



July 2013

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Upcoming Events

- **IAF Chicago Chapter meeting.**

Chicago, IL –
Teleconference 8/23/2013
[For additional details...](#)

- **Business Analyst World – Chicago 2013**

Hyatt Regency O’Hare,
Chicago, IL – November 18
– 19, 2013

Gary is presenting
“Facilitation Skills for
Eliciting Requirements.”
[For additional details...](#)

Revisiting My Definition of a Facilitator

I attended the IAF North America Conference in June and walked away with a question, “What is a Facilitator?” It is not that I became confused, but rather that I heard the word “Facilitator” used in ways that it had me seriously revisiting my definition of a Facilitator.

Why? Facilitator

For the past 30 years, I taught that:

“A Facilitator is a content neutral person who guides the group to consensus using effective processes to enable a group to make effective decisions while supporting a collaborative and respectful environment that encourages full participation and helps groups overcome barriers to accomplish their task. The Facilitator is responsible for the context.”

I began revisiting the definition when I described George Washington as being our first *Facilitator* (read my April 2013 *FoCuSeD™* eNewsletter, *We the People...*). I wrote a *History of Facilitation* that suggested origins in the 19th Century when Architectural Design students would cram together as an intensive effort to finish a project on the back of a cart on their way to class – the cart was called a Charrette. The concept of working as a group resulted and took on the name “Charrette”. This was a precursor to consensus-based workshops. I’ve heard people describe concepts used in facilitation dating back centuries – such as the *Talking Stick* and *Circle Seating* used in tribal groups. Were Facilitators around centuries ago? I use the *IAF Facilitator Core Competencies* to define the core competencies for a Business Analyst, a Project Manager, and a Collaborative Leader. Does that mean that these are Facilitator roles? Or does it mean that *Facilitator* defines a set of skills? One of my clients has both Mediators and Facilitators in the same office – they are the same people. To differentiate between mediating and facilitating they took a straightforward approach: if there are

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2013 FoCuSeD™ Facilitator Public Class Dates

5-Day – The FoCuSeD™ Facilitator Academy

Mar 18 – 22

Aug 05 – 09

Dec 02 – 06

Chicago, IL

4-Day – FoCuSeD™ Business Facilitator

Jan 28 – 31

Jun 17 – 20

Nov 11 – 14

Chicago, IL

3-Day – FoCuSeD™ On...

Apr 22 – 24
Washington, DC

Oct 15 – 17
Austin, TX

2-Day – FoCuSeD™ Advanced Class

TBA

We can bring all of our classes **on-site** anywhere in the world.



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Revisiting My Definition of a *Facilitator*, continued

two people involved, it is *mediation*; if there are three or more people involved it is *facilitation*. Does that mean that Mediators are really Facilitators or vice versa?

Members of the American Society of Training and Development (ASTD) call themselves *Facilitators*. I define them as *Learning Facilitators*. The IAF defines an IAF Certified™ Professional Facilitator (CPF) as a “credentialed *Facilitator* who has demonstrated evidence of meeting the *IAF Core Facilitator Competencies*”, but the IAF does not define *Facilitator*.

How? Revisiting Facilitation

The dictionary provides a broad definition, which does not answer my questions nor differentiate the roles. *Facilitate* is defined as *to make easier*. A *Facilitator* is defined as *one who makes easier*. When I look at what I teach to become a Facilitator, the topics fit into two categories – *People Skills* and *Process Skills (Context)*. For the Facilitator, these collaborative skills are needed in balance and the balance is maintained through *Content-Neutrality* (see *Illustration 1*).

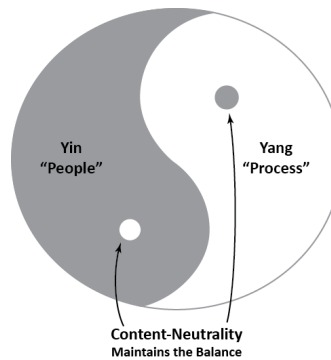


Illustration 1

When I apply these collaborative skills to the roles of a Learning Facilitator, a Facilitative Leader, and a Facilitative Individual, even adding *Industry Knowledge* the roles look alike (see *Illustration 2*). But for the Facilitator, *Industry Knowledge* relates to *Facilitation – People and Process Skills*. For the others, *Industry Knowledge* relates to the subject they teach or the industry in which they work.

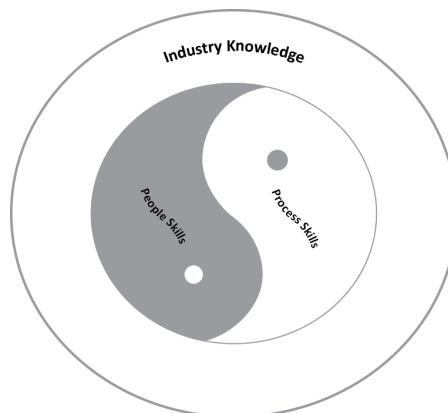


Illustration 2

Differentiating the Roles (see *Illustration 3* on following page):

- **A Facilitative Individual** – groups they work with tend to be known and their relationship tenure is longer-term. The range of processes they use are related to their job. *Industry Knowledge is about the industry in which they work.*

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Announcements

New Partners

MGR Consulting welcomes, as partners, Al Rush as Chief Operating Officer and Sean Rush as Chief Technology Officer. Their artistic background and Facilitator experience bring new perspectives and ideas. In addition to Facilitator services, both expand our capabilities.

Al is working to produce our books in electronic format.

Sean developed and teaches our *FoCuSeD™ Presence* class and will be teaching other classes.

MBTI®

We would like to congratulate Sean on becoming certified to administer MBTI® Step I™ and Step II™ enabling MGR Consulting to offer MBTI® assessments and consulting.

For additional information, contact Sean at sean@mgrconsulting.com

Tidbits

Al Rush has published an inspirational book –

“A Little Thought Book – 88 Keys of Consciousness?”



Revisiting My Definition of a *Facilitator*, continued

- **A Learning Facilitator** – groups they teach tend to be new and their relationship tenure is shorter-term. The range of processes they use are known and tend to be used repeatedly. *Industry Knowledge is the subject(s) they teach.*
- **A Facilitative Leader** – groups they lead tend to be known and their relationship tenure is longer-term. The range of processes they use are related to their job. *Industry Knowledge is about the industry in which they work.*
- **A Facilitator** – groups they facilitate tend to be new and their relationship tenure is shorter-term. The range of processes they use can vary with every workshop. *Industry Knowledge is about their industry – Facilitation.*

I believe that the roles differ in *relationship tenure* and *range of processes*, which means that a *Facilitator can be any of these roles*. The difference is that Facilitators don't have weeks or months to accomplish their work – they have a shorter time to deal with people and process issues. *Facilitators are Leaders for a specific task and a transitory group.*

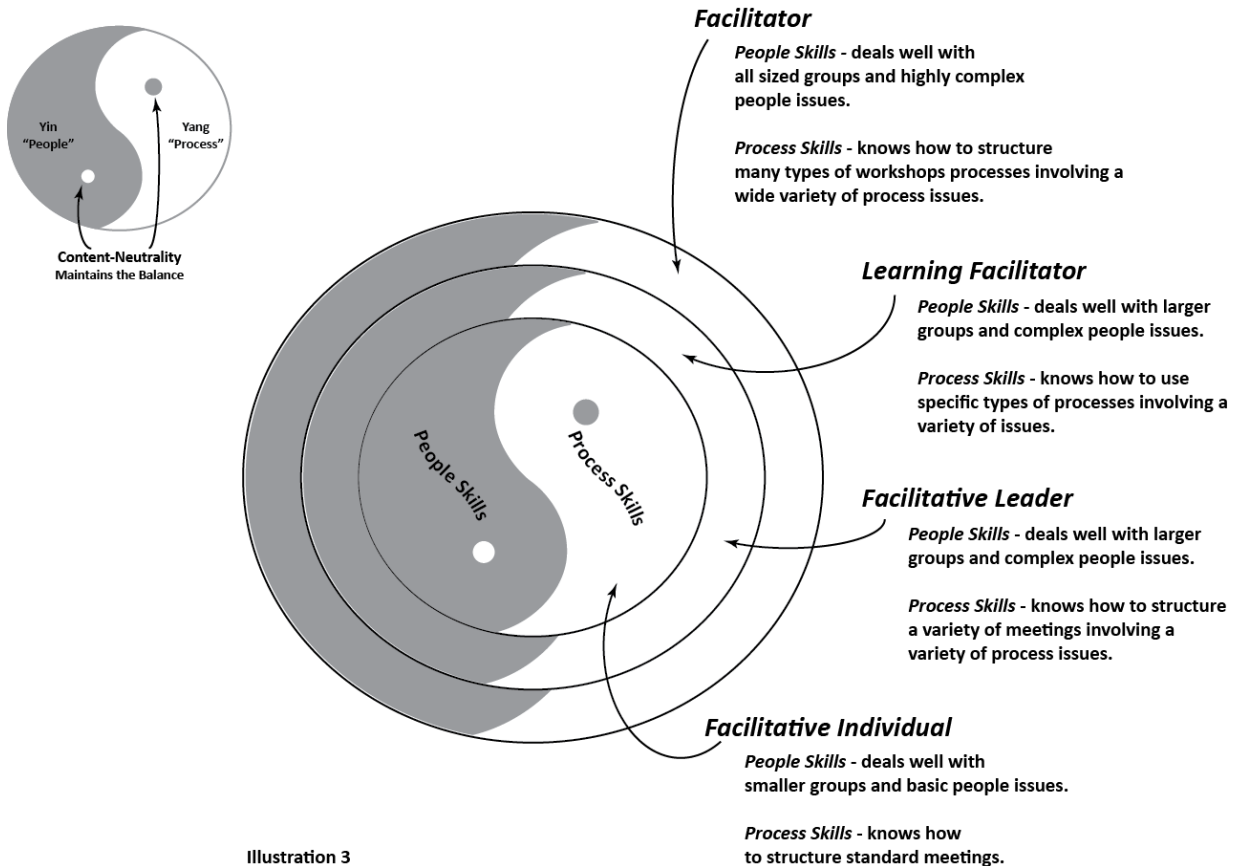


Illustration 3

Continued on page 4



Revisiting My Definition of a *Facilitator*, continued

Revisiting my Definition

Looking over my original definition, I find that it is accurate, but it doesn't clearly delineate the Facilitator role from the other roles. Therefore my new definition of Facilitator is:


*“A Facilitator is a content-neutral **task leader** who **forms a transitory group of people into a collaborative team** supporting consensus and **uses a range of processes** to enable the group to accomplish their task. The Facilitator is responsible for the context.”*

What does this Mean?

The definition of *Facilitator* and its use has broadened. What it means is:

- *People Skills* and *Process Skills* should be made a core competency for every member of any organization. *They need to be taught holistically because People Skills and Process Skills are not stand-alone.*
- Facilitators are effective *Leaders* since they already have highly developed *People Skills* and *Process Skills*. They respect the wisdom of the people and the power of the process. *They are Collaborative Leaders.*

Conclusion

This is why I have been urging the International Association of *Facilitators* (IAF) to change its name to the International Association of *Facilitation* (see my website homepage video – IAFNA2012 Fast Talk Gary Rush on the Future of *Facilitation*). *Facilitation* has branched out beyond what was imagined in 1994. 

IAF Chicago Chapter | “Where Collaboration Happens”

On July 26, 2011, nine people met at DePaul University in Chicago and formed the IAF Chicago Chapter. We are the second IAF Chapter within the U.S.A. Currently, our membership includes over 30 IAF members from Illinois, Wisconsin, and Indiana.

The purposes of the IAF Chicago Chapter are to support and further, to the best of IAF Chicago Chapter's ability, the purposes of the International Association of Facilitators (IAF), to include ... [Read more...](#)



Stop looking for solutions. When you are FoCuSeD™, you find them.

What Makes Us Different?

MGR Consulting, Inc. has been in business since 1985. We are a recognized leader in the field of Facilitation and Facilitator Training. Our FoCuSeD™ Facilitator classes support the *International Association of Facilitators (IAF) Core Facilitator Competencies* and what students need to do to achieve them, enabling those people who wish to pursue their *IAF Certified™ Professional Facilitator (CPF)* designation. **Certification:** *You can only receive professional Facilitator certification from the International Association of Facilitators (IAF).* [Read more...](#)

Our Leadership

Gary Rush, IAF CPF, Founder and President of MGR Consulting, Inc., previously known as MG Rush Systems, Inc., attended the U.S. Naval Academy. He is amongst the most successful and influential Facilitator Trainers in the world. **As a Facilitator trainer,** he teaches not only “how to”; he also teaches you to understand the “why” so that you can perform as an effective Facilitator. He provides detailed Facilitator and process tools, enhances his training through effective, highly interactive learning activities, and, as an IAF CPF Assessor, he covers the *IAF Core Facilitator Competencies* and what students need to do to achieve them. **As a Facilitator,** he improves client business performance through effective application of exceptional facilitation processes. He is highly skilled at engaging Participants and guiding them to consensus. [Read more...](#)

Our Facilitator Training

Gary's alumni are amongst the most successful and influential Facilitators and leaders. They often tell us how much he has changed their lives. Our Facilitator training is effective, comprehensive, and provides a complete set of skills, knowledge, and practice – *this ensures that what is learned is immediately applicable.* [Read More...](#)

"Gary is an excellent instructor and explains things very clearly. He has done a superb job of thinking through how to present material that will help people absorb and apply it."

Sarah, Principal Consultant & Facilitator
(FoCuSeD™ Facilitator Academy alumnus)

Our Facilitator Services

We have been facilitating since 1983. We facilitate many types of workshops involving a wide variety of issues and number of participants. *Our primary goal is to get a group of individuals to form as a team, learn to communicate, and achieve a goal or accomplish a task.* [Read more...](#)

Until FoCuSeD™

Until FoCuSeD™, facilitation techniques have been either about structure or group dynamics. FoCuSeD™ contains a unique concept for developing workshop agendas with an understanding of the *two parallel developments* occurring, “the workshop process and emotional group cycle”, that must be holistically planned to achieve useful solutions. It is not sufficient to select a workshop agenda and then insert exercises in different areas and hope that it works. [Read more...](#)

[Our FoCuSeD™ Classes](#)

Contact Gary directly at +1 773-330-2064 • email at grush@mgrconsulting.com

For additional information, see our Website – www.mgrconsulting.com
