

Facilitating Culture-Defining Meetings



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Principal & Co-Founder

I love designing and facilitating experiences that help humans change what they believe is possible.

- Practice Makes Culture™ Expert Facilitator
- Business Agility Consultant
- Facilitative Leadership Coach
- Leadership Circle® Certified 360 Consultant

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Principal & Co-Founder

I love watching humans thrive and achieve together. I believe organizations of all types can elevate how people work together to unleash the potential of individuals and teams at all levels.

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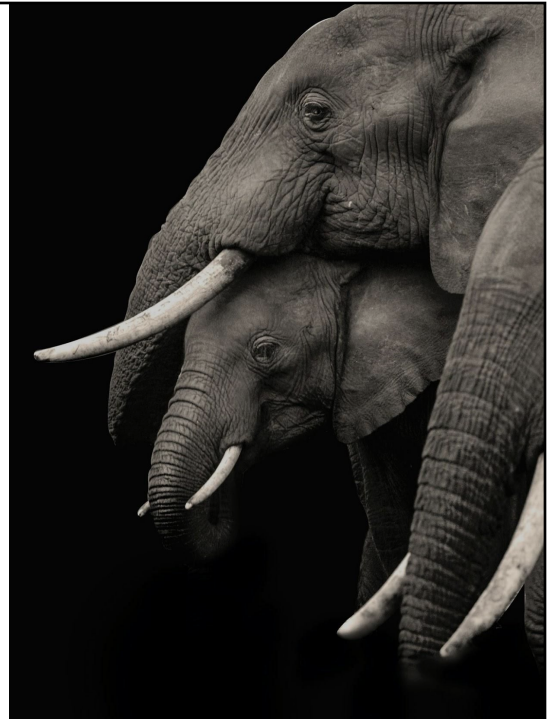
@RonicaRoth on Twitter

Practice Makes Culture™

What you **practice** as an individual
as a leader
and as a leadership team
defines your culture.

Your words and behaviors create
experiences that shape others' beliefs
and actions, and ultimately your results.

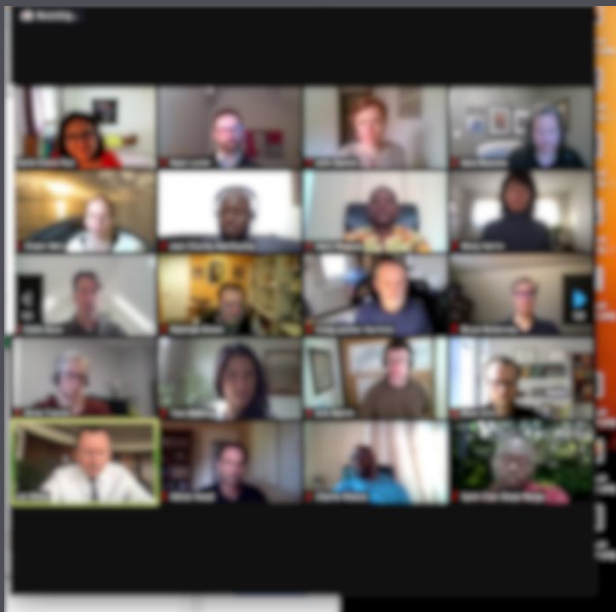
The Welcome Elephant



Choose an aspect of your org culture to focus on today

What are some aspects of that culture that you like or dislike?

For today, what aspect are you looking to change or amplify?



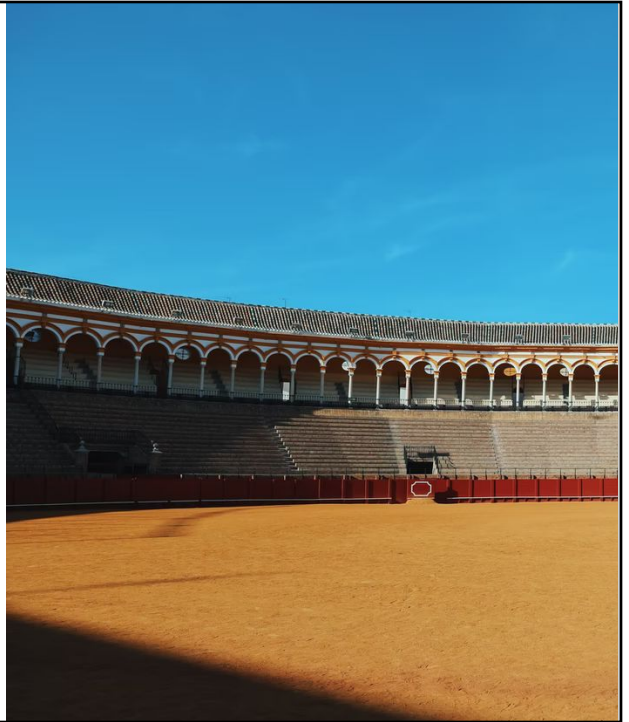


Facilitate a Culture-Defining Meeting

- ✓ Design with desired culture in mind
- ✓ Create the arena with psychological safety
- ✓ Facilitate divergence; welcome elephants
- ✓ Facilitate collaborative decisions that stick
- ✓ Close and claim small #wins

Choose a meeting to design for cultural outcomes

What is a meeting you lead or facilitate that you might adjust to address your desired cultural change?



Reinforce Culture in Meeting Purpose

TO

WHAT

BY

HOW

SO THAT

WHY

Reinforce Culture with Language

TO

BY

SO THAT

Collaboratively steer strategic change work for **our** line of business

- Sharing **our** current business & change results
- Surfacing and evaluating areas of concern, risk, and opportunity across our business, **making sure we hear from all participants**
- Choosing focus areas to continue/stop/start

We improve quarterly customer experience (NPS +10) with a more contiguous experience--**seamless across all of our products**

Opening the Arena

Welcome with positivity	Facilitator tone
Orient to the Why	Share the purpose
Connect the humans and invite them to use their voices	Icebreaker that reinforces cultural change
Create the container	Share agenda, logistics, other helpful information
Nurture psychological safety and desired culture	Co-create working agreements, Establish decision authority

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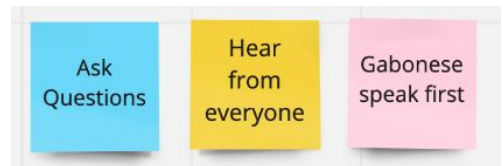


[Psychological safety is] a condition in which human beings feel (1) included, (2) safe to learn, (3) safe to contribute, and (4) safe to challenge the status quo – all without fear of being embarrassed, marginalized, or punished in some way."

Timothy R. Clark | *The 4 Stages of Psychological Safety*

Nurture Psychological Safety with Co-Created Working Agreements

- Co-create working agreements (rather than set ground rules)
- Guide the humans to create working agreements to support desired culture
- Consider agreements that focus on language, behaviors, and celebrating wins + practice slips
- Agreement requires consensus!



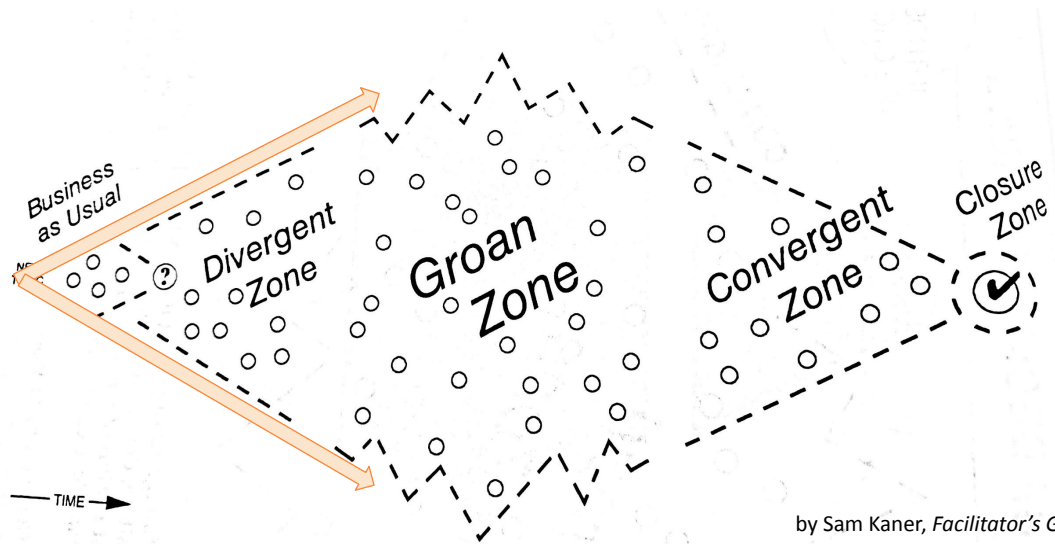
Seeding Working Agreements

What one or two working agreements might you seed to encourage behaviors that support your desired culture change?



Facilitate Divergence and Welcome Elephants

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by Sam Kaner, *Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making*



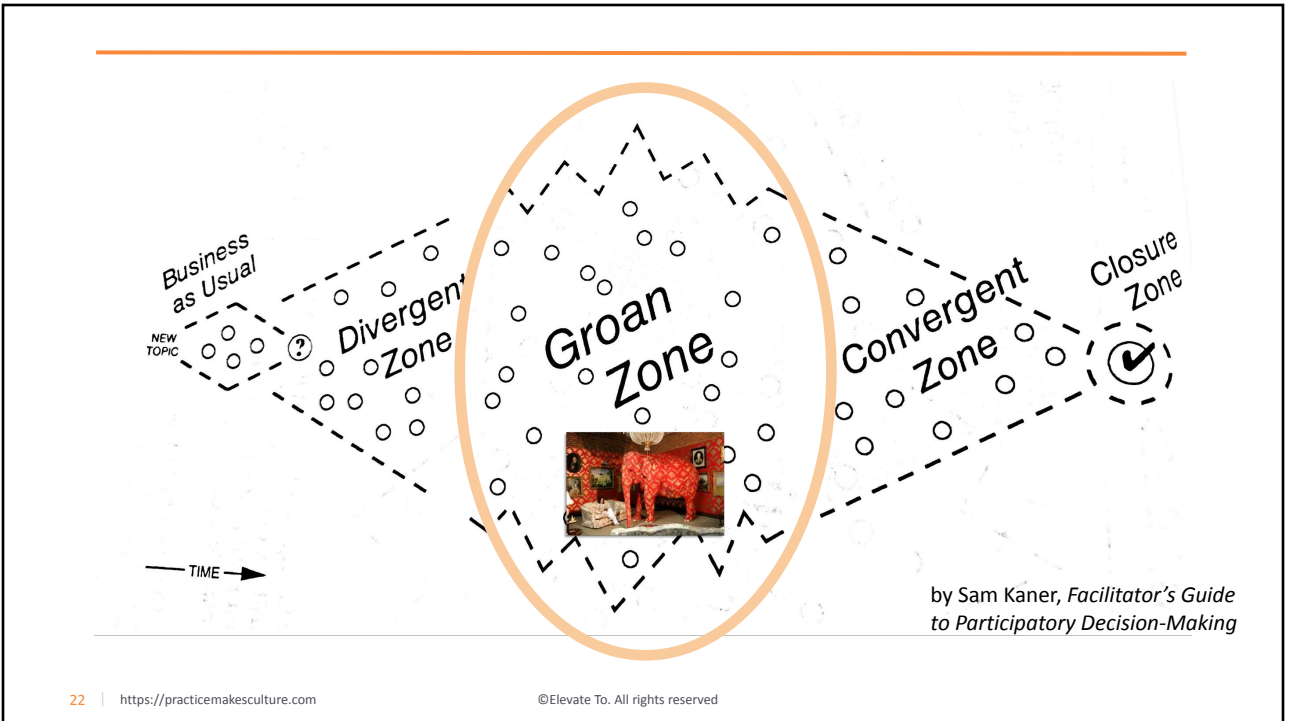
Facilitating Divergence

Reinforcing Psychological Safety

Craft the language you use to invite participation

Democratize the process

Honor people's ideas and language





Centering Yourself During Conflict



At some point as a facilitator, you will get rattled.

When this happens, try

- taking a deep breath
- reminding yourself of the outcomes you want for these amazing humans, and that this is just a part of the process
- quietly observe the behaviors

Box Breathing

When ready, take a deep breath:

inhale for a count of 4

hold for a count of 4

exhale for a count of 4

hold for a count of 4

repeat



Reframe Based on What You See

- Is this passion healthy or not?
 - Passion about ideas can be good, but intimidating.
- Is this anger hurting the group?
 - Anger directed at situation or “items” can be ok.
- Am I watching people try to avoid a healthy conflict?
 - Some people will avoid any conflict, which hurts the group.
- Am I watching people stoke an unhealthy conflict?
 - Some people love the excitement and don’t see the impact.
- Am I hearing real interests or simply positions?
 - People get stuck in the solution rather than the need.
- Are people angry or hangry?
 - Sometimes people are weary or hungry.



Name What You are Observing

“I’m noticing raised voices.”

“I think I’m seeing people talking past each other with deep positive intent”

“I’m hearing ‘us and them’ language, rather the ‘one team’ language we said we want.”

“I think I might hear two slightly different conversations”

“I see we’re starting to coalesce on a couple of ideas”

“I think we’re in vehement agreement, here”



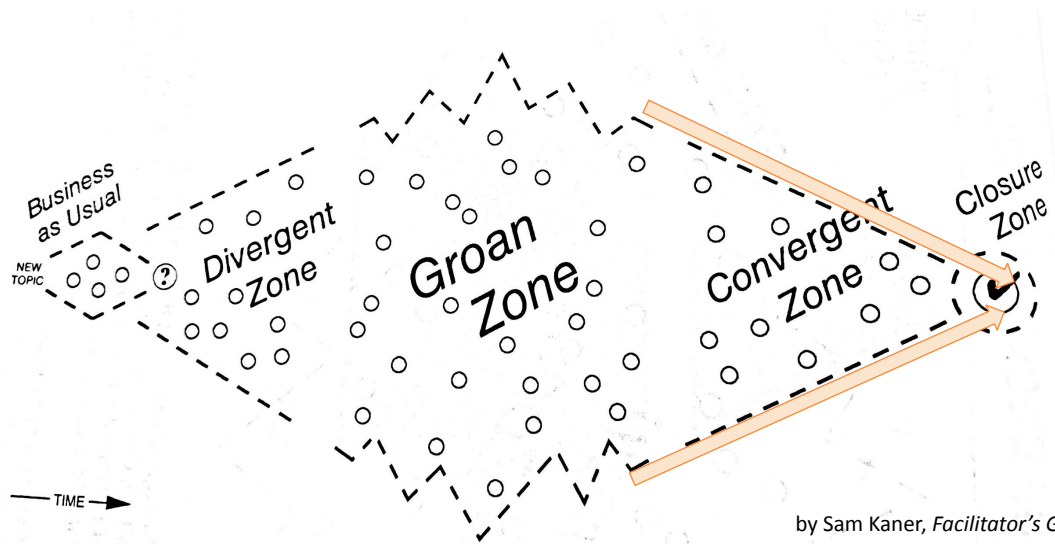
Name What You are Observing

1. Think about a recent time when you witnessed conflict in a meeting--that didn't match your desired culture.
2. Write down 2-3 possible options of “Naming and Reframing” what you were observing



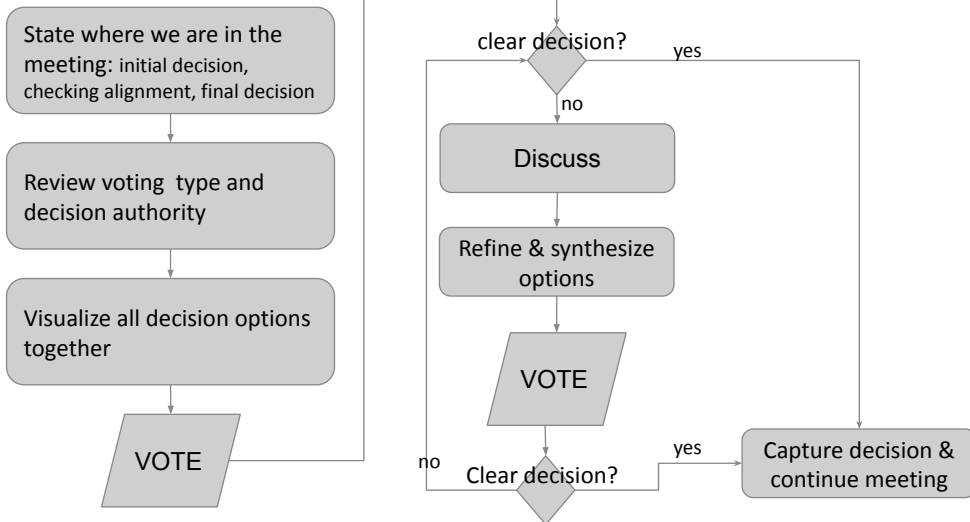
Facilitating Decisions that Stick

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by Sam Kaner, *Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making*

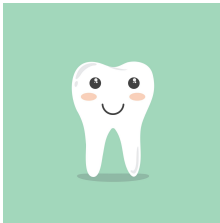
Facilitating Collaborative Decisions



Closing and Claiming #wins

Plan Streaks of Small #wins

Start VERY small.



Be VERY specific.

What behavior?

Where (what meeting)?

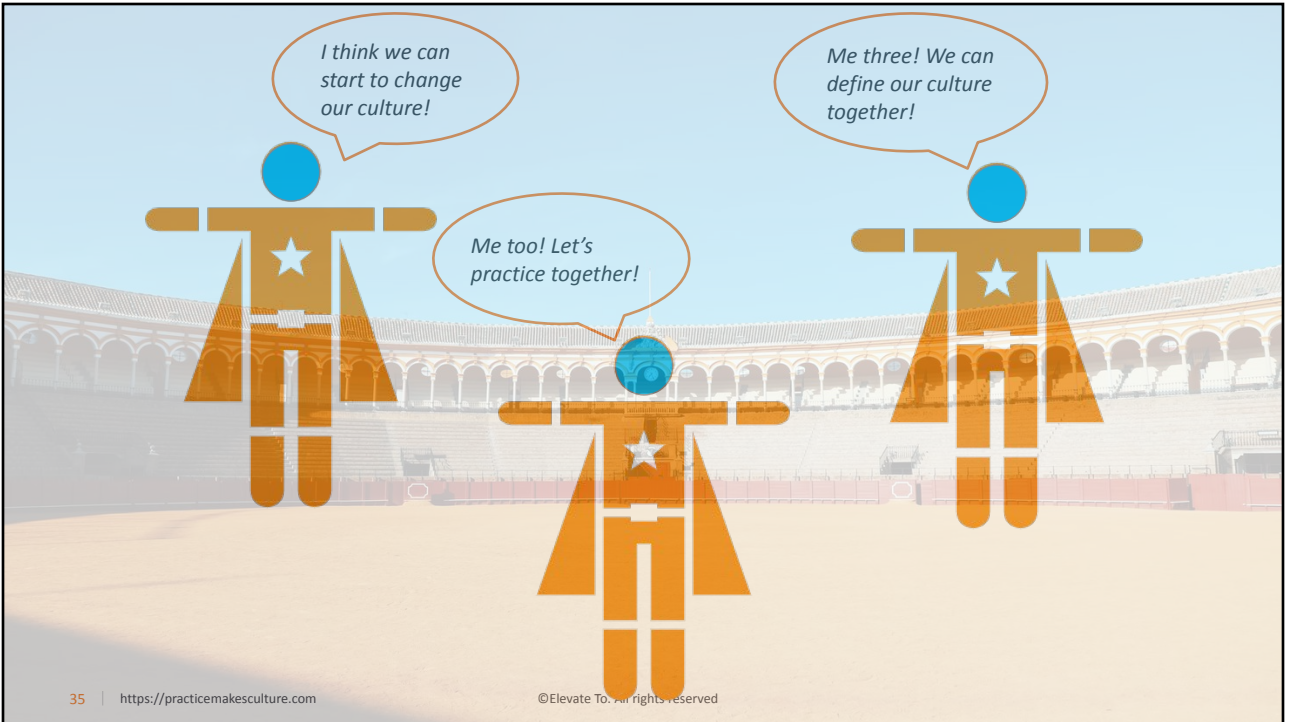
Date, day, time

Specific timing/location (at what point in the meeting)

Specify a small #win towards culture change

- Choose your first small win towards your desired culture change
- Be specific about which meeting and what date and time--even what point in the meeting
- Be specific about what language or behavior you will use





Thank You

Practice Makes Culture
Quarterly Practice Programs

Facilitative Leadership Program
<https://www.elevate.to/facilitative-leadership-program/>

Facilitating Agile Culture Change
<https://www.elevate.to/facilitating-agile-change/>



Additional Resources

Small but critical moves towards culture changing meetings:

<https://www.elevate.to/blog/2021/03/10/small-simple-critical-move-toward-better-meetings/>

Bigger moves towards rapid culture change with BRP:

<https://www.elevate.to/blog/2021/05/24/7-hidden-benefits-of-big-room-planning/>

Why Elephants?

<https://www.elevate.to/blog/2019/06/20/why-the-elephant/>

Icebreakers we love and why we love them:

<https://www.elevate.to/blog/2021/02/21/icebreakers-we-love/>