

Empowering conversation in the workplace

Tuesday 11th May 2017

Foreward: A few words from David Gurteen

Conversation is not a nice-to-have but a critical competence of a 21st-century organisation.

Conversation is arguably our most powerful organisational tool, but we largely take it for granted and fail to capitalise on it. The power of conversation lies in its flexibility and adaptability to address a wide variety organisational issues. Conversation can:

- Improve understanding & sense making
- Build relationships
- Transform leadership
- Stimulate action
- Spur innovation
- Surface opportunities
- Explore possibilities
- Reveal hidden problems
- Solve problems
- Break down departmental silos
- Identify risks
- Share knowledge
- Improve decision-making
- Give people a voice
- Improve engagement
- Generate ideas
- Coach and mentor people
- Make decisions

The potential for every work-related conversation in our organisations to drive performance, transfer learning, and build relationships is immense. But no one ever teaches us how to convene and engage in such conversations and so we haphazardly bumble along and squander one of our most powerful human abilities. We need to consciously "empower conversation" in the workplace. It is through conversation that we manage our knowledge - make better decisions and to innovate.

 *It's through stories that we understand how the world works* 

-- David Weinberger

Empowering conversation

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Draft Agenda

09.30 Registration

10.00 **Welcome and networking**

Exploring today's theme – empowering conversation.

Dr Sharon Varney, Henley Forum

10.30 **The Knowledge Café: Empowering powerful conversations**

The Knowledge Café is a powerful conversational tool. It can also be used to surface a group's collective knowledge, to learn from each other, share ideas and insights and gain a deeper understanding of an issue. It can help connect people, improve interpersonal relationships, break down organisational silos and improve trust.

Today you will have the opportunity to apply the Knowledge Café process to help you engage with the issue of empowering conversation in your organisation. David will also:

- look at the background to the Knowledge Café
- describe the Café process
- explain the ways in which the Café can be applied
- share some stories of how various organizations have adapted and made good use of the Café.

You will come away with the motivation and knowledge to start to run Knowledge Cafés of your own.

David Gurteen, Gurteen Knowledge

11.25 **Networking and refreshments**

11.45 **The Knowledge Café (continued)**

This workshop session will continue after the break.

13.00 **Lunch**

13.45 ***Signposts: Henley Forum Members website (optional)***

The Henley Forum Members' website holds a wealth of material related to our topic today. If you'd like an introduction, or a reminder of what's there and how to access it, please join Christine at this optional session. Just let us know before you go to lunch.

Dr Christine van Winkelen, Henley Forum

14.00 **'Speaking up' – empowering difficult conversations**

A 90-min case-based workshop focused on the two critical conditions for changing conversations at work. By exploring a real example participants will be able to explore how to use story and narrative to trigger new types of conversation and understand how to create the right space to facilitate a 'speak up' culture. Sparknow will share a case study on how conversations about quality were transformed on the manufacturing floor of a major pharmaceutical organisation. Using this example participants will learn how to create an environment and tools that enable conversations about what matters through sharing of stories and experience.

Fiona Hiscocks & Jim Scopes, Sparknow

15.30 **Networking and refreshments**

15.45 ***Members' Showcase: Lloyds Banking Group***

Putting people at the heart of everything we do: This session focuses on the challenges we face embedding Knowledge Management into a fast paced Financial Services organisation that is in the midst of a large scale digital transformation. We will be talking about the importance of embracing the culture, having the right processes and tools in place and the need to partner with other business areas to gain credibility and quickly generate value return. By using the network to build the network we are now having conversations with senior leaders around organisational connectedness, knowledge sharing and building strategic capability. Hear about the lessons we learned and share what you are doing in your organisations

Vicky Short & Monica Danese-Perrin, Lloyds Banking Group

16.30 **After Action Review**

David Gurteen will lead an After Action Review to help you to draw the threads together from today's sessions and to consolidate learning about empowering conversation for knowledge, learning and change.

David Gurteen, Gurteen Knowledge

17.00 **Close**

Session Leaders' Biographies

David Gurteen



David is a well-known writer, thinker, public speaker and facilitator on Conversational Leadership – a conversational approach to the way that we live and work.

He is best known as the creator of the Gurteen Knowledge Café – a conversational process to bring a group of people together to learn from each other and make better sense of a rapidly changing, complex world. He has facilitated hundreds of Knowledge Cafés and workshops in over 30 countries around the world over the last 15 years. He is also the founder of the Gurteen Knowledge Community – a global network of over 23,000 people in 160 countries.

David has a degree in Physics and spent most of his corporate career as a software development manager culminating in the position of International Czar for Lotus Development in Cambridge Massachusetts where he was responsible for ensuring that all software products were designed for the international marketplace.

Fiona Hiscocks



Fiona spent 9 years at IBM building her consulting skills in a variety of fields. She has 25 years' experience in helping senior client leaders tackle organisational challenges such as knowledge management, stakeholder engagement, leadership development and organizational change. Her expertise in change and narrative allows her to apply a variety of tools and methods to design solutions to complex organisational challenges.

She is a Director of Sparknow with a Masters from Harvard. She spent two years working to build leaders at the top level of the US Government including a project for the US President's Management Council. She also holds a US Patent for a narrative method to assess teams and communities seeking to enhance their collective capacities and has applied this to projects in Europe, the USA and the Middle East.

Jim Scopes



Jim has over 25 years' consultancy experience within the public & private sectors as both a management consultant & civil servant. He has worked at the most senior levels in UK government on strategy development, policy implementation and change management. Jim has led organisational change programmes and designed and delivered new operating models / ways of working.

As Strategy director at HM Revenue and Customs he was instrumental in establishing the corporate strategy and introduced the use of discourse analysis to diagnose the current culture of the organisation and how it needed to change to deliver the strategic intent. Jim is Associate Director at Sparknow, his previous roles have also included: co-founder and director of EightyTwenty Insight Ltd (a niche sourcing advisory company) and Partner in PA Consulting's Government and Public Services Practice.

Christine Van Winkelen



Christine has worked with the Henley Forum since its inception in 2000, project managing and leading research activities and special interest groups. She was the Director of the Forum for five years until February 2009 and has remained actively involved in research and management activities since then.

Christine is actively involved in a number of KM-related research activities. Her focus is on forming a 'bridge' between academic and practitioner aspects of the field. She has published extensively in academic and practitioner journals, co-authoring *Understanding the Knowledgeable Organisation: Nurturing Knowledge Competence* with Professor Jane McKenzie. Christine and Jane have also co-authored *Knowledge Works: a Handbook of Practical Ways to Identify and Solve Common Organisational Problems for Better Performance*, which brought together the practical tools, techniques and case studies created during ten years of Forum research.

Christine is a Visiting Academic Fellow at Henley Business School and an Associate Lecturer with the Open University. She tutors postgraduate strategy, knowledge management and change management courses, also supervising experienced executives undertaking MBA dissertations and research projects.

Previously Christine worked at Motorola, Nortel and the GEC Hirst Research Centre, developing her career from research physicist through training, human resource management, and then project and product management. She retains an independent strategic and people-oriented KM consultancy activity through VW Consulting.

Victoria Short



Vicky is an IT Knowledge Architect with 20 years' experience in specialist IT positions in Lloyds Banking Group, Vicky has under taken a wide variety of roles to senior level including technical infrastructure delivery manager, project management, IT Service Desk leadership and latterly IT Knowledge Management.

Monica Danese-Perrin



Monica is a Knowledge Management professional with over 15+ years' experience in implementing Knowledge solutions to support organisations. She has developed fully integrated KM strategies and programmes that encourage collaboration and generate ROI, initiatives have included embedding a Communities of Practice approach, establishing knowledge transfer techniques, ensuring knowledge assets have the right content management process and encouraging teams to participate.

Sharon Varney



Sharon is Director of the Henley Forum and a specialist in developing organisations and people. She works at a strategic level, helping to create more effective organisations, and engages at a very human level supporting people to manage personal change and transition.

Sharon developed her cross-sector learning and change expertise as a senior manager working in large, global organisations. She was Group Head of Learning and Communications for a global engineering and construction company in the offshore oil and gas business. Previously she was Vice President for international learning and development at a US bank.

Sharon now runs her own organisational consulting practice – space for learning - and is a member of the Leadership & Organisational Behaviour faculty team at Henley Business School.