

Case Study - The journey to becoming a Facilitator

Learning to facilitate and integrate with your professional expertise, wherever you are...

Question: What do the skills and practice of facilitation have to do with leadership and followership?

Answer: More than you may realise.

Picture the scene...

A new National Technology and Innovations centre. Full to the brim with smart people whose brief is to connect existing industry with innovators, and to find new ways forward with global conundrums. Yet, for all the PhD's and other professional skills, we are not taught how to facilitate, nor to value it.

Why might we need these skills now more than ever?

Because a business can be transformed by enhancing the skills required to manage meetings, and groups of innovators who need to come up with answers to intractable problems, whilst at the same time learning to be an active follower who can build on others' ideas rather than unintentionally being a "social loafer". Because teams and groups don't always add up to "more".

The brief from the technology centre:

"How can we facilitate and collaborate with all our stakeholders, ultimately building the respect and goodwill of all the participants who give their valuable time to attend our workshops? This ultimately has a direct effect on the engagement levels we will have to continue to collaborate and facilitate our industry in innovation for all our futures."

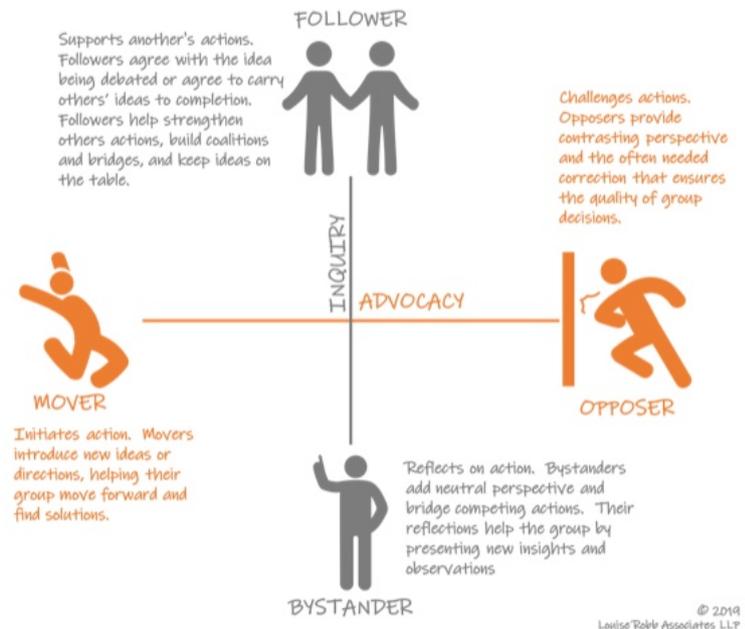
So what did we design together?

A seven-step three-day programme, enabling participants to:

- > Leave the facilitation programme with a real appreciation of the skills of facilitation (facile = to make easy) and how we could begin to integrate them with our unique specialist skills
- > Learn some processes of design and delivery that increase participant engagement
- > Understand that 4/5ths of the work is in the planning and preparation (that's what makes the workshops look "easy"); and develop real muscle in this arena
- > Utilise the space on the programme to practice between teaching sessions
- > Begin the journey of developing their own facilitation style and model, learning to integrate these skills with our specialist engineering and scientific skills

Together, we covered:

- > Scope building and terms of reference
- > Process building, for how to move people and their thinking together
- > The people factors, equal voice and group dynamics, when running meetings or facilitating workshops
- > Pulling these all together into facilitating a session using their splendid technology



Going forward and through the challenging times we have ahead, the participants have started their journey of integration, and "showing up".

The challenge now is to practice to "occupy the ground" and to move to "affecting the field".

We at Louise Robb Associates LLP are a small and highly skilled team of multi-generational facilitators. Each of us possesses our own unique model of facilitation, which we are growing to integrate with our other life skills.

If this has piqued your interest, why not get in touch with us to have a conversation and explore how we can help your people?