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A thinking partnership and the power of possibility and appreciation

Craig Leppan / July 14, 2014

Wow... that was huge. And emotional. and powerful. ^{2 Votes}

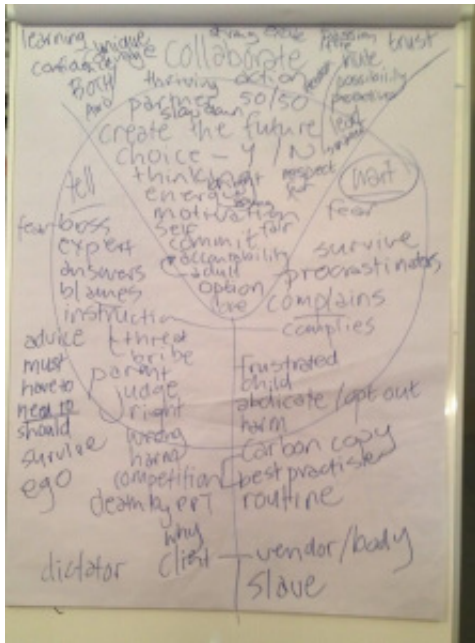
We spent this weekend at our annual strategy session where we take time as many do to reflect and decide together on what strategic decisions should shape the coming 12 months.

We did not know that the accidental and late selection of a facilitator to keep us on point and focused during the 3 days, would turn out to be so dramatic and would so affect and change the 21 people who went through the process.

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Our gift came to us from Louise Brits, who introduced us to the three modes goes with those modes.

I shared the two flip charts below on "Tweeter" as she calls it, calling it "T



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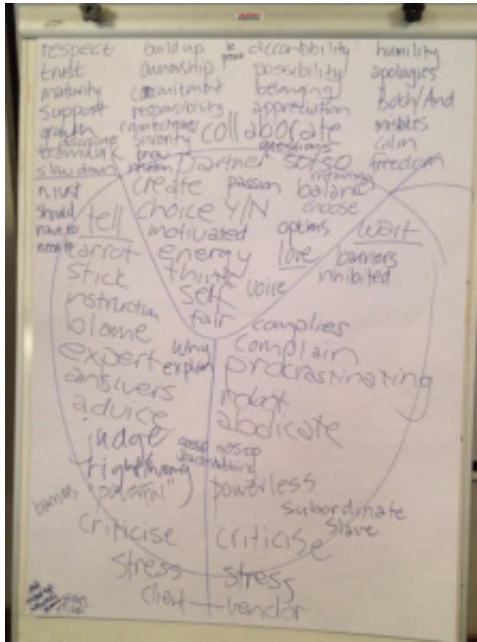
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The breakthrough message in those images are the choices we make in work, love and play. Tell and Wait are the most common modes we expect to work in and behave in from society and family training. Parent, Child, Boss, Subordinate, these work in the Tell and Wait modes. You can see the language that goes with those modes as opposed to the words and language in the collaborate segment. Choice, Create, Energy, Trust...

Let me credit the key books that Lou worked from and read to us from as she introduced this framework to us and how it shaped our powerful shift in thinking.

Time to Think – Nancy Kline.

The Art of Possibility – Rosamund and Benjamin Zander

Community – The structure of belonging – Peter Block

Flawless Consulting – Peter Block

So while they will all join my kindle library soon, its not necessary to read these to appreciate the concepts and power of the process through the few slides and challenge questions that Lou has distilled from these works.

The kick off exercise is the “Parade of Wants”... so simple yet so powerful to ask people to express what they want with respect to a

key question. Ours was “How do we co-create the best company to work for?”

This is our strategic question that we used to frame the conversation and that kicked off the “Parade of Wants”. But we all see the power of using this to kick off discussions, projects and meetings. Most “Wants” only ever get shared by the Tell-er in room or the conversation. The Boss, the parent, the client,, these are the roles that normally get to share their wants. The power of asking everyone in the room what they want with respect to a meeting, project or strategy is immense. The language change of “I invite you” and allowing people to speak their wants without interruption, and giving them the chance to say it again in a second round was immediately huge and we could see from the early “wants” that this was going to be different.

What do I want? I want to grow our business in new areas and regions. I want to do more of what I am good at. I want to spend more time on innovations and new possibilities. I want to stick my hand into HR and IT and Shared Services to make them the best they can be.

And we moved on to the Possibility Statements... I am the possibility of ... (Growing our business, Innovating, having more fun etc.) Again a powerful shift in language that once understood and used and voiced showed us what people believed in and were passionate about.

Next were commitments... hands raised to lead, fix, shape and improve key things in the business that they knew they could deliver on.


Tremendous results already were coming out, and will do when you try this on your own teams, children, boss, staff, clients and suppliers.

The doubts and dissents exercise brings us back to reality. What are we worried about? To share these often hidden thoughts and feelings again yields emotion and brings vulnerabilities to the table, and not without a few tears being shed. It shows others though a side not seen and the honesty is dramatic.

And then the coup de grace... who could have prepared for what came from a simple round of shared and voiced appreciation for those that you work with, and to do it without interruption. How often are you appreciated for what you do, or do you appreciate others and that means saying it out loud, and hearing it out loud... its wonderful.

To our staff, customers and suppliers – Our Partners in Possibility ... expect this to shape everything we do from this point forward. To my 20 colleagues and co-creators I invite you to share on any channel how this affected you and to co-create the future with me.

BOOM... (Cheese burger) 😄😋😭😂😁😄. 🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷

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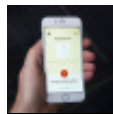

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2 thoughts on “A thinking partnership and the power of possibility and appreciation”



Marius Mare July 14, 2014 at 9:06 am

Great blog Craig. Together we not only felt ourselves change the way we think and feel but also saw how thinking patterns like this can change people around us and ultimately our workplace and country. A key thought that I want to add to this blog is that WE ARE THE LEADERS WE ARE WAITING FOR.

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Rainer Gaier (@WitRhino) July 14, 2014 at 4:16 pm

It's incredibly invigorating to see how people can be transformed from traditional paradigms harbouring complex baggage, into a world of possibilities and a future that looks inviting and enticing, with renewed energy and gusto to take on the very challenges that were already there that felt like a huge burden just a few days ago. This is a possibility for all that have the privilege and courage to embrace the learning. We (the management team if Oventions) were privileged to be part of what has to be a life changing experience. The result, a total shift toward collaborative thinking and a partnership that will empower all of us to better serve our stakeholders, friends and families.

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