



"The FoCuSeD™ Facilitator"

eNewsletter by Gary Rush, CPF

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

September 2010

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Effective Decision Making

Effective decision-making is critical. As Facilitators, we are responsible to help groups move past barriers and reach decisions. So, what if a group is evenly split regarding a decision with each side supporting their "solution"? How do you enable the group to reach a consensus-based decision?

I was asked to facilitate a workshop wherein two companies (Company A and Company B) had merged to create a new company. They needed to select a software package for the newly combined company so that they could begin working (the software package was required to begin). They had spent 9 months looking at alternatives and had narrowed it down to 2 choices – Vendor A or Consultant B. They couldn't decide between the two alternatives because the people from Company A liked Vendor A, but didn't like Consultant B and the people from Company B liked Consultant B, but didn't like Vendor A. They were stuck. They asked if I would facilitate a workshop to help them decide between Vendor A or Consultant B. I said, I *could* but only if they opened it up to more choices. *Deciding between only two choices is "win-lose" unless my math is wrong.* They said that they had already narrowed it down and I responded that they might have missed something. They agreed.

My assumptions regarding decision-making are:

- **Consensus-based** decisions are productive and generate the greatest support – they don't take a long time.
- **Voting** is not consensus and majority rule is seldom the best choice for deciding.
- **Pros and cons** don't work in a group. It becomes a game.
- This is not a linear process – *it is iterative up to the end.*
- There are NEVER only 2 choices.
- There is NEVER only 1 right answer.

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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. **Read more...**

The FoCuSeD™ Facilitator Academy

Our next available public class date:

October 18 – 22

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.

MGR Consulting is a PMI Global R.E.P. and an IIBA E.E.P.



IIBA Endorsed Education Provider

Upcoming Events

- Wisconsin IIBA Business Analyst Development Day (WI BADD™) Madison, WI
October 5, 2010

Effective Decision Making

Get them to Common Ground

The first thing I do, is ask the group what is an acceptable outcome for them – win-win, majority rule, recommend, or delegate. This guides the rest of the workshop process. In this workshop, they all agreed that win-win was the acceptable outcome.

When groups get stuck on two solutions, the first thing you need to do is to move them away from their solutions. This brings the group together on common ground – which is a better starting point. The two most effective ways to do this are:

- Bring them back to common *objectives* to ensure that they all have the same objectives.
- Bring them forward to an *ideal solution* – something unattainable yet meeting all of their needs.

I asked the Participants in this workshop to split into two groups (Company A separate from Company B) and describe the ideal solution from their perspective. Both groups described a similar ideal solution. They had been stuck on *how* to achieve the end result – not *what* they wanted the end result to look like. The exercise helped the group realize that they were both aiming for the same solution so they began working together.

Generate Many Possible Solutions

To move away from win-lose, you need more than 2 choices. I asked the Participants to generate many possible solutions. To do so, I started with, "*Do nothing*" and "*Do it yourself*" (I was giving solutions – a *violation of neutrality* – but I was certain that they were not practical. I was playing devil's advocate). They got the concept and generated 5 additional solutions. We now had 9 solutions – no longer win-lose.

Define Objective Criteria

The next step was to use an objective process – developing measurable *objective criteria* for *prioritizing*. I

asked the Participants to list out their criteria. We then discussed each criterion and refined it until it was measurable. It took 3 hours to define 9 objective criteria. Much of the 3 hours was spent on one criterion – Vendor Viability. It had been the major reason for the deadlock – it was subjective. Defining *viability* is not objective, but the criterion was apparently very important to the Participants. So, after much discussion, it became evident that what was so important about this criterion to the group was actually *experience* – how many times had the vendor or consultant implemented this type of software package in their industry. That was a measurable objective criterion.


Prioritize the Solutions using the Objective Criteria

Using the 9 objective criteria, we followed a double-weighted prioritizing process – score the solutions against the criteria, weight the criteria, multiply the weight times the score, and add up the weighted scores. We did this as a group. The Participants discussed each solution relative to the criteria and agreed on scores and weights. We added up the weighted scores and viewed the solutions in rank order. When we finished, the original two solutions were ranked third and fourth. The one they selected was neither of the two they started with. They now had a win-win solution.

Summary

Groups often get stuck on two solutions. The Facilitator's job is to help them through the decision making process. You do this by:

- Getting them to common ground.
- Generating many possible solutions.
- Defining objective criteria.
- Prioritizing the solutions using the objective criteria.

When you do this, the Participants leave with a *win-win solution*. 

New Class!

FoCuSeD™ Facilitating Teleconferences

**PMI – R.E.P.
IIBA – E.E.P.**

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? Because in this day and age, we have more and more meetings that are teleconferences or videoconferences. These are the way of the future. Unlike face-to-face meetings, you have to approach teleconferences differently to make them productive. It requires effective *Facilitative Skills*.

Because These teleconferences can be very productive, when properly facilitated. **How?** This class gives you the needed *skills* that enable you to not only conduct highly effective and productive teleconferences, but it also enables you to manage participants and conflict – the good, the bad, and the ugly. **Read more...**

Modifications: We will modify this class for **Associations** and **Association Chapters** (e.g., PMI, IIBA, IAF) for up to 100+ attendees. [Contact Gary for additional information.](#)

Core Classes

The FoCuSeD™ Facilitator Academy

**PMI – R.E.P.
IIBA – E.E.P.**

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. **Read more...**

Until *FoCuSeD™*, facilitation techniques have been either about structure or group dynamics (see “**It's time to get FoCuSeD™**”).

“I attend many conferences and working sessions & this has – without question – the best use of my time in 3 – 4 years! Thank you.”

Diana, Executive Director and Facilitator (*The FoCuSeD™ Facilitator Academy* alumnus)

FoCuSeD™ On...

**PMI – R.E.P.
IIBA – E.E.P.**

Gary Rush's 3-day highly interactive class teaches “**how to**” effectively 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. **Read more...**

About MGR Consulting

iIBA™ Endorsed Education
Provider



We have been in business since February 1985 when Gary Rush, CPF founded MG Rush Systems, Inc. He 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 renaming it to MGR Consulting, Inc. Millie (M) and Gary (G) Rush are now MGR Consulting.

We are a recognized leader in the field of facilitation, Facilitator | facilitative skills training, leadership, strategic planning, and data modeling. *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 improve client business performance through effective application of exceptional facilitation processes. *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.*

Our core classes also provide effective "soft" skills – *facilitative skills* to Project Managers, Business Analysts and others who want to become effective collaborative leaders and successfully improve communication to achieve commitment and support from stakeholders – so needed for business success. *It enhances whatever you do wherever you go in business and in life.*

Read more...

About Gary Rush, IAF CPF

Gary R. Rush, *IAF Certified Professional Facilitator (CPF)*, Founder and President of *MGR Consulting* attended the U.S. Naval Academy. He has managed projects since 1980, been facilitating since 1983, and training since 1985. He improves client business performance through effective application of exceptional facilitation processes. *He is a recognized leader in the field of facilitation, Facilitator / Facilitative Skills training and continues to be the leading edge in the industry by continuing as a practicing Facilitator.*

As a Facilitator, Gary facilitates many types of workshops. He is uniquely qualified to assist you in understanding, managing and implementing facilitated workshops supporting your methodology in your organization. He is an expert at engaging participants and guiding them to consensus. *His 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.*

As a Trainer, Gary is amongst the most successful and influential Facilitator Trainers in the world. 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*. *His alumni are amongst the most successful and influential leaders. They often tell us how much he has changed their lives.*

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**.*

Gary has implemented his facilitation technique in some of the largest companies and government agencies. His clients are many of the Fortune 500 companies. *His facilitation technique is used widely around the world. **Read more...***

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