Presentation Structure

- How can Planners use facilitation methods?
- What is the Technology of Participation approach?
- Focused Conversation: ORID
- Focused Conversation: Critique Example
- Focused Conversation: Site Visit Example
- How can Planners use Focused Conversations?
How can Planners use facilitation methods?

- Facilitation methods are of use in **various professional situations**, from coordinating teamwork, to project planning, to facilitating individual professional development.

- As a **civic profession**, the majority of Planning is done within a **group context**. Organizing group work **increases the efficiency and quality** of the process and the product of group work.

- Planners are at the heart of **soliciting and coordinating public input**.

- Beyond working in **intra-office teams**, Planners often **facilitate between various professionals**.
What are ToP® Facilitation Methods?

• ToP Facilitation methods are tools that provide a structure for participatory involvement.

• Individuals and groups dive deeper into issues, expand their capacity to respond, and allow for broader creative implementation of solutions.

• The ToP® approach to facilitation is based on inclusive participation, broadening both group commitment and the range of possible solutions, and profound respect which honors each individual and trusts that the group is capable of completing the task.
Focused Conversation

ORID Method

- Provides a structure to elicit meaningful dialogue, broad perspectives and clear ideas.
- Structures group participation.

When we process information and think clearly, we move through four different modes, sometimes very quickly.

These modes of thinking can be labeled:
- Objective
- Reflective
- Interpretive
- Decisional
Focused Conversation

Objective Mode

This is the sensory mode of thinking, where we process “raw” data:

- What we perceive through our body and senses
- Facts and data about the situation
- External/Observable information
Focused Conversation
Reflective Mode

This is our immediate response to these data, how we are processing the Objective level internally:

• How we respond to these “raw” data
• Images, feelings, memories, associations
• What experiences we relate to these data
• Internal response to external data
Focused Conversation

Interpretive Mode

This mode is about processing these responses, experiences and associations:

- So what does this mean?
- What values are activated?
- What is the significance?
- What are the implications?

Objective
Reflective
Interpretive
Decisional
Focused Conversation
Decisional Mode

This mode is about making decisions or choosing actions based on the meaning and significance of the information:

- What are the next steps?
- What actions are appropriate?
- What has been learned?
- What is my commitment?
Example: Critique of Visual Work

Objective Mode

These are the “facts” of what you are dealing with. The questions may feel “too obvious” to include, but they are the ground that the interpretation and analysis are built on. They get conversation and thinking going:

- What do you see?
- What colors, forms?
- What stands out?
- What parts are spatially related? Related by color? Form? Size?
- What do you see only after you have looked at it for a while?
Example: Critique of Visual Work

Reflective Mode

These questions address what responses the work elicits, and ask for your responses to the work:

- What is the overall feel of the piece?
- How do the colors, shapes, spatial relationships interact?
- Is there harmony in the work? Dissonance?
- How do you respond to it?
Example: Critique of Visual Work

Interpretive Mode

This is the real “meat” of the analysis--what is working? What isn’t? This is often where we want to start, but establishing the Objective and Reflective steps allows for more depth in the interpretation and analysis of the work, and for coherence if working in a group process:

- What is the piece communicating?
- What is the objective of the piece, and where is this “working”?
- Where is it not working?
- What is the significance?
- What are the implications?
Example: Critique of Visual Work

Decisional Mode

This step focuses on the implications of the analysis. What needs to happen to make the piece even more effective?

- What components have to change to align the piece with its objective?
- What does there need to be more of?
- What can there be less of?
- What changes can be made to strengthen what the piece communicates?
- What changes might improve how the piece is experienced?
Example: Site Visit Reflection

Objective Mode

These questions plumb the sense experience the observer had of the spaces in question, and begins to sort out the huge amount of data that is taken in on a site visit:

- *What are some highlights from the places we’ve seen?*
- *What colors, sounds, materials stand out?*
- *What surprised you?*
- *What activities or programming do you recall?*
- *What scenes do you remember from the spaces we have been in?*
Example: Site Visit Reflection

Reflective Mode

These questions address what the observer brought to the site, and what responses the site elicited in the observer:

- *Where did you feel most interested? Bored?*
- *Where did you experience a specific sense of “place”?*
- *What is the overall feel of the place(s) we saw/have seen?*
- *What was the high point for you? The low point?*
Example: Site Visit Reflection

Interpretive Mode

Again, this is the real “meat” of the analysis; What is working? What isn’t? If you skip the Objective and Reflective and start with this level, participants can lose the sense data that is so important to the site analysis:

- What spaces felt like they “worked”?
- What spaces didn’t work?
- Where did things feel the most connected?
- Where did things feel disjointed?
- Who/what is being served in these spaces?
- Who/what has been left out?
- What does there need to be more of?
- What can there be less of?
Example: Site Visit Reflection
Decisional Mode

This step activates the observer on a deeper level--What is really going on here? What opportunities have been missed? What would I like to have happen here?

- What would you name this part of town?
- What needs to happen next to benefit the pedestrian experience? Stimulate business? Support sustainability?
- What are the opportunities in this site?
- How does this site fit with the places around it? With the proposed project?
How can Planners use Focused Conversations?

Focused Conversations can be used for:

- Opening team meetings
- Framing public input sessions
- Reviewing session outcomes
- Reviewing team performance
- Reviewing individual performance
- Surfacing insights on progress to date
- Setting context for introducing a plan or activity
- Assessing current group mood
- Capturing participant feedback
- Applying new information to an established plan
- Evaluating a program’s effectiveness
Credits

ICA Associates CANADA “ORID Slideshow”
powerpoint for some language and the neat
arrow graphics

ICA-USA ToP® Facilitation Methods Manual, 2000

Stanfield, R. Brian, ed. The Art of Focused Conversation,
New Society Publishing, 2000