



"The FoCuSeD™ Facilitator"

eNewsletter by Gary Rush, CPF

"Stop looking for solutions – when you're FoCuSeD™, you find them."

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Different Cultures and the Facilitator

Lately I've had the opportunity to see and work with people from multiple cultures. What I've seen has given me an appreciation for and thoughts about behaviors, customs, characteristics, and what this means for Facilitators.

In looking at people across five continents, the **only real** characteristic that separates us is the economic status, but what differentiates us – our customs and behaviors – is what makes us interesting.

What Differentiates Us?

As Facilitators, we have to take into account the characteristics that differentiate us:

- Our Behaviors – how we act or conduct ourselves.
- Our customs, dress, and food, amongst others.
- Our work tendencies – how frenzied and driven we are or are not in our work.
- Our religious practices – not so much what we believe, but the methods in which we practice.
- Our relations – how formally we address each other; whether we ask about family before business; whether we hold our extended family close or distant.

These differentiating characteristics are what make us interesting. It would be our misfortune if we all became homogenized. The differences enrich us and give us color and complexity. There should be no judgment – one difference is not better than another. They are just different.

What does this mean to the Facilitator?

The competencies of a Facilitator are the same regardless of culture. What does change is how a Facilitator works with the participants and client and how the participants and client perceive the Facilitator. There are *no "right" ways to facilitate.*

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The FoCuSeD™ Facilitator Academy – the 1st Holistic Facilitation Technique

Gary Rush's 5-day highly interactive class teaches the "how to" with an understanding of the "why" to perform as an effective Facilitator. It's the most complete, most comprehensive, and most effective facilitation class available, providing detailed training on the concepts of *Holistic Facilitation*. It helps build your skills and confidence. It develops Collaborative Leaders. With FoCuSeD™ you get JAD, FAST, and more bringing a *holistic* approach to structured facilitation.

The FoCuSeD™ Facilitator Academy

Our next available public class date:

February 8 – 12

2010 Public Class Dates*

February	08 – 12
April	12 – 16
June	14 – 18
August	09 – 13
October	18 – 22
December	06 – 10

*All Public classes are held in Chicago.

*Gary Rush, CPF teaches all of our classes.

New Class

FoCuSeD™ Facilitating Teleconferences

See our class description on page 4.

Attend the IAF North America Conference in Chicago, Illinois

April 20 – 23, 2010.

The Art & Mastery of Facilitation



IAF North America Conference Week April 20-25

Different Cultures and the Facilitator, Continued

In working with the participants and clients, Facilitators need to understand the cultural norms. Each culture is different. Take the time to prepare.

- Do you shake hands, touch noses, kiss the cheeks, or bow when greeting participants?
- How you address people – formally or informally. Do you use first names or address participants as, “Mr.” or “Miss”?
- What type of attire is acceptable?
- The issue of “context” – do the participants relate to you if you ask about their family first or do they just want to get to work? *In some cultures, if you skip asking about the family, you will be perceived as cold and uncaring. In others, you may be perceived as slowing the work process.*
- When participants “agree”, what does that really mean? *In some cultures it means that they really agree. In others, it means that they agree to think about it. In others still, it means that they are simply validating the opinion of the senior person.*
- How much can you joke? *Some cultures accept certain humor. Using humor that doesn’t work with a particular culture will backlash.*
- Watch slang and word usage. *Language is not universal – even with the same base language (e.g., English, Spanish, French, Arabic). All have variations.*
- What are the work hours? *Different cultures work at different times – both work-hours and different days of the week. They won’t change their practices to meet the schedule of the Facilitator.*

How the participants and clients perceive the Facilitator, understand:

- Different cultures perceive male and female Facilitators differently. You cannot change their perception. Their perception changes as you deal with them and


through effectively facilitating. Be aware of its affect on what you ask them to do. Your attitude will affect how successful you are.

- Different cultures view the age of the Facilitator as important. You are respected if you are a “grey-haired” Facilitator.
- How do you carry yourself? Different cultures – especially western corporate culture – being strong and aggressive can be effective – but in dealing with a community group in a developing area, you may alienate the participants.

Facilitators need to be flexible when facilitating the different cultures. Guidelines about our own behavior need to be taken in the context of our clients. Some examples:

- “*You should always stand!*” It is not appropriate for every situation. I have watched Facilitators who deal with community groups in developing areas where the Facilitator sat on the floor. It worked because the community group viewed the Facilitator as helping, not driving.
- “*Make eye contact with the participants.*” Again, not appropriate for every situation. Some cultures feel intimidated or threatened when make eye contact.

Conclusion

It’s great to see that we are not the same – life is more interesting as a result. We need to be aware and sensitive to people from multiple cultures. It is wrong to think that they will adjust to us. As Facilitators, we help because we learn to be effective collaborators. We learn to accept and respect others. We learn to empower people to make effective decisions, but we need to expand our frame of reference. We need to prepare to embrace the characteristics that differentiate us. Neutrality and ethics are part of the Facilitator’s code, part of our competencies, and must guide us in working with multiple cultures. 

The FoCuSeD™ Facilitator Academy

Class Abstract

Gary Rush's 5-day highly interactive class teaches the “how to” with an understanding of the “why” to perform as an effective Facilitator. It is the most complete, most comprehensive, and most effective facilitation class available; providing detailed training on the concepts of *Holistic Facilitation*. It helps build your skills and confidence. It develops Collaborative Leaders.

Until *FoCuSeD™*, facilitation techniques have been either about structure or group dynamics (see *It's Time to Get FoCuSeD™*). With *FoCuSeD™*, you learn to proactively plan the emotional group cycle along with the workshop process to build a product – one without the other is fruitless. Gary believes that the process to build agenda and deal with people is the same whether you are dealing with business, technical, or any type of subject. He believes that theory is needed and teaches it to provide a background. Gary teaches specific “how to”; he provides detailed facilitation and process tools and as an *IAF CPF Assessor*, he covers the *IAF Facilitator Competencies* and what students need to do to achieve them. In his class, students practice 40% of the class time and receive comprehensive assessments along with recorded sessions. **Read more...**

MGR Consulting is a *PMI Global Registered Education Provider (R.E.P.)* and an *IIBA Endorsed Education Provider (EEP)*.

This class is available publicly in Chicago and on-site anywhere in the world. Please contact Gary for additional information, pricing, and scheduling.

“Best session I've had in 30+ years of classes!”

Michael, Project Manager & Facilitator (*FoCuSeD™* Facilitator Academy alumni)

Attendees Receive

The FoCuSeD™ Facilitator Guide – A radical departure from previous work. A comprehensive reference manual in which Gary shares his step-by-step process so that students can replicate his practices.

FoCuSeD™ On...

Project Management, Business Analysis, Quality Management

Class Abstract

Gary Rush's 3-day highly interactive class teaches “how to” successfully use *facilitative skills* and tools necessary to drive the overall business management strategy into the product solutions so needed for business success – achieving support and commitment from their stakeholders. It guides you, enabling you to plan the people side along with the process side to successfully accomplish a task. It is targeted for Project Managers, Business Analysts and others working in Project Management, Business Analysis, Six Sigma, TQM, and other Quality Initiatives. **Read more...**

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This class is available **on-site** anywhere in the world. Please contact Gary for additional information, pricing, and scheduling.

Attendees Receive

FoCuSeD™ On... Guide – A comprehensive reference guide in which Gary shares his step-by-step process so that students can replicate his practices.

FoCuSeD™ Facilitating Teleconferences

Class Abstract

Gary Rush's 1 ½ -day highly interactive class teaches "how to" conduct effective and productive teleconferences to collectively achieve a goal or accomplish a task.

Why? Virtual Meetings are the way of the future. Unlike face-to-face meetings, you have to approach virtual meetings differently. **Because** – Conducting an effective and productive teleconference requires effective facilitative skills. **How?** This class gives you effective *facilitative skills* that enable you to conduct highly effective and productive teleconferences enabling you to manage people and conflict – the good, the bad, and the ugly. Gary believes that theory is needed and teaches it to provide a background. He teaches specific "how to" and provides practice (40% of the class time) to allow development of what was learned enabling attendees to use the skills immediately upon returning to work. **Read more...**

This class is available **on-site** anywhere in the world. Please contact Gary for additional information, pricing, and scheduling.

Attendees Receive **"FoCuSeD™ Facilitating Teleconferences"** by Gary Rush, CPF

About MGR Consulting

IIBA™ Endorsed Education Provider

PMI Project Management R.E.P. Institute

We are a recognized leader in the field of facilitation, training, Facilitator training, collaborative leadership, strategic planning, data modeling, team building, problem solving, decision-making, and facilitating innovation. *Our core classes give you effective leadership, business, and interpersonal skills.*

We are uniquely qualified to assist you in understanding, managing, and implementing facilitated workshops supporting your methodology in your organization. We are experts at engaging participants and guiding them to consensus. We facilitate many types of workshops including strategic planning, business analysis, data modeling, process modeling, design, problem solving, team building, and product ideation. *Our primary job is to get a group of individuals to form as a team, learn to communicate, and achieve a goal or accomplish a task.*

We also teach effective "soft" skills – *facilitative skills* to Project Managers, Business Analysts and others who want to become successful collaborative leaders and successfully improve communication to achieve commitment and support from stakeholders – so needed for business success. *Our effective Facilitative Skills class teaches "how to" use facilitative skills to improve team performance to meet project needs. It enhances whatever you do wherever you go in business and in life.*

We are a *PMI Global Registered Education Provider (R.E.P.)* and an *IIBA Endorsed Education Provider (EEP)*.

MGR Consulting is dedicated to providing the highest quality in training, content, materials, and experience. Our experience shows in all that we do. Our mission is to share what we learn enhancing the lives of others. *We envision a collaborative society that respects individualism and embraces diversity.*

About Gary Rush, CPF

Gary has been in business since February 1985 when he founded MG Rush Systems, Inc. Gary ceased operations of MG Rush Systems, Inc. in June 2004 to become a restaurateur. In June 2005, after a one-year absence, Gary returned re-instating his company MG Rush Systems, Inc. and changing the name to MGR Consulting, Inc. Millie (M) and Gary (G) Rush are now MGR Consulting.

Gary Rush, IAF Certified™ Professional Facilitator, heads *MGR Consulting*. He is amongst the most successful and influential Facilitator trainers in the world and continues to be the leading edge in the industry by continuing as a practicing Facilitator. He is Chair of the International Association of Facilitators (IAF). As a Facilitator trainer he teaches *The FoCuSeD™ Facilitator Academy* and *FoCuSeD™ On...* He teaches specific "how to"; he provides detailed facilitation and process tools and as an *IAF CPF Assessor*, he covers the *IAF Facilitator Competencies* and what students need to do to achieve them.

In 1985, Gary created *FAST*. In 2007, Gary created *FoCuSeD™* – a revolution from *FAST*. It is the most complete, most comprehensive, and most effective facilitation class available; providing detailed training on the concepts of *Holistic Facilitation* (see "*It's time to get FoCuSeD*" on our website). Gary's structured facilitation technique is used widely around the globe. He has implemented his technique in some of the largest companies and government agencies. His clients are many of the Fortune 500 companies. His alumni are amongst the most successful and influential leaders and the successful growth of facilitation in Northern Europe is directly related to his alumni.

Besides his family, Gary's passions are cooking and making a difference in the world by encouraging collaboration through facilitation, leadership, and diversity.

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