the final list.

The search for the best “stakeholder balance” is one of the many worthwhile challenges of preparing a Future Search. Keeping the numbers manageable is another (64 is the ideal). Getting this right goes a long way to securing successful outcomes from the event. The Planning Group did a good job in those two meetings to focus the theme and to get the right people onto the stakeholder lists. While so doing they created a powerful sense of shared purpose...a strong planning group was in place.

Ask any Future Search facilitator, any sponsor or any planning group member - the most challenging aspect of a Future Search is getting the right people to come along for the duration (16 hours over 3 days seems like a Big Ask at first sight). This is where the Planning Group’s influence and collective power of persuasion works wonders...and it was to prove so again on this occasion, helped immeasurably by the hard work of the LSP support team.

Careful thought was given to the selection of the young people (11 of the invitees were young people) who came from a wide range of social, economic and educational backgrounds, disabled and non-disabled. The LSP Support Team worked with Salford’s Children’s Champion and the Youth Service to “find” and support these young people. As a way of briefing the 11 young Future Search participants, we hosted a separate Open Space event especially for young people in the lead up to the Future Search. With the same theme as the Future Search - “Seizing Salford’s Moment: Connecting People with Op-



The mind map shows trends that affect the theme – connecting people with opportunities. (Partners in Salford)

portunities” - the Open Space produced plentiful ideas and perspectives which the 11 young people carried into the Future Search with confidence. These ideas were captured on pin board and were displayed throughout the Future Search.

The Event

So it was that in July 2008, 59 people gathered at Digital World Centre on Salford Quays, opposite the site of Media City, one of the several regeneration projects which would bring exceptional opportunity for Salford people. City leaders, front line workers from a range of services, business leaders, government officials, strategic managers, local activists and residents, including young people....people with interests in health, housing, regeneration, education, social welfare, training and skills, culture, neighbourhoods, sustainability, environment, community engagement,

business, criminal justice, community development and more...they all came together over a three day period to address their theme.

Day One : Where we have been and where we are now...

Day one focused on the past from 1974 until the present day. People introduced themselves with the help of an object which for them, symbolised Salford : a bottle of nail polish, a bag of peat, a framed newspaper hoarding announcing Salford's improved educational attainment, old photographs, recent photographs. All carried people's stories and prepared people for the next exercise; the creation of a timeline.

A huge timeline, the length of three walls of the room, mined people's wisdom for the history of Salford since 1974, including personal and global events.

A rich picture of a shared history, some new perspectives and improved understanding



Future Search encourages thoughtful sharing. (Partners in Salford)

all emerged from the follow up exercise analysing the timeline for meaning relating to our theme. Time spent on this first exercise seeds benefits right throughout the Future Search process.

We ended day one with one of the most powerful exercises in a Future Search; the creation of a group mindmap. Using a wall of the room, Sandra Janoff worked skillfully with the group to create a huge map of the major trends affecting our theme. As we worked through the trends coming from the group, both the complexity of the issues affecting our theme and their inter-relatedness became visible for all. The stage was set for the following day's work but first it was home to bed...

Day Two : Where we are now and what we wish for the future..

The day started with stakeholder groups selecting for themselves the trends with most relevance. Groups then identified their "prouds" and "sorries" - the best of the past and the things they would like to have done better. Every stakeholder group does this exercise separately. In my experience of Future Search, the reporting of these to the full group is one of the high points for participants. Prouds are welcomed by all and sorries are embraced with compassion...something about the gathering changes perceptibly at this point...

Put yourself 16 years into the future. Today is 22 July 2024. The Salford of your dreams is now a reality. People are connected with opportunities! The community is thriving...describe:

1. What life is like?
2. Policies structures and programmes that are in place?
3. How stakeholders in Salford relate to one another?
4. How Salford keeps the spirit of growth and change alive?

Moving from single stakeholder to mixed stakeholder groups participants launched into the creation of ideal future scenarios with a passion...lots of talking, dreaming and creat-

ing...music, poetry, drama, drawing, collage, sculpture, making, costume. Groups presented back their desired futures to the gathering and people wondered at both the similarities and the differences between the groups' visions of a Salford where everyone was connected to the opportunities the city offered. Excitement, optimism and noise were high at this point. From there, we moved into an increasingly reflective phase, focusing on the search for the similarities...the common ground principles.

After a period of group work, people began to combine their ideas with other groups to find



The walls show the work done by participants. (Partners in Salford)

the common ground principles around which they could begin to co-create a future where people are connected to opportunity. Working across eight flip charts, young people in particular keeping the energy high, the full group worked together to clarify these principles. People listened carefully as each group reported; they sought clarifications and listened carefully again. Occasionally the room fell silent as everyone reflected, young people and others waited patiently by the flip charts, and co-facilitators remained silent. Seemingly effortlessly, the common ground emerged in a simple form on each flip chart. People paused and reflected again...before saying that this they were agreed on. The day ended with the emergence of the key themes for the following day's action planning. It was time to go home...

- Creativity
- Families
- Homes
- Prevention better than cure
- learning, skills and work
- Low carbon economy
- Neighbourhoods
- Transport
- Young people in influential positions

Day Three: How do we get there

People started by crafting strong short common ground statements describing the future they wished to create. Groups worked on these carefully building in the common ground principles agreed the evening before.

These statements served as a launch pad for



Work is done in small groups, then reported back to the entire group. (Partners in Salford)

the energetic action planning that was to take up the remainder of our time. Every nook and cranny of our suite at the Digital World Centre was occupied by a group. For many, breaks were set aside as people worked on to complete their work. All groups produced an action plan. Champions stepped forward for each theme, offering to take forward the action plan. The Future Search was coming to its conclusion.

Salford designed this event as an important step in a process of transformation, not as an end



(Photo: Partners in Salford)

in itself. After the event, they got to work. The action plans from the process have been integrated into the delivery planning for the Local Area Agreement. The people involved in the Future Search have been welcomed into the discussion groupings of the Local Strategic Partnership. The principles of whole systems working are influencing how the partnership operates.

Future Search was a developmental process for the partnership. It has confirmed the importance of having the right people in the room, which has become one of the partnership's guiding principles when planning new areas of work. It has gifted the partnership a group of people from diverse backgrounds who are committed to working together in new ways to improve the lives of the people of Salford. At the heart of this way of working is the importance of dialogue and the principle of common ground.

Practical actions are in the making. Plans to develop an occupational health and wellbeing scheme for public services is underway. The young people involved in the Future Search won a national Diana Award for the quality of their

contribution. The Future Search experience gave them a unique experience of active citizenship, building their confidence and their appetite to play an equal part in civic society. Two of the young people now have a show on Salford City Radio where they hold city movers and shakers to account. People from the business community and from the university have been working with the young people to create a publications group for young people in the city. Many unlikely alliances connecting people with opportunities in Salford...which reminds me, that was the theme of the Future Search.

About the author:

Clíodhna Mulhern co-facilitated the Future Search with Sandra Janoff, who co-created this unique action planning method with Marvin Weisbord. Clíodhna advises Partners in Salford, the local strategic partnership, and proposed the idea of holding the Future Search. For more information about Salford's Future Search, contact her at Clíodhna@flowstone.org.uk, or see the Partners in Salford site at www.partnersinsalford.org. For more information about Future Search, visit www.futuresearch.net or contact Sandra Janoff at sjanoff@futuresearch.net. For a full report of the Salford Future Search conference, and its workbook, see <http://www.partnersinsalford.org/future-search-2.htm>.

Facilitation of online learning: an art and a profession

by Simon Koolwijk

“Imagine you have 15 organisational advisors working around the world. Most of them work in remote areas and don’t have the means to meet colleagues who work on the same issues. The means to organize a face-to-face conference amongst the advisors are limited, and still there is a strong need to exchange and share experiences.”

This was one of the requests which Simon Koolwijk and Joitske Hulsebosch got in 2006 when they talked to the Dutch development organization ICCO. Together with ICCO, they decided to start a 4-week E-Conference, where the different advisors would be able to exchange their experiences on organizational development.

A discussion platform was started and every week participating advisors shared their views through a Skype teleconference. The benefits appeared to be many. Advisors gained a new perspective on their role, and gained confidence by hearing and sharing similar experiences. The conference provided a space to experiment with e-tools, and it saved costs. The organization received feedback from the field, which helped them to review their policies.



(Photo courtesy of Simon Koolwijk)

Between 2006 and 2008, Simon and Joitske organised several E-Conferences and a Community of Practice was developed on organizational development. Stories and literature were benchmarked on a wiki (<http://iccocad.pbwiki.com/>), blogspot (<http://www.iccocad.blogspot.com/>) and delicious (http://delicious.com/compantuser/capacity_development).

This is just one of the cases which are presented in the course "Facilitation of online learning".

The course – 'Facilitation of online Learning'

The course has been developed by Sibrenne Wagenaar, Elmine Wijnia, Joitske Hulsebosch and Simon Koolwijk, who are all experts on e-facilitation and e-exchange.

"If you look for a combination of face-to-face and electronic learning, it is a worthwhile investment to do this course," says Simon Koolwijk.

Participants get an common online experience during the week in advance of the face-to-face training through a discussion forum



(Photo courtesy of Simon Koolwijk)



(Photo courtesy of Simon Koolwijk)

called Ning (www.ning.com). They are asked to introduce themselves and share some questions they have they would like to see answered during the training. The photo's with a Facebook character invite people to explore, to get to know each other, and to share their expectations. People immediately make contact and are already excited, even before the course has started. "It is really stimulating", says Simon.

During the one-day course, participants are asked to bring in their own case, and from there, their thinking is stimulated by the course. In the morning, cases are presented and shared by the trainers. Later on, participants exchange their views and thoughts through a chat.

Their input is taken to the afternoon session, where participants further elaborate their case by using the wiki platform. At the end, the groupwork is presented and in-depth discussion

helps them to further explore the benefits of online facilitation.

By the end of the course, the participants have gained ideas on how to set up and facilitate a process, where electronic tools such as skype, discussion groups (for example google groups), ning, youtube and delicious can help their target groups a step further.

Online facilitation is an art you have to master

Sibrenne Wagenaar: "I would like to stress that the success of online learning is heavily dependent on how you organise the process and the facilitation. Most facilitators and organisers think that learning will be initiated spontaneously during and after a face-to-face meeting and that on-line learning will take place by itself after the meeting. However this is not the case. My experience is that you really have to think through each step and link the online learning component with the physical meeting component. Designing an online process is really an art and a profession.

Elmine Wijnia: "Online tools require a different kind of communication and therefore need a different kind of facilitation than in face-to-face settings. Most facilitators are very good at the latter, but feel lost in an online environment. The facilitator can have different roles in the process. He/ she can be a convenor - hosting the discussions, or a moderator summarizing people's input, or an animator stimulating and involving



(Photo courtesy of Simon Koolwijk)

the audience. A pitfall is that the facilitator falls into the trap of becoming an expert. Therefore, it is useful to appreciate the audience as being the experts themselves or to ask them whom they like to host as a specialist.

Joitske Hulsebosch: "what you see is that experienced face-to-face facilitators have to become comfortable with the ins- and outs- of various tools themselves before they can facilitate well."

Participants' feedback

"At the end of our last course on the 25th March 2009 participants responded very enthusiastically", says Simon. "We kept our Ning platform running after the course, and we got some fantastic feedback. Some have started immediately with small experiments in their own



Simon Koolwijk

organisation, others have initiated discussions in their network to develop online processes, and others shared they very much enjoyed the day and were inspired!"

The next training courses on working with e-tools will be organised on May 29 and October 15, 2009, in Utrecht, The Netherlands. The next training for 'Facilitation of Online Learning' will be held on June 16, 2009. For more information. werkenmetweb2.wikispaces.com

About the author:

Simon Koolwijk is a trainer/facilitator in capacity development for private sector and nongovernmental organizations for more than 15 years. He specializes in training trainers in participatory and facilitation methods, project management & project design, curriculum development, communication skills and organizational analysis.

Simon has worked in more than 15 countries, mainly in Eastern Europe and Africa, in environment, human rights development, agriculture, water, health and sanitation and development of social infrastructure. For the past two years Simon also has facilitated E- Conferences and electronic exchange groups of professionals in capacity development. Simon's motto in life is: "If people discover their path to their passion, then miracles will come through!"

For more information about ICCO, see <http://www.icco.nl/>. For Skype, see <http://www.skype.com>. You can find Simon Koolwijk at www.simonkoolwijk.blogspot.com; Joitske Hulsebosch at <http://joitskehulsebosch.blogspot.com/>; Elmine Wijnia at <http://elmine.wijnia.com/weblog/>; and Sibrenne Wagenaar at <http://www.link2learn.eu/>

Creating a world to which people want to belong

by Holger Nauheimer



Holger Nauheimer

Many years ago I had several encounters with Robert Dilts, one of the early developers of the systemic thinking school of NLP. Robert, in his kindness, has left a deep impression on me with the subtitle of his book “Visionary Leadership Skills”, which serves as the title of this little article on how facilitators can have an impact on change in organizations and societies. I hope Robert doesn’t mind.

We are living in times in which most aspects of life have become unpredictable. Will we still be in business next year? If so, what new skills will we need to serve our clients? If we are employed, will we still have a job? Will our kids be able to develop their talents and gifts? Will our organizations become better places, where the individual contribution is valued and where team work becomes a means for personal and corporate success? Will there be more or less wars, terrorist attacks, and hunger (for food and for meaning)?

And these are just the big questions – just try to write a list with two columns: in one column, jot down the things that you deem certain and in the other those which you think are

uncertain. What's your personal balance?
So: if uncertainty and unpredictability prevails, can we as facilitators have an impact or are we subject to the strong forces of a seemingly chaotic world?

I believe we can. As facilitators, we

- help teams to develop
- create room for dialogue
- assist organizations to improve their collaboration practices
- support individuals in their intent for personal growth
- deconstruct complexity and enhance comprehension
- understand and describe systemic patterns in groups and organizations
- serve as role models that provide orientation
- allow emotions and feelings to be expressed
- identify emerging leaders and give them room to experiment
- express our views on the good, the bad and the ugly of organizations and societies
- act as messengers of social initiatives
- suggest tools for improved collaboration

(add your suggestions here)

As systemic thinkers, we know that every action has an effect on the system. At the end, our work boils down to one simple thing that we do: Creating space for passion and responsibility to unfold. I love to start my workshops with a

simple exercise: I ask the participants to get off their chairs (which of course are assembled in a circle with no tables), and spend 15 minutes to meet other people. For these 15 minutes, I encourage them to talk about two aspects of themselves: What are they passionate about? What do they want to take responsibility for during the workshop (and beyond)? This little

activity sets the tone and provides fertile ground for openness, transparency, emotional involvement and collaboration.

So, here is our contribution to a better world: let's focus on helping to increase the global quantity of passion and responsibility. If we commit to this as an objective for any of our workshops, then I am not worried about our impact. Have a look at a video on how a group of young Asian people have understood this concept and what they came up

with as their commitment:

<http://www.change-management-blog.com/2009/02/what-are-you-responsible-for-what-do.html>

There is more reason for optimism: the global web culture that has developed over the last years is an indicator showing that people do collaborate if they have the tools, the freedom to use them and nobody standing behind their backs. Gary Hamel has expressed this perfectly in an article for the Wall Street Journal ("The

“
*We are made wise
not by the
recollection of our
past, but by the
responsibility for
our future.*”

George Bernard Shaw

”



Video shows young peoples' commitments

Facebook Generation vs. the Fortune 500" <http://tiny.cc/Gewpr>). He describes the following patterns of collaboration via social media:

1. All ideas compete on an equal footing.
2. Contribution counts for more than credentials.
3. Hierarchies are natural, not prescribed.
4. Leaders serve rather than preside.
5. Tasks are chosen, not assigned.
6. Groups are self-defining and -organizing.
7. Resources get attracted, not allocated.
8. Power comes from sharing information, not hoarding it.
9. Opinions compound and decisions are peer-reviewed.
10. Users can veto most policy decisions.
11. Intrinsic rewards matter most.
12. Hackers are heroes.

Quite a good description of how the real

world should function, isn't it? So, let's start to build in real life what works in the Web already. I am ready to assume the hacker's position, if so wished.

About the author:

Holger Nauheimer has 20 years of professional experience of which he spent 15 years as a consultant, trainer and coach for private business, the public sector and non-governmental organizations. He has worked in more than 50 countries of Europe, North, Central and South America, Africa and Asia, and specializes in the facilitation of personal, team and organizational transformation.

He is the founder of the Change Management Toolbook (<http://www.change-management-toolbook.com>), a social platform for change facilitators, and he regularly blogs about change at his Change Management Blog (<http://www.change-management-blog.com>). Currently, he is exploring social media as means to facilitate change in organizations and societies. Follow him on Twitter (<http://twitter.com/hnauheimer>).

Helping us to focus on the future – Keynote speaker Rohit Talwar

Rohit Talwar, one of the world's leading futurists, will be a keynote speaker at the 2009 IAF European Conference in Oxford, England, helping us to focus on current and future scenarios that affect us and the businesses and organizations with whom we work. An award-winning, entertaining and thought-provoking speaker on future global trends and challenges, Rohit helps governments, global businesses, and individuals anticipate, understand and act on the trends, forces and ideas that are shaping our futures.

Drawing on more than 10,000 hours of research, he works with global corporations, innovative young companies and governments across the world, advising global leaders and helps them develop insights into the key trends and developments shaping the future and then act on them to create and deliver strategic innovation and change. He has under-



Rohit Talwar

taken research, consultancy and speaking engagements in more than 35 countries on five continents, has written widely on futures, strategy and change, and has appeared on BBC TV, CNBC, and BBC Radio 4 to talk about future trends.. He was editor and lead author of the book *Achieving Transformation and Renewal in Financial Services*.

His particular interests include China and India, travel and tourism, and global trends and issues such as climate change and the rise of online virtual worlds. He was recently invited to share the platform with California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger to discuss California's future in a changing global economy.

Studying global trends

Currently running the largest Horizon Scanning and Futures Programme in Europe for the UK Government and leading a study on the critical global trends over the next 50 years, Rohit

also facilitated the consultation for the UK MoD's major study on Strategic Trends 2030 and has recently completed the design and facilitation of an Accelerated Scenario Learning programme for a global pharmaceutical company. He also has worked with the US Department of Defence, Singapore National Horizon Scanning Centre, Finnish Foresight Programme, a wide range of UK government agencies, and a blue ribbon list of corporate clients around the world.

Rohit motivates organisations and individuals to challenge orthodox views, consider future possibilities, and create their preferred futures. He uses in-depth research, practical experience and powerful imagery to help people understand, act on and benefit from the complex trends, forces for change and uncertainties that are shaping our world. Rohit is most commonly asked to consult on and speak about the following topics:

- Agility - How do you survive and thrive in a fast changing world?
- Foresight - How can we identify and benefit from key future global trends and drivers?
- Growth - What are the implications, opportunities and risks of EU enlargement?
- Strategy - How we develop focused, fast and flexible strategies?
- Imagination - Where can we exploit breakthrough technology?
- Innovation - How do we use foresight to drive rapid innovation and create new ventures?

Change Leadership - How do we develop future-focused leaders and motivate our top talent to be first to the future?

To get a preview, see a fascinating interview with Rohit at <http://www.thetalentjungle.com/hotels-travel-tourism-future-vision-2020/>. You can find Rohit at <http://www.fastfuture.com/>

Preliminary program posted

The preliminary program for the conference, on the theme "Get Inspired", can now be seen on the IAF Europe 2009 Conference site, at www.iaf-europe-conference.org. More than two dozen exciting conference sessions, and 11 exciting pre-conference sessions, are part of the program already, and more sessions are being added as you let us know more about what you need.

The programme is designed to address four key areas:

- Tools and Techniques (T) – providing an opportunity to add to our tool boxes.
- Professional and Personal Growth (P) – an opportunity for us to focus on the practical aspects of setting up and running our businesses in these tricky times as well as continue our own personal growth.
- Research & Theory (R) – bringing us the latest research in human behaviour, group theory, organisational development and learning.
- IAF (I) – helping us get the most from our professional body.

Gary Purser is the Chair of the 2009 IAF Europe Conference, and the member of the IAF Europe Team responsible for professional development. You can reach him at gary.purser@iaf-europe.eu.

Bulletin Board

News from the European Team: April 2009 Report to Members

By Martin Gilbraith

At the IAF Europe 2008 conference in Groningen in October, Rosemary Cairns, Gary Purser and I were appointed to form a new leadership team for the IAF European region. Soon after the conference the three of us met in Manchester, in November, to plan our work for 2009.

We published profiles of the three of us in this newsletter in November, and a brief report of that planning meeting in December. We felt that now would be a good time to report to you in some more depth on the plans we made then and how they are progressing, and to share an overview of the financial position of the region.

The following is drawn from a more comprehensive 5-page report drafted for the IAF global Board meeting to be held prior to the IAF North America conference in Vancouver this month. The full report can be found with this article on our online Forum at www.iaf-europe.eu, under 'News from the European team'.

Do please share any queries or feedback, either on the Forum or directly with any of us – and do please let us know if you are interested to get involved in this work, whether at the regional level or locally in your area. There is much to do,



and we rely largely on volunteers from among the membership to do it. We are grateful to all those of you who have contributed, and are contributing, to the life of the Association.

Communications & publicity

This is Rosemary's area of responsibility. In this area, we planned to establish a monthly IAF newsletter and an active IAF Europe website, make use of social networking sites and other collaborative e-technologies to promote IAF and enable networking among members and other facilitators, and encourage and enable the use of more languages within the IAF region.

This is the 6th issue of the new newsletter. The new regional website is live at www.iaf-

europe.eu, and includes a Forum with a 'language café' and events notice board, back issues of the newsletter to download, and links to & from other IAF sites. Rosemary has posted messages and links on various Facebook and YouTube pages, and uses Google Docs to distribute the newsletter.

Professional development

This is Gary's area of responsibility, and includes the annual conference and Certified Professional Facilitator (CPF) programme. In this area, we planned to ensure an annual IAF European conference to deliver satisfaction to members and income to the region, to make 12 conference scholarships available in 2009, and to support and promote two CPF assessment events in the region.

Oxford was selected as the location for the 2009 conference from among three contenders, a



Martin facilitating our team discussions in Manchester in November, 2008. (Photo: Rosemary Cairns)

local conference team has been established, and contracts have been signed with Keble College Oxford as the conference venue and Entendu as the conference management company. The conference was launched in February, and open for early-bird registrations at www.iaf-europe-conference.org.

Early promotion has led to five conference sponsors being secured already, and delegate bookings are ahead of the last two years' conferences by around 12 weeks. A good number of applications have been received for conference & pre-conference sessions, and the draft programme is almost ready to publish. We have committed to provide a minimum of 5 scholarships from our reserves, and more depending on conference income.

One CPF event was held in Switzerland in December, two events in Dutch are scheduled for the Netherlands and a pre-conference event is scheduled for September.

Organisational growth

This is also Gary's area of responsibility, but Rosemary has agreed to cover for Gary temporarily to allow him to focus on getting the conference underway. In this area, we planned to ensure effective management of memberships (new, renewing & expiring members and promotion of membership), to achieve a total of 500 members and 12 chapters or affiliates in Europe in 2009, including expanded membership in Eastern Europe.

We have established regular and systematic

communications to welcome new and returning members, and to follow up with expiring members to encourage them to renew or learn why they will not. New chapters in Germany & Serbia have been approved by the Board, and we are following up interest in possible new chapters in Ireland, Italy, Poland, Slovenia, Turkey and the UK.

Total membership in Europe has varied since November between a high of around 360 and a low of around 320, with an underlying trend of decline if anything. Growing the membership remains a key strategic priority for the region, and for IAF globally, for the year.

We are hopeful that the conference will better attract new and returning members once the programme is published shortly, and that new partnerships with facilitation training providers offering 1-year student-rate memberships will also attract new members.

Governance & support systems

This is Martin's area of responsibility. Within this area, we planned to participate fully in the global IAF Board, publish a brief 2008 annual report and finance report, establish formal and transparent governance links between IAF Europe and IAF globally, hold monthly team conference calls and another face-to-face team meeting, achieve a closing reserve balance of €40k, and

each spend on average a day per month on IAF business.

I have participated in two global Board conference calls and almost daily in ongoing electronic discussions, and shall be attending the 1-day face-to-face Board meeting in Vancouver in April and the 2-day meeting in Cape Town in October.

In the detailed report on the IAF Europe Forum, you will find our financial report for 2008 and the first quarter of 2009. The paperwork is underway to have the three of us appointed as Board members of the region's Netherlands-registered foundation 'IAF Europe Stichting', along with existing Board member Maureen Jenkins and in place of Jim Campbell. Maureen and Gary Austin, authorised signatories on IAF's Netherlands and UK (Euro & Sterling) bank accounts respectively, have agreed to continue for the time being in those roles and

provide us with regular consolidated financial reports.

We have established a team Yahoo group and a routine of monthly internal team reports and conference calls, and plan a second face-to-face team meeting in Oxford, with the conference team, in June.

We are finding our plan to each spend on average one day per month on IAF work somewhat naive – one day per week (or more) would be closer to reality!



Finances

In terms of the financial report, there is an established policy that a share of members' dues are paid by the globe to the regions and that in return a share of regional conference surpluses are paid by the regions to the globe, however this has not yet been implemented.

For the time being, IAF Europe's primary source of income is the annual conference, and the main expenses (beyond the conference itself) are member services and communications. Our present reserve balance is largely the product of the lucrative 2006 conference in Stockholm. The 2007 conference in Edinburgh earned a small surplus with 182 delegates (just received, after a delay caused by the hiatus in the regional team), and the 2008 conference in Groningen made a small loss with just 109 delegates.

Given that we have only a minimal reserve after two poor years for conference income, and given the current economic climate as well, we have taken a prudent approach to budgeting for 2009. The projection shown allows just a skeleton expense budget, and assumes the conference just breaks even, in order to indicate what conference loss we could afford to sustain within our existing reserves.

The 2009 conference budget breaks even on 160 delegates with no sponsors, and would take around 250 delegates and €10k of sponsorship income to enable us to achieve our ambition of a closing reserve balance of €40k – so please help us to rebuild a reserve that will allow a more ambitious plan for member services in the region next

year, by booking to attend the Oxford conference yourself and by helping to promote it to potential delegates and sponsors!

Welcome new and returning members, March 2009

We are delighted to welcome the following new members who joined IAF during March.

- Carol-Anne Alcorn, UK
- Simon Bradstreet, UK
- Taryn Carlton, UK
- Steve Coulson, UK
- Shona Cowan, UK
- Bethan Evans, UK
- Sam Groves, UK
- Leni Grünbaum, Finland
- Angie Henney, UK
- Amelia Lee, UK
- Judy Leslie-Carter, UK
- Arthur Lourijsen, Netherlands
- Mary Mackay, UK
- Erik op ten Berg, Netherlands
- Vicki Phillipps, UK
- Annabelle Ridley, UK
- Peter Riemens, Netherlands
- Damien Sherwood, UK
- Maria Vicente, Sweden
- Clare Wheeler, UK

We are equally delighted to welcome back IAF members who renewed their memberships during March:

- Karen Bailey, UK
- Sue Banjo, UK



- Vicky Cosstick, UK
- Stephen Davey, Switzerland
- Knud Lindholm Lau, Denmark
- Eugenio Molini, Spain
- Sally Murfitt, UK
- Penny Pullan, UK
- Graham Rawlinson, UK
- Linda Todd, UK

Workshops and Meetings

You can find out more details about specific events by visiting the Workshops and Meetings section of the IAF Europe Forum (<http://www.iaf-europe.eu/phpBB3/viewforum.php?f=8>)

If you would like to post an event in the Forum, please email rosemary.cairns@iaf-europe.eu.

MAY 2009

- Public Participation Training, May 4-8, Edinburgh, Scotland (Hilton Associates)
- Citizen involvement in town and rural development - conference, May 5-7, Vingstedt, Denmark (BalanCity Project).
- The Organization Workshop, May 12, London, England (John Watters)
- Facilitation Skills, May 13-14, London, England (The Management Centre)
- "Participatory Strategic Planning" May 13-14, London, England (ICA:UK),
- International fundraising e-Conference May 12-14, online
- Graphics Made Easy, May 14, Birmingham, England (Penny Pullan and Vanessa Randle)
- Netherlands CPF Certification Event, May 14,

Rossum, The Netherlands (IAF)

- European Awareness Scenario Workshop (EASW), May 14-15, Milan, Italy (Scuola Superiore di Facilitazione)
- International Fundraising Festival 2009, May 20-22, Prague, Czech Republic
- Open Space Technology training, May 21-23, Milan, Italy (Scuola Superiore di Facilitazione)
- Co-creating an Awakened Culture, May 23-25, Findhorn, Scotland (Findhorn)
- Post-Merger (PMI) Readiness For People, Process and Organizational Integration Management, May 27-29, Berlin, Germany (I-Focus International)
- The Leadership Workout, May 29-31, Wiltshire, England (Maureen Jenkins and Ayleen Wisudha)

JUNE

- "Introduction to Group Facilitation" June 2, Manchester, England (ICA:UK)
- "Group Facilitation Methods" June 3-4, Manchester, England (ICA:UK)
- Brain Friendly Learning for Trainers, June 3-5 (Kaizen Training)
- Facilitation for Leaders, June 2009-May 2010, London, England (CFOR)
- Facilitator Masterclass, June 23-25 (Kaizen Training)
- UK Appreciative Inquiry Network meeting, June 29, London, England
- Narrative techniques for business (story-listening)— June 24, London, England

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APRIL '09

(Anecdote)

- Storytelling for business leaders (storytelling)
—June 25, London, England (Anecdote)

JULY


- "Group Facilitation Methods" July 14-15,
2009, London, England (ICA:UK)
- "Action Planning" July 16, London, England
(ICA:UK)

AUGUST

- Appreciative Inquiry experienced
practitioners workshop, Aug. 17-19, Kent,
England (Jane Magruder Watkins and Anne
Radford)

SEPTEMBER

- "Group Facilitation Methods" Sept. 1-2,
Manchester, England (ICA:UK)
- "Action Planning" Sept, 3, Manchester,
England (ICA:UK)
- "Introduction to Group Facilitation" Sept. 3,
Manchester, England (ICA:UK)
- Leading Meetings that Matter, Sept. 10-12,
Noordwijk, The Netherlands (Sandra Janoff
and Marvin Weisbord)
- Managing a Future Search, Sept. 14-16,
Noordwijk, The Netherlands (Sandra Janoff
and Marvin Weisbord)
- IAF Europe CPF Certification Events, Sept.
16 & 17, Oxford, England (IAF)
- IAF-Europe Facilitators Conference, Sept. 18-
20, Oxford, England.
- "Group Facilitation Methods" Sept, 23-24,
London, England (ICA:UK)



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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