

The Technology of Participation (ToP)[®]

Foundational Course

ToP Facilitation Methods

Advanced Training

ToP Strategic Planning

ToP Secrets of Implementation

Facilitating Conciliation: Beyond Conflict Resolution

Application Design Lab

The Power of Image Shift

Facilitation Graphics

Mastering the Technology of Participation

Become a Certified ToP Facilitator (CTF)

*Learn to facilitate with the ease and
power that builds commitment*





Why Technology of Participation (ToP)[®]?

Participation matters. In every time zone and in private, public, and community settings, ToP methods are bringing high levels of participation to the decision-making process while embedding the ability to create specific customized applications. ToP cultivates the collective ideas that result in breakthrough changes and it generates the spirit of commitment that undergirds follow through. Getting a participatory culture to bloom takes new attitudes, tools and methods – the kind ToP provides.

The methods work!

ToP methods have a proven track record for getting results. You can use them with confidence to generate ownership, create clear goals, open lines of communication, broaden perspectives, and inspire people to adapt to their changing environment. These methods have the rare ability to honor the diversity and integrate the contributions of all involved.

ToP methods level the playing field and are so authentic that conflicts rarely detract from achieving agreement on results.



ToP Track Record:

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) promotes economic development in over four hundred counties stretching from New York to Mississippi. They have used the Technology of Participation and external facilitators to build regional plans for energy development, multi-modal transportation hubs, and the ARC Strategic Plan 2005-2010. Each of these consensus-based plans included a region-wide core team of 15-25 state representatives along with hundreds of local citizens, government officials, and private sector participants. Data was gathered in sub-regional field forums and analyzed in assembly gatherings to identify major themes and select priority localities and projects for state and federal funding. An important side benefit is the capacity building of core team members in ToP facilitation skills.

RARE, an international conservation organization, trains local leaders to use social marketing and participatory planning methods (Technology of Participation, ToP[®]) to engage communities in biodiversity conservation through a program called *Pride*. To date, RARE has worked in 52 countries, and trained 158 local leaders in the developing world, whose campaigns have influenced more than 6.8 million people living in over 2,400 remote communities. With the new curriculum, the *Pride* program has been awarded a *Masters in Communication* by the University of Texas, El Paso, Texas. For more information, please visit www.rareconservation.org.

Cedar Rapids, Iowa is rebuilding its neighborhoods following the devastating flood of 2008 during which a major portion of the city was destroyed and thousands of families were displaced. The municipal government coordinated a 5-month “Neighborhood Planning Process” in early 2009 whereby residents identified key elements for recovering the vibrant character, connectivity, and diversity of their communities. They established priorities for land use changes, infrastructure improvements, and participatory procedures for local governance. Hundreds of residents accomplished this through a series of eight major planning events that incorporated ToP methods. A core group of 70 local civic facilitators, trained in ToP methods, were instrumental for ensuring the creative contributions of everyone in attendance at large events, often involving over 300 people.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) leads international efforts to defeat hunger. To assist its staff in this effort and to increase its effectiveness in working with stakeholders worldwide, FAO offers facilitation training in participatory and collaborative methods. The Technology of Participation (ToP)[®] set of methodologies is among the foundational methods utilized.

Build a solid foundation for strong group participation, productivity, and commitment with:

ToP Facilitation Methods

ToP Facilitation Methods are practical tools for fostering highly energized, productive, inclusive, and meaningful group participation. The ToP course is for anyone who leads meetings and/or works with groups and desires better results. Learn and practice two foundational facilitation methods and a powerful application!

The Focused Conversation Method

This tool enables you to:

- Conduct purposeful discussions
- Probe beneath the surface to the depth of a topic
- Surface new ideas and solutions
- Deepen understanding of diverse perspectives
- Stimulate candid feedback

The Consensus Workshop Method

Using this tool enables you to:

- Easily capture a group's best thinking
- Tap rational and intuitive thought processes
- Integrate diverse ideas, thus resolving turf wars, divided camps, and other unproductive group dynamics
- Generate practical and creative solutions
- Level the playing field
- Hear every voice
- Develop a strong consensus
- Provide forum for people to understand each other

This method brings a group's many diverse ideas into agreement and infuses the team with energy for action.

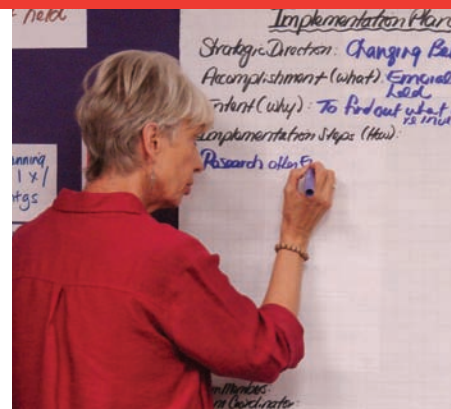
The Action Planning Process

This tool enables you to:

- Visualize and articulate a successful result
- Analyze the current situation
- Maximize involvement and solidify commitment
- Create clear forms of accountability
- Develop an action timeline
- Allow a group's self-motivation to take over

Using both the Focused Conversation and the Consensus Workshop, this process takes a group from an idea for an event, project, or campaign to a detailed plan of action with a timeline and task assignments.

ToP Facilitation Methods are effective in an infinite number of situations. Used alone or creatively combined and adapted, they serve as powerful tools for groups to think and work together in innovative and productive ways. The methods can be scaled to work with virtually any size group, from one to hundreds. 2 days. *(In some locations, a third day gives additional time for questions and practice.)*



What You Will Learn:

- Specific facilitation methods for group discussions and planning efforts that take less time, are more productive, and engage the creative spirit of participants (thereby are more fun and enjoyable).
- Ways to design questions that help people discuss difficult and important topics respectfully and thoroughly.
- A method for helping a group to build consensus even when there are opposing ideas to integrate.
- How to facilitate an action planning process that makes sense, doesn't get bogged down, and energizes a group to implement its plan.

“ToP training is rigorous, powerful and well worth the investment! We trained our entire management team to use ToP facilitation methods and have been using them all over the organization. ToP has given managers an important tool that strengthens the culture of participatory decision making and promotes staff acceptance and enthusiasm for agency initiatives and change.”

*—Elizabeth Carty, MSW,
Chief Operating Officer,
Center for Elders Independence*



ToP Strategic Planning

ToP Facilitation Methods is a prerequisite for this course.

What You Will Learn:

- An effective and common sense five-step approach to strategic planning that actively engages implementers in the planning process.
- An in-depth understanding of the dynamics of strategic planning to help organizations align for accomplishments that exceed expectations.
- Ways to move groups beyond buy-in to ownership.
- Approaches to improve follow-up communications.
- Tools for immediate and on-going implementation.

The ToP Strategic Planning process builds on your learning from the ToP Facilitation Methods course, showing you how to weave those methods into an integrated approach to strategic planning. The resulting plan is realistic, achievable, and easy to monitor. The five steps of ToP Strategic Planning process are:

Preparation and Design: From the moment a client contacts you, there are opportunities for achieving a successful facilitation that incorporate the clients' objectives and needs. These include learning what led to the decision to do planning now, who will be involved, and what decisions have already been made or need to be made prior to the event.

Practical Vision: Shared excitement arises when the unarticulated desires, hopes, and dreams for the future are elicited from the group and participants come to a consensus around a practical vision for a specific time frame.

Underlying Contradictions: Before participants trip over obstacles in their rush to the future, they need an in-depth understanding of the blocks and barriers that stand in the way of their vision and what keeps them in place. This step enables a group to talk about their contradictions in a objective way.

Strategic Directions: Having glimpsed the future and being clear about what is blocking it, a group can then craft strategies that will address the underlying contradictions and move them toward their vision. This workshop brings focus to the work ahead.

Focused Implementation: After taking a look at what final success looks like for each of the strategic directions and clarifying the current reality in relation to each one, a group is able to determine realistic accomplishments for the first year, lay out specific responsibilities and deadlines and create a plan for ensuring implementation. 2 days. *(In some locations, an additional day on "Approaches to Environmental Scanning" is an option.)*

Skilled facilitators/trainers demonstrate each step of the ToP Strategic Planning process and clarify the rationale behind each step, providing examples from their own facilitation experience. Participants practice the methods during the course.

ToP Strategic Planning is for executives, managers, and others responsible for successful implementation of organizational strategies, as well as board members, educators, consultants, and people responsible for design and facilitation of organizational plans.



For more detailed information on advanced courses, go to www.ica-usa.org.

Additional Advanced Courses

The Power of Image Shift

Strong images influence why people act the way they do. While we cannot control behavior, we can learn to create the environments, contexts, and processes that help people choose creativity, cooperation, and productivity. This course unlocks the power of shaping and shifting images. (2 days)

ToP Secrets of Implementation

Do your client groups have trouble sustaining a plan once it has been initiated? Do you sometimes find it difficult to help your clients stay on track, bring new people into a team, and then bring closure? This course is about keeping plans and projects alive, relevant, doable and achievable. (2 days)

Facilitating Conciliation: Beyond Conflict Resolution

Our society is crying for alternatives to the adversarial approach to dealing with disputes. There is another way. Learn to apply ToP methods to reconcile differences and heal deep rifts. (2 days)

Facilitation Graphics

Explore ways to add imagery and graphics to enhance your facilitation, training, consulting, or coaching toolkit. Practice and become proficient in which markers and paper to use, basic shapes, drawing techniques, and much more. (1 day)

Application Design Lab

Having learned the powerful ToP methods, this course will teach you how to use them to design participatory events. (1 day)

Mastering the Technology of Participation (MToP)

Develop competence with ToP methods through an intensive, year-long training program. Designed for those wishing to significantly increase their skills in group facilitation, the program provides a theoretical foundation and opportunities for practice and feedback with organizations outside of the classroom. (4 sessions over 1 year)

To inquire about in-house courses, contact your local registrar or any ToP trainer.

ToP courses can be customized to meet your organization's needs.



“I can’t think of better tools to help all levels of staff and consumers work in teams to develop consensus, make effective decisions, and create a sense of ownership in making things happen. ToP courses provide flexible, high quality training that gets immediate results.”

*—Michael Lisman, Director,
Adult Community Support Centers,
Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services*

“Has anyone from the Council sent you a note letting you know how often and successfully we have used our ToP training around here? Since April, we’ve used it for our strategic planning with staff and board, for a key consensus building workshop with staff, board, and ‘external’ participants, for designing our project work plans and for myriad other internal needs...thought you’d like to know!”

*—Susan Smoluchowski, VP,
Council on Crime and Justice*

“I have used the ToP methods throughout my career in health promotion in both formal training and multi-sector health promotion planning activities. I have found the tools very valuable in bringing diverse voices together for learning and collaborative action.”

*—Stacey McConlogue, MPH, Program Manager,
Denver Healthy People 2010*

“Because of our efforts today and your expert facilitation, I have a clarity about my work here at Ninth Street. I wasn’t expecting to achieve such a focus. It seems an exaggeration to say that “the clouds parted” but I feel that I can finally map what was so muddled before; I was just trudging through, hoping for some guidance.”

—Skye Christensen, Managing Director,
Ninth Street Independent Film Center

“Thank you so much for working with us on the action planning process with family shelter service providers. I can’t tell you enough how big of an impact this has made. The facilitators did a great job guiding the discussion and moving us toward action. We have been operating as part of a politically charged collaborative that was literally at a stand still. The work done today and with the support of the facilitators navigating through the challenges made it possible for us to move forward. People left seeing possibilities and the dynamics have changed. Very exciting.”

—Jim Durdle, Family Service Center,
Housing and Emergency Services,
Catholic Charities

“This is what I have been searching for...the role of guiding others to their knowledge rather than imparting mine. This is the first time I’ve left a training wanting to be part of the group I’m leaving.”

—Brenda Norman,
Minnesota Governors
Workforce Development Council

“ToP Facilitation Methods is simply the best facilitation training I have ever taken. Great job!”

—Lyle H. Iron Moccasin,
American Indian OIC

Where did these methods come from?



The Institute of Cultural Affairs was incorporated in 1973 in the USA. ICA-USA is a private, nonprofit, social change organization (IRS designated 501(c)3). Its primary objective is to promote positive, sustainable change in communities, organizations, and individual lives in the USA and throughout the world by helping people visualize, plan, and implement consensus-based strategies aimed at reaching goals they envision for themselves.

More than forty years of methods testing and refinement have enabled ICA-USA to create and sustain a variety of programs across the USA and abroad which invoke one common principle: the desire to release the creativity of the people, involve them, and allow them to shape their own destiny. The ICA-USA facilitates this creative process so that people can

learn for themselves how to think, plan, and lead. Among its many accomplishments, ICA-USA is the only group to have facilitated town hall meetings in each county in the United States and facilitated meetings for positive social change in every time zone around the world.

ICA-USA is proud of its exceptionally qualified faculty. Each trainer team brings a wealth of both up-front facilitation and training experience coming from work with large and small businesses, nonprofits, community agencies, governmental and educational institutions, and neighborhoods. They are skilled at both transferring these methods and answering your questions about how these methods work. The trainers provide an interdisciplinary and multicultural approach to organizational change and development.



Become a Certified ToP Facilitator (CTF)

Begin the journey by applying online, taking additional courses, and documenting your ToP facilitation experiences.

Visit: <http://www.ica-usa.org/index.php?pr-topfacilitator>.

Sample listing of organizations that have benefited from ToP methods

Business

3M
American Express
Carlson Hotels Worldwide
Dell Computer
Eli Lilly & Company
Equity Residential
Harley-Davidson Financial Services
Honeywell Inc.
National Basketball Association (NBA)
Medtronic Corporation
Sun Microsystems
Tennant Company
Thomson Reuters
Unisys

Education

4-H
Arizona State University – Center for Nonprofit Leadership & Management
Austin Independent School System
Chicago Public Schools
Colorado State University Extension Service
Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation
Denver's Great Kids' Head Start
Duke Office of Community Affairs, Quality of Life Project
Emory University
Indiana University – Department of Family Medicine
Iowa State University
Linn-Benton Community College (Oregon)
Massachusetts College of Art and Design, Boston, MA
Minneapolis Community Education, Youth Development Team, Minneapolis, MN
Native American Education System
University of Illinois Extension
University of Minnesota Extension, St. Paul, MN
University of Wisconsin, Office of Quality Improvement
Ysleta School District, El Paso, TX

Government

Alameda County Public Health, CA
Appalachian Regional Commission, Southeast USA
Bureau of Land Management
California Department of Public Health
California Department of Boating and Waterways
Children's and Families' Commission - Placer First Five and Los Angeles First Five

California Judicial Council and Administrative Office of the Courts
National Judicial College
Chicago Department of Public Health, HIV/AIDS/STD Public Policy and Planning



Cities including Boynton Beach, FL; Cedar Rapids, IA; Fremont, CA; Kodiak, AK; Phoenix, AZ; Seattle, WA
Cook County Department of Public Health
Democratic National Convention – Greening the Convention
Hennepin County Research, Planning & Development, Minneapolis, MN
Illinois Department of Transportation
Minnesota Department of Transportation
Osage Nation
Pueblo of Isleta
Pueblo of Acoma
Ramsey County Community Corrections, St. Paul, MN
Shoshone Bannock Indian Tribes
U.S. Food and Drug Administration
U.S. Postal Service
Wind River Indian Reservation (Eastern Shoshone/Northern Arapaho)

Nonprofit

Amherst Wilder Foundation
American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)
American Red Cross
Blue Cross Blue Shield
CARE, International
California Alliance of Arts Education
Council of Energy Resource Tribes
Gardening Matters
Habitat for Humanity
Heifer International
Hopi Foundation
Mercy Housing Refugee Program
Montana Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence
National Foundation for Global Environmental Change
Ninth Street Media Arts Center
Oneida Environmental Services
St. Paul Foundation
The Wellness Community in Arizona
United Way
Wise Women Gathering Place



The following is a list of ToP registrars. Please call them (or any trainer listed at the website) direct for a schedule of courses in your area, an in-house training, and/or designing a unique course to fit your organization's need. For the most up-to-date contact information, go to www.ica-usa.org.

ARIZONA

Phoenix Area

Marilyn Oyler, CTF

602/468-0605

marilynoyler@cox.net

Tucson Area

Catherine Tornbom, CTF

520/395-0602

catherine@interfuseassociates.com

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles Area

Linda Hamilton

909/793-4482

participationworks@verizon.net

Sacramento Area

Marlene Lockwood, CTF

530/417-0884

registrar@topspf.org

San Diego Area

Aja Howell

760/ 224-3246

aja@amhconsulting.org

San Francisco Bay Area

Marti Roach, CTF

925/376-3853

marti@strategicfacilitation.com

COLORADO

Eunice Shankland

303/248-3372

registrar@icadenver.org

ILLINOIS

Dennis Jennings, CTF &

Judy Weddle, CTF

773/769-9266

dennisjennings1@gmail.com

weddlehope@aol.com

IOWA/NEBRASKA

Deborah Burnight, CTF

712/943-1949

dmb1953@aol.com

LOUISIANA

Erness Wright-Irvin

504/259-4219

ewirvin@bellsouth.net

MASSACHUSETTS

Nancy Jackson, CTF

978/779-5472

nanjackson@gammybird.com

MINNESOTA

Linda Alton, CTF

612/281-6556

linda@mntop.us

NEVADA

Patricia Tuecke

775/333-6998

ptuecke@charter.net

NEW YORK

Lisel Burns

718/783-2298

liselburns@earthlink.net

NORTH CAROLINA

Elaine Stover

336/605-0143

greenschemes@bellsouth.net

OKLAHOMA

In-house courses only

Mary Jo Major

405/373-2288

mjm8224@sbcglobal.net

OREGON

Barbara MacKay, CPF, CTF

503/579-5708

bmackay@northstarfacilitators.com

PENNSYLVANIA

Jason Bernard

412/281-9690

registration@mccmcd.com

SOUTH CAROLINA

Sue Laxdal, CTF

843/342-6813 or 612/275-7015

sue.laxdal@igc.org

TENNESSEE

Liz Allen Fey

615/320-0039

liz@msgnashville.com

TEXAS

Austin Area

In-house courses only

Lynda Lieberman Baker, CPF, CTF

512/289-3978

lynda.baker@tea.state.tx.us

Dallas Area

Nadine Bell, CPF, CTF

972/404-1333

nadine.bell@burrellgrp.com

San Antonio Area

Mary Flanagan, CTF

210/822-2876

mary@msgsanantonio.com

WASHINGTON

Gordon Harper

206/720-6647

top-nw@igc.org

WASHINGTON, DC/PHILADELPHIA

Lois R. Saboe

610/277-LOIS (5647)

lois_saboe@msn.com

WISCONSIN

Green Bay Area

Beverly Scow

920/490-0627

bscow@new.rr.com

Madison Area

In-house courses only

Jennifer Obinna

952/936-2159

jobinna@worldbridgeresearch.com

Milwaukee Area

Anita Rodriguez

414-507-0277

anita@anitaandken.com

Top courses are also available in the following other countries:

BARBADOS

Sharon Almerigi

246/432-2011

salmerigi@caribsurf.com

AUSTRALIA

BELGIUM

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

CANADA

CHILE

GUATEMALA

JAPAN

MALAYSIA

NETHERLANDS

SOUTH AFRICA

UNITED KINGDOM

www.ica-international.org



1-800-742-4032

www.ica-usa.org

Technology of Participation (ToP)[®] is a registered trademark of the Institute of Cultural Affairs.

