

Celebration: Organizational and Personal Practices

Minnesota Facilitators Network

Meeting Notes

Thursday March 31, 2005

OPENING, PRELUDE, AND FIRST MOVEMENT

[See attached event orchestration document.]

Music by Kool & the Gang “Celebration Come On” from their greatest hits CD.

Hafiz Poem “And Applaud” from *I heard God Laughing: Renderings of Hafiz* by Daniel Ladinsky.

The evening started with a WELCOME and [then followed the attached] focused conversation. All present were asked to raise their hand if they had ever celebrated something. Everyone’s hand went up. The group was asked to go around the room and have each person say their name, what they had celebrated, and give a [phrase that described that celebration. Well, the phrases developed into long and fun statements.]

The group was then asked what were some of the emotions that came up from these celebrations? What colors, smells, and sounds do they associate with celebration? We did popcorn style answers.

The next questions were: What does celebration mean to you personally? What significance does it have for you? So what? What difference does celebrating make?

Following this, the group was directed to look at and read the questions regarding Celebration given to the MFN members when they were invited to this meeting.

- What do we mean by celebration?
- What do we gain when we celebrate?
- What do we lose when we don’t celebrate?
- What are ways we can support celebration in our work? In our personal lives?
- What are some celebratory practices that have worked well for you in the past?

Then we asked the group for other questions they might have. They came up with:

- Why is it natural to think of celebrations in our personal life but not in our work?

The participants were then instructed to go into small groups and discover answers to these questions. They were to work together for 45 minutes to create a 10-minute presentation in whatever form they desired: Share ideas. Be Creative! Develop a celebration or celebrations to present to large group.

We suggested the following prearranged topics around which to form small groups: Spontaneous Celebrations, Short Planned Celebrations, Large Formal Celebrations, and Wildcard Topic. [The flow of the meeting from after the opening readings and welcome up until this point more or less followed the attached, “Interest Group Formation Focused Conversation.”]

SMALL GROUP CELEBRATIONS

1. Music and Tribal Practices at Work a.k.a. Smoke, Fire, & Music

Cheryl, John, Jeff, and Shawn Moore sang “Wasting Away Again in Margaretville” and accompanied themselves on guitar, drum, and rattles. They lit candles, put them into the hoola hoops, and called this the campfire. Then they processed their performance with the following questions:

How do you bring fire and life to workplace?
Bach? Jimmy Buffet?

What was going on in your mind and body when the music was playing. What did you hear?
But I know it is nobody’s fault.
You don’t know the reason.
Time just flies by.
Takes us away from our troubles.
It puts both sides of your brain in to action.
Music is the oldest alternative form.
Create a song or slogan. Sticks in your head (Zoom Zoom Zoom).
Song is so catchy.

What have you noticed?
Further isolation.
Some people say there is a woman to blame.
Loose things.
Pain involved.
Time flies by.

What about work?
Wasting away.
Drag people down.
Music makes my feet want to dance.
I was focused on the music.
Didn’t think about anything else.
When we sing something it is easier to remember.

How do we bring music into the corporate world?
Is it because corporate world uses corporate songs too much?
Harley Davidson then big on teams and work in cells.
Decide as a group what music is to be played.
Music is uplifting.

What might you encourage people to do to introduce music?
Traveling tulips.
Explore mood.
Team accountability.
Introduce music into your workplace gradually.
Use a song people know.

Can't get people to sing.

2. The Whole Person at Work

Why is it natural to think about celebrations in our personal life but not in our work?

It could bring an instantaneous break.

It brings playfulness

The Whole Person at Work group created a **Whole Person Wheel** and came rolling onto the stage. The wheel was a pie shape with an interior circle that said whole person and pie sections [starting from the top and clockwise]: KNOWLEDGE/INTELLECT, Feelings emotions, Spirit Soul, Experiencing, Relationships Family, Energy, Physical.

It seems that Knowledge and Intellect are what is always honored and the rest is forgotten.

The whole person needs: physical, spiritual, emotional, psychological, intellectual, belonging, cared about, valued, I Matter.

Celebrate all the parts to HONOR the WHOLE Person.

Need to create the Environment then Value the Whole person.

We need to help everyone to feel safe. Start by having small groups form and asking what is your favorite movie, book, author. Then the other person reports back to the group what they learned about this person.

Use two truths and a lie exercise to get people to warm up.

Share what team member did on a vacation. This is about listening and bringing awareness to all.

Write down three things: 1) High school mascot, 2) Favorite movie, 3) Who do you admire and why? Creates energy about values.

Do an Focused conversation (ORID) with group as a warm up.

3. Spontaneous Celebration

Be Spontaneous. This group started Duck, Duck, Gray Duck. The whole room of adults ran around like the kids playing upstairs from our meeting. Lots of laughing ensued. We were all surprised and had a lot of FUN with a celebration that cost nothing.

Games lighten things up,

Bring laughter.

It is hard to be spontaneous. We are too scheduled at work.

Anita Kuntz spoke of Fast, Fun & Friendly events that are done each month at *Target Corporation*. She said they have very little money and different departments take on the responsibility of deciding what the celebration will be.

4. Short Planned Celebrations

Short Planned Celebrations

Celebrate at work and build into the workplace celebration:

Hiring,
1st month appraisal,
Performance review,
Team performance,
Etc...

Some workplaces don't allow or are not conducive to celebrating.

How do you do a short celebration at work?

- Hold a potluck.
- Celebrate *elbows*.
- Need something, for example, a milestone to celebrate.
- Assign around celebration an entrée to different people to bring.
- Do a TEAM building exercising (8-1/2 x 11 paper put on someone's back and everyone goes around and writes something positive about that person).
- Draw names out of a hat to know who your secret pal is and you must catch that person doing something that makes a difference. Then share with the whole group.
- Buy colorful lunch bags. Each person on the TEAM writes something about each of the other people on the TEAM and how they appreciate what and/or who they are. Drop these notes into the bags of all the appreciated people
- Do reflective conversations about celebration or projects success.

FINAL DEBRIEF

What insights into celebration will you take away tonight?

Music,

Singing,

Children & adults running around,

Heavy breathing,

Laughter.

Amazed that everyone jumped into the game.

Audience was prepared, easy to participate, and opening questions.

Workplaces do not prepare you to celebrate.

Need to have courage to celebrate.

Need to fully embrace role of celebration.

We do it every month at work, [even though we] have a very small budget for this.

What else will you take away?

- There is a difference between a fun place to work and celebrations, but maybe not.
- Celebrate a failure. And record learning from failure.
- We have challenge champions. If a team has a bad month they get the challenge champion "trophy".
- In order to be innovative we need to celebrate failure.
- Failures allow us to be successful.