



Synectics^{LLC}

Working with Organizations to Create *Sustainable* Transformation

Facilitation Skills for Chaotic Times

Developing Internal Capacity for Leading and Sustaining Positive Transformation

Overriding Goal:

The goal of this comprehensive program is to develop the skills and knowledge of people so that they can design, implement and sustain strategic initiatives in schools to improve achievement for all students.

Facilitation Skills for Chaotic Times focuses on three interconnected areas of study - Leadership, Systems and Facilitation Process Skills. Each program is uniquely designed to embed such skill development into the actual strategic work of the participating schools and districts.

Building the Case

It is abundantly clear both in and outside of education that leadership, and especially facilitative leadership, is essential to achieving and sustaining high levels of academic achievement. Robert Marzano, et al conducted a meta analysis of studies that links principal leadership to student achievement. They identified specific traits that most correlate to leadership effectiveness, the majority of these being connected to a facilitative style of leadership. Kenneth Leithwood, et al in their 2004 study stated that:

“One of our major conclusions is that leadership is second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn in school”.

Evidence in the business sector has been accumulating for years relative to the connection between leadership and organizational success. Collins and Porras in their book Good to Great, analyzed the process of ‘tipping’ mediocre organizations into true success stories. Leadership is at the core of such turn around companies. Not surprisingly, these leaders all shared common characteristics – a focus on values, core principles, and a reliance on a collaborative culture. This leadership style requires deep understanding of

systems and the ability to utilize the day-to-day process skills for building relationships, connections, and making information abundantly available.

So the big question remains of whether you can train people to become great leaders with a powerful facilitative style. The answer is somewhat complex. It turns out that it is very difficult to train or develop a bad leader into a good leader, but it is very easy to develop a good leader into an exceptional leader. The same is absolutely true for powerful facilitator leaders. In fact, the best way to develop and nurture good leaders is to develop them inside organizations that have powerful leadership cultures. Inside that culture people are given many experiences for learning and development in which they receive ongoing coaching in their facilitative leadership craft. These same systems actively select for these types of leaders through recruitment and promotions over time.

Therefore, the strategy is to identify the good facilitative leader, provide a development program that is embedded in the real organizational work of student achievement and simultaneously transforms the culture of the organization. Over time, this becomes a powerful and positive reinforcing loop of improving academic results, improving leadership and greater organizational congruence.

Program Design:

In working with all types of organizations over the past 27 years, it is clear that widespread skilled leadership is the most limiting and critical variable to sustained success. Organizations need to develop leaders who:

- ❑ Have a deep working understanding of organizational “systems” and the art and science of leadership
- ❑ Are able to diagnose and plan appropriate system interventions
- ❑ Are able to design and facilitate group conversations and planning sessions
- ❑ Have deep interpersonal skills essential to coaching and mentoring
- ❑ Are able to provide support and coaching to others regarding change and project implementation

At the most basic level, this program is designed to develop a group of highly skilled leaders (Teacher Leaders, Principals, Assistant Principals, District Coaches and Consultants, and Leaders) who engage with the rest of the organization to help facilitate the transformation of the organization. It is an action learning process in that the learning is applied directly to the strategic imperatives of the organization.

The Program consists of four major elements; 1) Focusing the work, 2) Face-to-face training, 3) Skill reinforcement processes, and 4) Application of the skills into the strategic work of the organization.

Component 1: Focusing the Work

The first step in contracting the work involves a conversation with the formal leaders to clarify the overall program outcomes and to design the process to support the specific strategic priorities of the organization.

Component 2: Face-to-Face Training Program

After very careful screening and contracting, program leaders (participants) engage in 3-5 training modules totaling 10 days scheduled over a 3-6 month timeframe. The scheduling and sequencing of the modules corresponds to the nature of the organizational work (strategic imperatives) developed in step 1. The broad outcomes of the modules are as follows:

Training Module #1: Building skills focused on the individual

- ❑ Introduction to the key systems, leadership and facilitation models and philosophy
- ❑ Focus on communication and rapport building skills
- ❑ Strategies to build new teams
- ❑ How to handle difficult group dynamics
- ❑ Observation and questioning skills

Training Module #2: Building skills focused on groups

- ❑ Build understanding about the core principles of group facilitation
- ❑ Build caring and nurturing learning environments
- ❑ Focus on various group conversation strategies and models – Appreciative Inquiry, The Process Enneagram, and ICA's Discussion Method

Training Module #3: Moving individuals and groups to action

- ❑ Practice with various planning methodologies to use in group settings – ICA's Workshop Method, Mental Models Process and The Process Enneagram for Planning
- ❑ Introduction to project design principles and approaches
- ❑ Accountability strategies and approaches

Training Module #4 Sustaining & supporting ongoing change

- ❑ Leading organizational change
- ❑ Building connections across systems
- ❑ Coaching & mentoring
- ❑ Ongoing learning and redesign strategies
- ❑ Building sustainable systems

Component 3: Reinforcement Processes

The key distinguishing feature between this development approach and other more traditional training programs is that it builds upon best practices in the “transfer of learning” field. Embedded inside and between each training module are a series of Reinforcement Processes that raise the probability that training transfer goes from 5% to 85%. These processes include:

- Work application exercises that apply skills directly to the workplace
- Weekly teleconference learning sessions focused on specific skill application

Component 4: Application of Skills Inside Strategic Imperatives

Beginning in the second training module, the participant group begins to utilize the new skills by facilitating schools sites in the strategic work of the organization. This is the component that the whole program is truly designed to accomplish. The skillful application of new leadership ideas, strategies and skills will allow participating school districts to achieve the academic and cultural goals for their system.

Track Record

Facilitation Skills for Chaotic Times was one key element in a multi-pronged approach developed and implemented by Riverside County Office of Education. The work was sponsored by the California Department of Education, Special Education Division as part of their Focused Monitoring Program. The specific program is called RCAT+/ Riverside County Achievement Teams (plus an emphasis on Special Education). This work has been evaluated by Susan Leddick of PKR, Inc. and significantly positive correlations were found for increasing student achievement and participation in the study. The Leadership component of the work was specifically studied and attributed to have significant influence on the results. Contact – Mike Jones, Associate Superintendent for Riverside County Office of Education (951) 826-6648.

“As I have increased my knowledge of the learning process – I use process and facilitation skills as the power tools to help us clarify and resolve issues and to create and complete a path of travel to improve student learning.”

**Dawn Walsh – Project Coordinator for RCAT +
Riverside County Office of Education**

As a result of the facilitation training and coaching provided by Steve Zuieback, we have fundamentally changed both the TYPE of work we do with our schools and districts, and HOW we do that work. The San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools Curriculum & Instruction Division is now focused on providing the types of systemic services that directly enhance the capacity of our districts and schools to create sustainable, results-oriented learning and teaching environments, and by far, the most powerful tool we have to do this is the repertoire of facilitative leadership skills we have gained through our work with Steve.

**Francisca Sanchez, Associate Superintendent
San Francisco Unified School District**

The Desert Mountain SELPA in San Bernardino County has been sponsoring this program to provide capacity building for their school districts. Many of these school districts have attributed their improvements in student achievement to their participation in this development program. Contact – Ron Powell, Program Administrator, Desert Mountain SELPA (760) 242-6333.

In fall of 2006 the Ocean View School District in Huntington Beach utilized this development process to bring together all of their Principals, Assistant Principals, and District Managers to learn leadership, facilitation and systems skills inside their focused district and site priorities. Contact – Bev Hempstead – Assistant Superintendent, Ocean View School District (714) 847-2551.

“I know you realize how transformational the facilitation training truly is for administrators and teachers. Not only does the training provide specific skills training and a forum for practicing those skills, but also empowers educators to take more personal responsibility for implementing systems change - site and district level. The skills I learned in facilitation training transformed how we collaborate as a full school team, focusing on the 'right work' such as instructional improvement, leveraging resources and helping students gain proficiency rather than remain mired in the distraction of minutia. In terms of how the district principals and management team operate, the facilitation processes we learned in training supports our work together. Specifically, our meetings are now collaborative and centered on student achievement”.

Liz Williams, Principal – Marine View Middle School

Your facilitation training provided the "mini" below the green circles for the important work we are doing in OVSD. I am reminded daily of the MAJOR personnel changes/transitions our district has experienced and continues to experience. Without the facilitation skills gained through the training, our district would probably have lost its momentum. However, it has been those ongoing, skillful, facilitated conversations, led by staff across the district, that kept us afloat and focused on what matters most - STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT.

Beverly Hempstead- Assistant Superintendent Ocean View School District

About the Facilitator:

Steve Zuieback is president of Synectics and a member of the Dalmau Network based in Australia. Steve has extensive consulting and training experience with education, private business, governmental organizations, communities and non-profit organizations in the areas of leadership, systems, creative planning, change implementation,



productivity improvement, team development, and community building. Steve's professional activities take him around the country and internationally. He has worked with BHP, ALSOC, Coles Myer and Transport South Australia in intensive leadership development and planning sessions in Australia, and has worked extensively with Ernst & Young in South Africa and Australia and Indonesia.

The key focus of Steve's work now is in the area of building deep leadership capacity within large organizations and systems. Steve has been involved in the design and facilitation of the statewide Leadership Institute process sponsored by CalSTAT and funded by the California Department of Education. He is also active in an emerging Community of Practice focused on Systems Change in Education.

Fee Schedule:

The actual fee schedule for a particular program is somewhat dependent on the unique design. In general the cost breakdown is as follows:

Component 1: Focusing the Work	\$ 3,600 – \$ 4,250
Component 2: Face-to- Face Training -includes travel -maximum of 36 people per training -All material duplication, logistics, room rentals and refreshments are covered by client	\$22,000 – \$27,500
Component 3: Reinforcement Processes (optional)	\$ 4,250
	<hr/> \$29,850 – 36,000