

Zenergy Newsletter

July 2008

Introduction

Greetings and welcome to the winter edition of our newsletter.

Contained here is some news from us, including details of two books, dates of our next Zenergy programmes and a short article about the relationship between cultural change and leadership in organisations.

We have been working a lot this year with alignment and noticing what it takes to get on the same page and heading in the same direction. There are so many ways well intentioned people can miss each other and end up in conflict. Also we have automatic ways of acting that seem fine but upon close inspection are covering up some desire to protect ourselves and get what we want. On the other hand when alignment is genuinely present relationships become more positive, things flow easily and good results follow.

Feel free to share this newsletter with anyone you think may enjoy reading it. This is our favourite way of becoming known by our potential programme graduates because you will know best which of your colleagues will value our work.

Warmly
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Zenergy

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Social Change

At the AFN Conference in Adelaide in November 2007 many facilitators expressed commitment to growing equitable, just and sustainable communities and societies as the "deep knowing, longing or yearning" that led them to facilitation as a profession.

Leading from this, a Facilitating Social Change Conference, co-sponsored by The Groupwork Institute of Australia and Zenergy, was held in May at Commonground, a couple of hours north of Melbourne.



Participants came from facilitation and social change communities in Australia and New Zealand. Philip Thomas (photo, on left), an invited participant from the international Generative Change Community shared his knowledge relating to social change multi-stakeholder peace building events in Latin America.

The conference was held in an adapted version of Open Space with self generated workshops in response to key questions identified by the participants. Workshops included: 4-Quadrant Social Change Framework, Exploration of Big Mind, Working with Indigenous Communities, and Sustaining Ourselves. More details are on the website: www.fsc.net.au.

Online Relationships

Zenergy's Stephen Thorpe has had a chapter drawn from his PhD on *The Use of Storytelling in Building Online Group Relationships* published in the new *Handbook of Research on Computer Mediated Communication*.

The handbook presents an authoritative collection of research on the implications and social effects computers have on communication.

Stephen's chapter presents findings from his research with a group of eighteen facilitators from around the world. Stories were generated and shared using a number of different online tools including web profiles, chat, blogging, web, video and audio conferencing. Storytelling provided a useful means for developing relationships across the range of communication channels studied.

A copy of the chapter is available for download from the [Research](#) page of the Zenergy website.



Zenergy's Upcoming Programmes

Stage 1: Art of Facilitation

Auckland: Jul 14 - 18
Auckland: Sept 15 - 19
Wellington: Oct 6 - 10
Nelson: Nov 10 - 14

Stage 2: Essence of Facilitation

Wellington: Jul 21-25
Auckland: Nov 3 - 7

Stage 3: Co-operation

NZ: Sept 25 - 28

Coaching

Auckland: Aug 7 - 8

Master Class

NZ: Oct 16 - 19

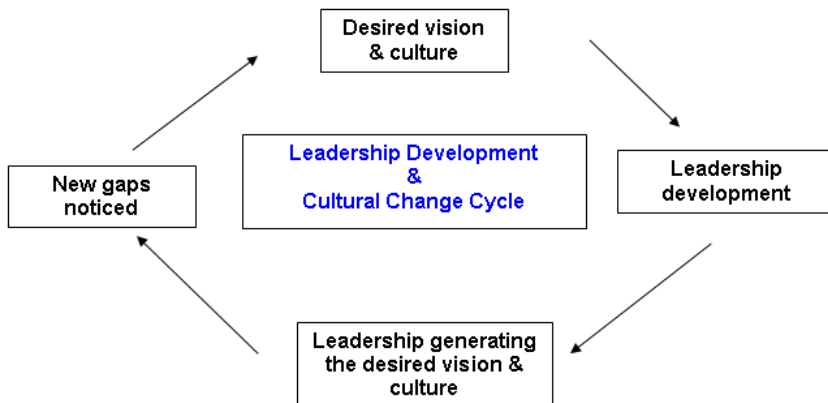
Online Facilitation

Global: Sept 1 - Nov 9

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Leadership Development

For some time in my work with a range of organisations I have been reflecting on the relationship between leadership and cultural change. I have been noticing culture as an emerging force with teams and organisations which can be healthy or destructive. While the effects of culture are felt by all and affect everyone; often what causes the culture to change and develop seems to go unnoticed.



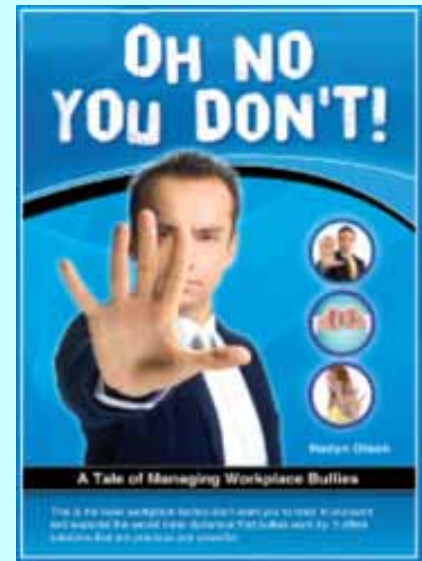
The relationship between leadership development and cultural change

I have been finding it helpful to consider that culture is what develops as a response to the way we go about achieving results and often negative or unhealthy culture develops as an unintended consequence of our actions. In fact the actions of each person within a social system create the culture we experience and this also creates an opening for leadership. Every person is responsible for the culture that exists and can take leadership in creating something different. However I as have been working with this notion I have noticed that invariably when the culture is not healthy people do not feel like leaders, they are more likely to feel trapped and impotent. This dynamic is most obvious when working with issues like workplace bullying where the cycle of heavy handed management intended to push for results creates a sense of victimisation and an increasing inability to function effectively which in turn provokes the response of heavy handed management.

It is very common when studying culture, in for example management training, to be introduced to the idea that organisational culture is very hard to change. Very often culture is seen and experienced as a complex many headed beast which no one can control and which runs up and down the corridors causing havoc and unhappiness. Two related approaches which assist people in organisations to create health are facilitation and leadership coaching. Very simply facilitation in this context is about assisting the team, who don't like the way the culture is, to notice much more specifically what goes on currently, what is desired and what leadership is required to move in the desired direction. It is very helpful to have a notion of culture as an emerging unstable non linear force that is influenced by everything everybody does. Very often people will be unaware that what keeps the culture static are particular ways of doing things that get repeated each time certain conditions are present. In this context leadership coaching is about working with any person to assist them to notice and change the things they do that have unintended consequences that create unhealthy culture.

I have found that it is also essential to believe that people almost never intend to create negative dynamics; they are applying the skills they have to achieve what they are committed to. Moreover if they could create healthy culture at the same time they would. For more on this article by Hamish Brown see the [Research](#) page of the Zenergy website: www.zenergyglobal.com.

Oh No You Don't: A Tale of Managing Workplace Bullies



This highly relevant new book focuses on workplace bullying, is written by Zenergy Diploma graduate Hadyn Olsen, and is published by WAVE Publishing.

Easy to read and learn from, this book is a useful resource for all employers, human resources personnel, group facilitators, team leaders, and workplace managers faced with challenging staff members. It provides a guide not only for dealing with problems but for creating a culture of respect, dignity and safety for workplaces.

Describing typical workplace bullying situations and their remediation, Hadyn Olsen offers clear strategies for identifying when behaviour is bullying. He defines strategies for eradicating bullying behaviour from the top down; a pathway for implementing the strategy for the good of the whole organisation and a strategy to ensure that bullying behaviour does not become a part of the workplace again.

Order through: www.wave.org.nz.

Zenergy Theme for 2008
Conscious Alignment