Bonding for Greatness…Unfolding Joyful Effectiveness in Leadership Teams

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A R T I C L E   I N F O

A B S T R A C T

The authors share an approach to developing sustainable integration in senior leadership teams, especially in today's *VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous)* corporate world. This approach has applications in a wide variety of contexts, including governments. The common patterns of problems have been spelt out as being centred on the issues of Context, Connection, Consciousness and Commitment. After looking at the philosophical foundations (or the underlying paradigm behind this approach), the paper then goes on to describe the Objectives, Methodology and Design of the Bonding for Greatness TM program. The importance of the Quality of facilitation is underlined as being critical to the success of the process. Preliminary results on the impact of this programme in enhancing joyful effectiveness of Leadership Teams are analysed.

Introduction

Bonding for Greatness

…Unfolding Joyful Effectiveness in Leadership Teams

The usage of the acronym *VUCA*, highlighting the characteristics of the environment in which the current corporate world works (namely *Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity)*, has become commonplace in senior leaders' discussions. Where the demands for everything being faster, better and cheaper are ever increasing, organizations grapple with attracting, retaining and developing a workforce that can meet the challenges of this ever unfolding reality. The length and width of organizations spread across geographies in multi-cultural and VUCA environments makes it amply clear that teams working together in a collaborative and cohesive manner has become crucial, and at the same time, challenging.

In this article, the authors share their observations regarding vital questions like: What are the key people-related challenges the Indian corporate world is facing? How is industry responding to these challenges? What are the real needs or gaps? What interventions are promising and successful in creating a positive impact?

Methodology

The present article derives insights from the vast experience of a learning and development consultancy firm which has designed and delivered a particular programme titled 'Bonding for Greatness'. (The first author is the founder chairman at this organization). The relevance and success of the programme is indicated by the fact that the programme was conducted for over ninety two of middle and senior management cadres from fifty corporate organizations working in varied sectors like Banking, Manufacturing, Hospitality, Telecom etc. over a period of ten years starting from 2005. A total of 1840 corporate participants have undergone this programme. All these programmes, branded as "Bonding for Greatness (or BFGs)" aimed at addressing a single broad need – "how to bring people together to deliver the best".

This article analyses the data from these programmes and aims at deriving actionable insights in the critical area of bringing people together. The data and the findings in this article are based on the hundreds of reports documenting the pre-programme studies, programme designs, documents summarizing the contents and the

outcomes of the programmes and the programme participants' feedback, testimonies and commitments for action that they made.

The problem

The origin of the programme design was based on the training firm's work with many organizations over the past twenty years. Past experience showed that certain patterns of problems repeated themselves. For example, most CEOs seemed to be concerned about high levels of attrition and the challenge of attracting and retaining talent. Keeping people "engaged", growing competition, an absence of innovation, shrinking margins and low levels of initiative were some of the stated concerns. Peoples' propensity to stick within their own narrow 'silos' and not communicate and work well with others across boundaries was another common theme observed across the organizations. Along with a host of changes that globalization has brought, apparently, one of the less desired outcomes is that many organizations are becoming well-oiled process driven machines, whereas, the feeling of community (with mutual trust, sharing, support, joy and wholesome growth) is absent. Levels of engagement of people are low. Studies show that among Indians who work for an employer, 60% are not engaged, 31% are actively disengaged while just 9% are engaged (State of the Global Workplace, Steve Crabtree, 2013).

Organizations, including the ones which are epitomes of integrity in the public eye, are seen to be working with a mercenary attitude and a lack of care for people. Many individuals are caught up in well-paying islands of despair, wondering what they are doing with their lives. There is a palpable lack of meaning and joyful purpose in the work lives of many leaders. Many people we speak to, especially women, experience imbalances in their work and home lives. Many express feelings of apathy and powerlessness.

The Solution

Where the issues expressed by the clients seemed to be the ones that can be effectively dealt with a BFG programme, the programme was carried out in the following phases: Step 1: Pre-programme Study, Step 2: Designing and Conducting the Programme and Step 3: Post-programme follow up and Review.

Step 1: Pre-Programme Diagnostic Study

The purpose of the Pre-Programme Study is to collect data for designing and customizing the intervention. It involves the following steps:

- Face-to-face / Telephonic conversations with some of the participants to understand the current reality in the organization, their personal challenges and dilemmas and also to better understand the deliverables from the programme;
- Face-to-face / Telephonic conversations with a few other stakeholders (CEO, HR, etc.) to get their perspectives on the concerns;
- Studying the business plan and growth strategy of the company; and
- Any other meeting / document study that might be required.

The output of the pre-programme study is a clear design for the programme.

Analysing the multiple Pre-Programme Study data, certain common themes emerged which were observed across organizations:

- Vision / Strategy is either not clear and/or not communicated across the different levels of hierarchy;
- Leaders, business units and people not aligned;

- People, heads, departments not talking to each other;
- The different approaches of the old versus the new people;
- Accountability and ownership are a big concerns. People are seen not fully utilizing their potential, not fully motivated and committed, often either falling prey to complacency or putting themselves before the organization;
- Change Management is a big challenge. Integrating the new workforce, adding speed and agility especially in growing business become crucial;
- There is demand or need that people do not operate from the space of ego control or power, but instead operate from the space of trust, care and mutual respect;
- A culture of appreciation is needed instead of one of control and punitive measures;
- Where these challenges are not seen to be addressed at all, attrition could become a challenge;
- Organizations need Space for open honest talk – for good, frank discussions; and
- People Engagement and Development are needed to sustain productivity.

All these can be seen as manifestations or symptoms of a few deeper underlying causes. The key issues could be that people have forgotten the larger context and purpose of life. They are disconnected from each other and enough conversations do not happen. They are out of touch and asleep to the vast inner resources that are invisible in the normal life of "Business As Usual (BAU)". To put these in another way, these appear to be problems of the absence of **Context, Connection, Consciousness, and finally Commitment**. Let us look at these four themes in greater detail below:

Context: *People are out of touch with the "big picture", their own and others' positive potentials, and how all pieces of the jigsaw puzzle fit together.*

Few people understand the larger purpose of their Business as a whole in its environment. The systemic linkages of different stakeholders, the Value that is delivered by the organization to each one, and the Business Model that is at work are rarely understood.

Besides the larger context, people also do not seem to be in touch with their own strengths and positive aspects. They are also often unaware of the positive elements and life-giving forces in other people in their organization. We have seen situations where people who have worked together for over fifteen years do not know about each other's strengths, gifts and talents.

Consciousness: *Levels of positive emotional energy and initiative are low.*

There is an absence of positive emotional energy in many organizations. This is because life appears to be going on in an unconscious way. Many assumptions and beliefs remain unquestioned. We find a high prevalence of fear, despair, anger, hurt and stress. People complain of many physical ailments arising from these negative emotional disturbances. Moreover, people do not seem to be capable of doing what they intellectually know they ought to do. There are large gaps between knowing and doing.

Most people feel helpless and powerless in today's organizations. They feel like victims of a large hierarchy and power structure over which they have no control.

Connection: *There is an absence of adequate connection and conversation.*

Conversations that need to happen, especially across different horizontal layers and departments of the organization, do not take place. Many organizations have no spaces or "platforms" where people can converse on things that they truly care about.

The sharing of knowledge and best practices, which could happen through such conversations, consequently does not happen.

Most of the initiatives that people take are usually disjointed. Since diverse perspectives and viewpoints rarely get a chance to cross-fertilise, we find that the levels of innovation are low. Even the simple conversation required to listen to the voice of the customer is amazingly rare.

Commitment: *Levels of commitment to people development and sustained improvement action are low.*

The fourth thing we have seen is that the time and attention given to systematic improvements and the development of people is lower than needed. Most middle and senior managers are caught up in firefighting and doing work that someone two levels below them could be doing. Even when a change intervention is started, sustaining it is a challenge. The quality of sustained commitment is a big challenge!

The Foundations of the BFG Intervention

Before we go deeper in to the Objectives and Design of the BFG programme, it is crucial to describe its genesis.

Any design, whether it is of a house or of a learning "intervention", reflects the underlying values and views of the designer. How does one design an intervention to change peoples' emotional states and behaviours in a sustainable way?

The philosophical underpinnings and rationale behind the design of "*Bonding for Greatness*" (BFG) can be found in the following fundamental viewpoints:

1. **We view organizations, learning, people and all of life through the lens of wholeness.** We see all as a coevolving dynamic whole and as "perfection in progress". In our designs, we bring in the psychological, emotional, physical and spiritual dimensions into play. Many of these aspects are often ignored. Life is a very intelligent and whole process. Wholesome Learning, Wholesome Leadership, Wholesome Development are all processes that are aligned with the intelligence of the Whole i.e. the intelligence of Life. We believe that this fundamental alignment to Wholeness is the path to not only high performance, but also to sustainable joy, peace and abundance for all. It is the foundation for Human Excellence.

2. **We hold the view that "life is dance and dance is life".** We see all of existence as a universal dance. We trust this dance wholeheartedly. The sciences of Complexity and Chaos Theory seem to be echoing what ancient seers knew long ago. Viewing the world as being a playful and intelligent dance can be marvelously stress-reducing experience for a player in the field of Organizational Development (OD)! The massive sea of changes that we have experienced and agonized over recently – the wave of mergers, greed driven globalization, the AIDS epidemic, global warming, terrorism etc. – are all natural phenomena in a complex adaptive system. Predicting when and where the next big change will come from is futile. Learning to be flexible and adaptable and dancing intelligently with the whole is the only sustainable strategy.

3. **All human beings have some component of greatness in them**. All also have the same common core of unbounded creative intelligence. In many of us, this profound space of pure creative intelligence is overshadowed by memories of distress events and traumatic experiences. These can be easily removed. The removal of these blocks creates an influx of creative energy into the body-mind system leading to all round improvements in joy, responsiveness and integration.

4. **When people are given the space to express what they deeply care about and feel respected and listened to, it creates a space for healing and inspired action.** When we turn to each other in honest and respectful conversation, we are both healed and become instrumental in healing others. We begin to flow more in harmony with the whole.

5. **The whole universe is upheld by universal and unbounded creative intelligence.** This intelligence or energy is constantly orchestrating amazingly beautiful processes without any human intervention. It seems to be doing a pretty good job of design and execution! Our individual and organizational life is inextricably linked to this intelligent energy. The role, then, of an OD practitioner, is to listen to this intelligence in his/her heart and obey its gentle promptings. One mind, no matter how clever, cannot match the brilliance and glory of the creative intelligence or awareness which runs all of life!

6. **Most human situations are complex and unpredictable.** We believe that it is very hard to have a full grasp of all the variables that can affect an outcome of a particular intervention or process. Anyone who claims that they can operate in the command and control mode to look at a situation, design an outcome and come up with a solution, are fooling themselves. However, there is a way to flow along with the intrinsic creative intelligence of nature. As designers we can look for signs of this intelligence at work in the universe. The most optimal design emerges when one is fully integrated with and listening to the whole. This means deeply listening to my own intuition, the people around me, the situation, and responding wholesomely in the moment and every moment. (Wholesome = Whole/Ethical/Excellent in all dimensions) In this mode, one becomes an instrument of the whole and is dancing with the whole. It is like being an empty flute and allowing the whole universe to play its music through you.

7. **Humility arises from a heart full of gratitude.** Gratitude comes from a deep understanding of the beautiful, harmonious and perfect movement of nature. As my heart expands in humility, my integration and oneness with the universe also grows.

8. **Whatever we focus on and hold intensely in our thoughts is attracted into our lives.** So if today, I want to attract more positive organizations into my life, there is something I need to change in myself. This is the principle of taking total responsibility for those aspects of Life which show up in my experience. This calls me to work on my own purification as part of the process of my evolution. As I grow in purity, joyful evolution is a natural outcome.

9. **People are infinitely creative.** Given a few simple tools and the space to play with these, I have invariably been amazed and awestruck by the sheer brilliance of what people come up with. After many years in this field, I still feel like a small child, full of wonder, when I experience these emerging displays of creative energy.

10. **As a dancer dancing with the universal design of life, one need not be stuck with any fixed methods or tools**. One

needs to listen to what needs to be done and use whatever tools or processes are required in the moment.

Objectives of the BFG Workshop

Considering the general understanding stated above and the needs that emerged in the pre-programme diagnostic studies, the broad programme objectives for the participants were arrived at:

- Get to know each other more and work coherently towards a common vision;
- Learn to think and act as one unified team;
- To share best practices and institutionalize a process of sharing best practices,
- Create a process for sustained action after the programme;
- Communicate openly and honestly with each other to resolve conflicts and solve problems harmoniously;
- Create an environment that fosters accountability, trust and customer centric breakthrough innovation; and
- Create a shared vision for the organization and align on key business priorities.

Elements of the BFG Workshop

Stories of success are used to evoke memories of past greatness and also to create a positive emotional state for further work. Elements of Appreciative Inquiry, drawing and collage, drama and song are used in this starting phase. There is also a collective norm setting that happens here. The process of effective open dialogue and group learning is discussed.

Co-creating a very large and expansive shared vision is another exercise that is part of the design. This is done in a way that everyone's voice is honoured and brought into the final vision. People are encouraged to listen to inner guidance through silence, to find out what life is trying to express through them and their organization.

Morning exercises, which include Yoga, Tibetan Rites, Pranayama, Meditation, Laughter and physical team bonding exercises are an important element for unblocking energy flow in the body-mind.

Powerful inputs on Wholesomeness and spiritual insights are shared. Tools like the Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) to uproot negativity and install more powerful and energising affirmations in the mind are also used in conjunction with this.

Open Space Technology is used to surface issues that people deeply care about and to also get them to take responsibility for the future of the organization. Self-organising and emergence are constantly allowed to function. When working with another facilitator, we constantly listen to our inner guidance, to each other; listen to the people and the situation. This spontaneously guides us to what has to be done.

Detailed action planning with follows up and review mechanisms are also jointly agreed upon. People are also invited to come forward and be trained as "I Catalysts" … people who have a passion and capacity for unfolding inspiration, integration and innovation in the organization. I Catalysts act like little bit of yogurt in a large pot of milk.

The Methodology used in BFG workshops is based on the principles of Adult Learning. Some of the methods used are captured in the list below:

- Experiential Learning through structured exercises;

- Appreciative Inquiry (see *Appendix 1* for more details);
- Open Space Technology (see *Appendix 2* for more details);
- Surfacing and discussing the live challenges before the participants;
- Leveraging the participants' own strengths and expertise;
- Film clips;
- Movement with music;
- The "light seat exercise" or other ways to give and receive Feed forward;
- Open conversations;
- Morning Exercises including meditation and Mindfulness;
- A "Talent Night" on the evening of the first day;
- The use of Graphics, Visuals, Collages;
- Co-creation of a Shared Vision; and
- High Energy Closing exercises based on Commitments, Pledges and Affirmations.

The full programme design with session details can be seen in *Appendix 3*

The Actual Conduct of the Programme

This is to emphasise that while there is a recipe for the BFG workshop, it is also the skill and authenticity of the facilitator which will add value to the whole experience in practice.

In a magical BFG workshop you will notice that not only is the level of participation high, but also the level of energy. The participants' body language indicates this. They bend forward and have an intense and mesmerized look on their faces. Their eyes are shining and filled with interest. Their body language is animated. They radiate happiness and enthusiasm.

Further you will also notice that there is less formality and rigidity in the group. This leads to an opening of the flow of communication. As barriers melt away, locked up emotions, appreciation, gratitude and information are released and flow freely. There are many "Aha" moments, like when two people who have worked together for many years suddenly discover that one is a great cook and the other a good singer. Expanding perceptions leads to clarity and deep insight. This enables people to start noticing more things about themselves as well as the participants.

A certain intensity comes through in the BFG workshop. A palpable energy, arising from the heightened emotions of the participants, can be felt during the sessions. This feeling shows up as deep care and love. From the facilitator's perspective, in a magical BFG workshop, there is a high level of fluency and spontaneity. The sessions flow freely and smoothly in a natural way, just like a river.

In a well facilitated BFG Workshop, all the features mentioned below are brought out:

- Self-forgetting flow
- Oneness with the group,
- Ease and Grace, and
- Balance

It is the inspired facilitation in BFG Workshops that touches and transforms lives. The Workshop is a deeply transformational experience. Facilitators remembering their own innate Creative Intelligence, and seeing this same Inner Resource present in all participants, creates a very empowering and liberating space in the workshop. In a way, the Leaders in the group pick up the ways of creating spaces for connection, conversation and co-creation. The facilitator models new ways of Leading.

The facilitator of a BFG Workshop, is nothing but a conduit that reminds participants of their own magnificence, of who they already are. When this happens, one is not merely working with one's own Creative Intelligence but also with the collective creative intelligence of the whole group. The stories, knowledge and gifts that participants in BFG bring to the workshop add to the process of deep transformation.

Some of the core elements or inner secrets to facilitating a BFG Workshop can be captured in the acronym "HEART", where the word stands for Humour, Empathy, Awareness, Responsiveness, Totality; or alternatively, Humility, Enthusiasm, Attention, Respect, Teamwork. When Facilitators of the BFG Workshop facilitate from the Heart, they evoke the energy of Oneness in the participants. This is the heart of the BFG Workshop! While there is a lot of joy and creativity in BFG Workshops, they also end up delivering valuable business results.

Impact Assessment

Analysis of the impact of BFG programme shows several positive trends. Based on the success of their first BFG batch, fifteen out of fifty clients conducted multiple batches of the BFG programme, indicating their trust in the effectiveness of the programme. The post programme reviews of the programmes highlight and capture changes in various areas. The following observations by the senior stakeholders as well as the participants indicate the impact areas:

- Significant improvements in team working. People often report a " total meltdown of boundaries and barriers";
- Trust was cemented through this workshop and norms to sustain this were also agreed upon. This led to laying the foundation for working together more synergistically;
- The comfort to be able to reach out and asking their colleagues for help and also on focusing on what I can do instead of letting things happen;
- Co-creating a shared vision for the team, which has the buy in of all members;
- To work for the pure joy of it, instead of letting other factors discourage ones efforts;
- Meeting each other with more awareness and respect for the other person instead of it just being a formality. To unlearn what was taught and appreciate it for new nuances;
- Effects of positive and negative thinking;
- Focusing on taking ownership for outcomes and solving problems proactively;
- Feed forward: we got honest and candid feedback from colleagues and team members;
- Trusting each other – having meaningful dialogues to make things happen;
- The group dynamics too have evolved. The highly committed team now follows a focused, prioritized approach and believes in collaborative problem solving;
- A Strengths Matrix of the team members talents and strengths emerged;

- We have become more respectful and appreciative of the diverse strengths that our team members bring to the table. We were unaware of these earlier;
- We have identified the "must win" projects which we need to work on; and
- As a programme outcome, the organization institutionalized a system for developing leaders from within.

In a verbatim testimonial a senior team member said, "The team has showed a marked improvement in motivation levels. The team members are peppy in general and are self-driven. Team members show a sense of ownership."

An elated team member quoted; "We are a Charged Innovative Team now! The renewed force elicited by team members has been transformational in our success."

We have often heard the phrases "awakening" and "huge Eye Opener" after the BFG Workshops.

The Impact of BFG is captured by multiple modalities. The Table 1 gives a snapshot of various data pieces which were analysed to assess the effectiveness of BFG.

Table-1: BFG Impact Assessment

Period / Respondents	Immediate	Mid-term	Long-term
Participants	Post programme feedback: Quantitative & Qualitative	Progress on individual commitments	x
Senior Stakeholders	Qualitative feedback	x	Quantitative & quantitative data

Post Programme Feedback

At the end of each BFG, participants fill up a feedback from which gets collected for both qualitative and quantitative data. The quantitative data analysis of the data shows a very favourable response from the participants. The table in *Appendix 4* (Collated Quantitative Feedback), below shows the data based on about 600 participants' individual feedback on various parameters. The applicability of the learnings and experiences that one gathers in such programmes to their real life is always a concern. The score of 4.5 shows the participants' confidence that the themes they experienced in the programme are in reality practically applicable to their professional life.

The qualitative analysis of the comments from the participants throws light on what they found to be of most value in the programme. The top value of such programmes was seen as learning to converse and actually connecting with their team members at a deeper lever. Participants got to know each other much better and as a result also gathered good understanding of their own and the team's strengths. The bonding that most participants experienced during the programme also created the possibility of continuing to do so even after the workshop. Most importantly, the learning about the importance of such connection was the biggest takeaway for most participants. The other critical areas appreciated by participants were the opportunity for self-assessment and getting feedback from their colleagues.

Progress on Individual Commitments

Individual behavioural changes are the key to achieving team / organizational change. After participating in BFG, as a result of learning and also getting feedback from colleagues, participants often get insights into what are the key areas they need to focus on. Participants make and declare their top 1 or 2 commitments for change to the whole team. These provide a good anchor and reminder to focus one's energy on specific areas to achieve visible improvement.

One such study was carried out to track participants' progress on their commitments. Participants were asked to rate their progress on the commitments on a scale of -3 to +3, where negative ratings show an actual decline in the committed area, 0 indicates no change and positive numbers indicate the magnitude of progress. Results showed that 31% participants rated a slight progress (+1). A majority of 63% participants indicated substantial improvement (+2) and the remaining 6% reported a total improvement in the committed area (+3).

When asked what have been the main aids for their success, the biggest contributing factor for their success was attributed to the concept captured in the acronym AAG which denotes the power of Awareness, Appreciation and Gratitude for creating positive energy in the teams. The second best factor emerged was the concept of 'focusing on the I factor' where participants are encouraged to focus on what's in their locus of control rather than the 'they factors' which pertain to others' behaviour.

Long Term Impact Assessment

Members of top leadership of organizations where BFGs were conducted were asked to report if and what was the long term impact of BFG. 11 senior leaders from 8 organizations responded to the survey. When asked if they would recommend BFG to other organizations, every single leader responded with a 'yes'. The average rating of BFG effectiveness was 7.45 on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 stood for 'No effect' and 10 for 'Highly effective'.

What changed in many organizations was a much improved bonding among team members, greater trust and an overall positive appreciative attitude. This also resulted in better operations, clearer roles and in some cases direct visible business results.

Challenges for Further Exploration and Research

After creating and delivering a successful programme like BFG, the serious challenge that any learning and development person focuses on is the sustainability of such results. The common fear is that these positively impacting experience will wither away. Even though some of the cases discussed earlier show a tangible impact that sustained over a period of time, more work needs to be done on this dimension. A question to ask is what practices will remind the participants of the importance of teaming. What will actually inspire and remind them to continually practice what they have learnt? How can we innovate to make the learnings more "sticky" and enduring?

Another great way to propagate such work could be to create forums and catalysts who will keep the flame burning. Further research and practice can focus on specifically these aspects of continuity and sustainability of the impact of such programmes.

Conclusion

In this paper we have shared an approach to developing sustainable integration in senior leadership teams. This approach has applications in a wide variety of contexts, including governments. The common patterns of problems have been spelt out as being centred on the issues of Context, Connection, Consciousness and Commitment. After looking at the philosophical foundations (or the underlying paradigm behind this approach), the paper then goes on to describe the Objectives, Methodology and Design of the BFG Workshop. The importance of the Quality of facilitation is underlined as being critical to the success of the process. Preliminary results on the impact of this programme in enhancing joyful effectiveness of Leadership Teams is spelt out. The results are promising and encouraging. A few areas requiring more research have been spelt out.

By working from the very core of Awareness (the generative substratum of our Inner Resource) and taking an Appreciative, and Positive view of Life, we see that the BFG Workshop works in a radical way. People begin to see that they have the power to transform their lives, to take creative steps to make a difference and to work with others in a relaxed and joyful and yet productive way. The impact on results is tangible.

In a world of business organizations which are all looking for inspiration, integration and innovation, how can the BFG movement become a part of the Leadership culture of many organizations? Could this approach, which integrates inner and outer tools, and creative and analytical approaches give us the key for more productive and joyful integration in Leadership Teams? At a time when all spheres of work need people to increase meaningful connection, collaboration and co-creation, BFG may be what we are looking for. For leaders who are looking to enhance Inspiration, Integration and Innovation in their teams, the BFG approach gives some practical insights and ideas to make this happen.

Appendix 1: Appreciative Inquiry (AI)

What Is It?

A powerful approach that invites people to learn through their personal stories of accomplishment and aspirations. Used by individuals, organizations and communities, it begins with an affirmative interview to identify the best of "what is" in order to pursue dreams and possibilities of "what could be."

Probable Outcomes:

Fundamental shift toward cooperation, equality of voice, high participation, inquiry and improvisational learning as daily practices.

Group Size:

20 – 2,000 involved in interviews, large scale meetings and collaborative actions.

Typical Duration:

3 hours to 4 days. The longer it runs, the more embedded into daily practice it becomes.

The Steps in Brief:

1. Select a focus area or topic(s) of interest.
2. Design an interview to discover strengths, passions, unique attributes.

Example Questions:

1. Describe a peak experience or "high point" in your work. What was happening? Who was involved? What made it such a powerful experience?

2. What do you most value about... yourself? Your work? Your organization/school?

3. What core factors give life to your organization/school?

4. What three wishes do you have to enhance the health and vitality of your organization/school?

    a. Identify patterns, themes and/or intriguing possibilities in the interviews.

    b. Create bold statements of ideal possibilities ("Provocative Propositions").

    c. Co-determine "what should be" (consensus re: principles & priorities).

    d. Take action.

For More Information

Appreciative Inquiry commons: http://appreciativeinquiry.cwru.edu

Appendix 2: Open Space Technology (OST)

What Is It?

A methodology of transformation that enables a group of any size to address important, complex issues in a constructive and powerful way.

Probable Outcomes:

Discovery of the capacity to operate as a learning organization with high levels of personal responsibility and leadership.

Group Size:

5 – 1000 people. By using computer connected, multi-site, simultaneous events, theoretically, there is no limit.

Typical Duration:

3 hours to 3 or more days. The longer it runs, the more learning and depth happens. Ultimately, it can be a daily practice for individuals and organizations.

The Steps in Brief:

1. Create a focusing statement or theme that frames your topic in a positive way.
2. Invite the people who care about the theme.
3. Create the space: Set chairs in a circle or in concentric circles, leaving space in the center with blank sheets of news print and coloured felt pens. Label a wall "Agenda Wall".
4. To begin the gathering, explain the theme, the process the group will follow to organize, the Law of Two Feet, and the four principles.
5. Invite anyone who cares about an issue to step into the circle and write the topic, their name, a time and place for meeting, announce it and post the offering on the Agenda Wall. They are responsible for facilitating their session(s).
6. When ALL offerings are concluded, invite people to sign up for what they are interested in.
7. People participate in discussions and take responsibility by using the Law of Two Feet.
8. Closing: reconvene in the circle to share highlights and key learnings, simply listening to whatever people have to offer.

For More Information

Open Space Institute (US), usa@openspaceworld.org

World-wide Open Space web site: www.openspaceworld.org

Appendix 3

The BFG Programme Design
Day 1

Session Title	Learning Objectives	Session Description
Welcome, Context Setting & Creative Introductions.	Getting to appreciatively know the strengths of individuals and our teams	**Welcome** – **Introduction to Pragati Leadership, Valued Customers and Self** **Context Setting**- **Objectives of the Prog, Prog Architecture, Setting Norms,** Discussion of the reasons for this workshop. **Pre Programme Findings,** **Creative Introduction**- **Exercise – Namaste –** We will use this time to know each other beyond your role. Then do an **appreciative look at ourselves.** Strengths of the team, what we feel proud of, our Vision. **Appreciative look at the organization**.
Taking an appreciative look at ourselves & our organization	Where we are now and where is it that we want to be?	**Looking at ourselves** – **What is Wholesome Leadership?** **Visioning exercise** Make collages – **standing in the future exercise** can also be conducted. Make people **stick post it's** on topics/ aspects for addressing in the future, etc. – You can also make them **rate their team functioning**, their organization, etc. on a scale of 1 – 10. Where are they falling short? Why is it happening? How do they plan to overcome these gaps? Etc.
Attitudes for Excellence	What we already possess to be a super team?	**Energiser** **Building a Super Team** **How to be truthful and caring at the same time** Here facilitator must ensure the following:

		Scope for everyone to share ideas. Openness, Comfortable, Spontaneous and uninhabited environment. Give space to speak up. Emotional aspect if prevalent. Boost up Self-confidence. Patience is critical. Destructions prevent us from listening. "Sharpen the axe instead of wasting time in cutting the wood first". **Attitudes in excellence** – main thrust are **Accountability**. **45 mins** Methodology varies from dialogue, storytelling,
Building an Effective Feedback Process Light Seat Method	NVC Feed forward Clarifying mutual expectations and Roles.	**Building An effective Feedback Process:** Close with summary of day and looking forward to talent night.

Evening Day 1 - Talent Night

Dance Drama- My Dream Team, other activities organized by the client

Early Morning Day 2 - Exercises for the Body and Mind

Actual physical exercises (Warm ups and Tibetan Rites); Pranayama Basics, Introduction to Meditation. Learning to be close to nature, wholesome living, and building trust.

Day 2

Session Title	Learning Objectives	Session Description
Team Building Without Time Wasting		**Characteristics of a Good Team** **Team building without time wasting** – individual feedback 1 – 2 team changes – 1 -2 individual changes Everyone makes I commit cards. Trust game – group of people – iron rod – trust fall – or then trust walk.
Creating a Learning Organization 2 behaviours towards building a Super Team		**Getting the group to Share individually** what they think are the 2 behaviours they should commit to build a Super Team. Consolidating and Agreeing to 2 behaviours as a group and defining the measureable behaviour indicators for the same. **Open Space Conversations** On Unblocking the Blocks and How We Can Function As A Team good thinking creating, celebrating being together
Final Recap, Action Planning, Feedback & Closure	Develop an Action Plan for Self and make commitment	What should be the **review mechanism** on reviewing that we are living the 2 behaviours? **Personal Commitments**- I Commit Cards. Closure exercise: What am I leaving back in the Fire of Awareness, and what am I taking back

Appendix 4: Collated Quantitative Feedback

Criteria	5 ☺	4	3 😐	2	1 ☹	Overall Rating
Overall assessment of the programme just completed.	249	274	27	3	0	4.4
Course objectives as stated in the beginning of the programme have been achieved.	249	267	36	1	0	4.4
I will be able to apply the learnings from this training on the job.	243	177	19	1	0	4.5
Facilitator's ability to enable enhancement of my learning.	215	200	13	1	0	4.5
Overall rating of the facilitator.	367	200	23	9	0	4.5
The methodologies used to deliver the programme have been effective.	184	223	41	2	0	4.3
The course material has been relevant and value adding.	125	238	59	7	0	4.1

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