

YES! AND... CREATIVE GORILLA # 124

One facilitation tool can help your team achieve a great deal...

Use The All Purpose Scaling Tool...

"Anyone got a Swiss Army Knife?" Construction worker in a TV programme



"Swiss Army Knife"

Would you like a multi purpose facilitation tool for your team?

I am on the way to the airport, stuck in traffic jams in snowy weather. To complete my joy, I have just received a text telling me that my flight home is cancelled and the next flight is in seven hours. So I thought I would do something enjoyable and write the Gorilla in the back of the cab.

Recently, I ran a facilitation master class, something I have run successfully many times for MBA students. I go into this class without a plan and have attendees write on Post It notes what they want to know about facilitation. I have two hours to provide and demonstrate all the answers. On this occasion, an attendee wrote that he wanted a multi purpose tool to help him facilitate meetings quickly.

This article shares with you the tool I provided to the students. It is based on "Scaling", a tool from Solutions Focus, a methodology I use a lot.

To make it more real for you, imagine you are a creative leader working with a team (I used "facilitation" as the class topic). Here are the

steps that I put together on the spot from my experience:

1. Ask them to consider what would be happening if they were performing really badly, the worst team in the organisation, world, wherever. Assign that description as "1" on a scale.
2. Have them describe the benefits if they were performing brilliantly as a team. Assign that description a "10".
3. Ask them, "On a scale of 1 – 10, where is the team now?" Have the individuals stand on a line between 1 and 10, depending on where they rate the team.
4. Ask each individual, "What does the team do well that has got you up to (e.g.) 3 from 1?" Note we do not ask, "What is stopping you get to 10!"
5. After all have spoken, have them record their answer on a Post It Note with a marker pen. Collect the notes and place them on a wall.
6. Ask, "So what might happen to move you up one place on the scale in a short time?" (Note, we do not ask, "What would move you to 10?" This is too much of a challenge.)
7. Again, have them record the answers on a Post It Note and place on the wall.
8. If all the answers expect another person or people to do something, you might ask, "What might YOU do to move the team one step up the scale?"
9. Record the answers as before.

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SO

Using the tool, the team has:

Described poor and excellent performance

Rated the team's current performance

Highlighted examples of good team work

Identified what should happen to improve performance soon

Identified what individuals will do

How long it takes will depend on the size of the team. Allow two hours for a team of twelve.

While I have used scaling many times it was not until I demonstrated it in the master class that I recognised it could be used as a self-contained tool. Normally, in place of describing "1" and "10" I use two other tools (Platform Setting and Preferred Future) and I will have people scale and look for small actions separately. Thinking on my feet I combined it all in to one.

After the session, I began planning this article and considered what I might call the integrated tool. As I have a Swiss Army Knife in my facilitator kit, I adopted this metaphor, as it is a range of tools combined in one product.

ACTION

Try using the tool with your team or a team you know of.

TO CLOSE

Having identified the metaphor, I was in the gym in my hotel this week, watching a National Geographic TV programme about the construction of a cable car in Jackson Hole in the USA. The camera cut to a worker fixing a cable pulley. He smiled and said, "Anybody got a Swiss Army Knife?"

I've never heard mention of the product on TV before and suddenly there it was. I marvel at how coincidences pop up when I need a closing paragraph for a Gorilla. Psychologists probably have a name for the phenomenon!

Right now though, sitting in the airport completing this article with four hours to wait, what I would like is for an airline technician to find the equivalent of a Swiss Army Knife and fix my b*!#! aircraft!

.John Brooker | Facilitate, Innovate, Transform.



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