It Just Ain't What it Used to Be

The Impact of Remote and Hybrid Working
on the Practice of Organization Consulting

CORPORATE
COLLABORATION
RESOURCES

The Hypothesis and the Question

- Switching to all-remote during the pandemic had an effect on how we, as consultants, use ourselves as instruments in the consulting process.

- What have those effects been and how have we adapted?

Use of Self Defined

The conscious use of one's whole being in the intentional execution of one's role for effectiveness in whatever the current situation is presenting.

Aspects of "Self"

- The senses - seeing, feeling, hearing, etc.

- Our ways of processing these inputs

- What occurs within us as we do so – thoughts, feelings, etc.

- The choices we make as a result, etc., etc.

Breakout

- How has working remotely benefitted how you work with your clients?

- What have been the biggest challenges in how you use yourself when facilitating groups remotely?

Some of what was shared following the breakout

Benefits, overall, of remote facilitation
- Engagement and inclusion went up.
- Deference to superiors went down.
- Dominance by bullies went down.
- We leave a better data trail, e.g., decisions made.
- Able to have people from different time zones, countries, cultures, etc, come together without having to travel. This is good for diversity.
- Introverts can write their thoughts making them visible in a way that works for them. We can all see each other now – unlike on a phone.
- Dealing with bullies is different now that you can't stand behind them.

Some of the challenges

- The subtle stressors – when we sit around a conference table we are not staring at each other's faces all the time. Contributes to Zoom fatigue. I have found I need to be more aware of what's happening in my body during Zoom meetings.
- I miss seeing the body below the neck. You can miss important cues to what's going on inside a person by what they do with their body
- Social network – not seeing who sits with whom, who congregates with whom at breaks. Harder to assess the social dynamics.
- Sometimes the tools aren't able to be fully utilized because not available to everyone one.
- We are now seeing and living the reality of remote teams.

Large Group Discussion

- What have been keys to adapting your Use of Self when working with groups remotely?

- What solutions or recommendations can you make?

Thoughts about being effective, virtually

- Learned its best to have everyone on their own computer rather than groups together in rooms, remotely
- And, it can be helpful if you must facilitate remotely to have the entire team in ONE room so you can see and hear them interacting all together.
- Use of tools like Mural helps build engagement and inclusion
- There are subtle signals we can see in a group and that we could learn to see over Zoom.
- We use personal assessments to understand how people might show up in groups.
- Do an org design on the team you are working with. What is it's purpose, e.g..
- Understand the cultural differences in a group and adapt to them. Sometimes, because of cultural differences, we need to make decisions outside the virtual room but we can do it.
- Hybrid meeting idea – have a buddy in the room to help keep the remote person actively connected.