

The learning meeting and simple techniques for participant involvement

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ITALIA
CHAPTER
 MPI

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1. My points today

- The classical meeting or conference makes participants **listen passively** to presentations – and there are too many of them
- In the knowledge society, **people want to be active** and make connections with each other and share ideas
- This can be achieved through the introduction of simple interactive, **learning processes**



2. The problem: Conferences produce too little inspiration for action



As it is

- One-way
- Passivity
- Q and A
- Debates
- Workshops
- Panels

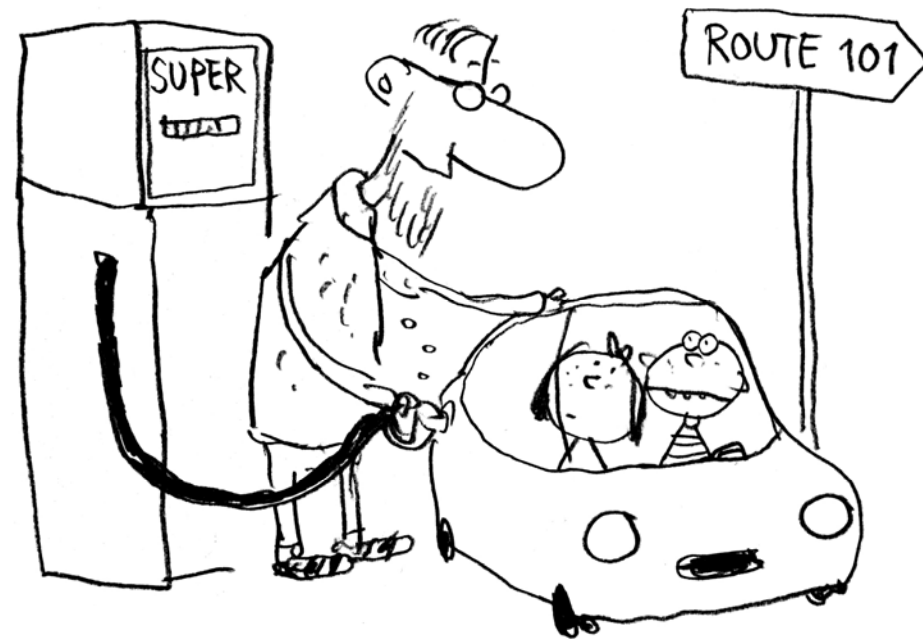
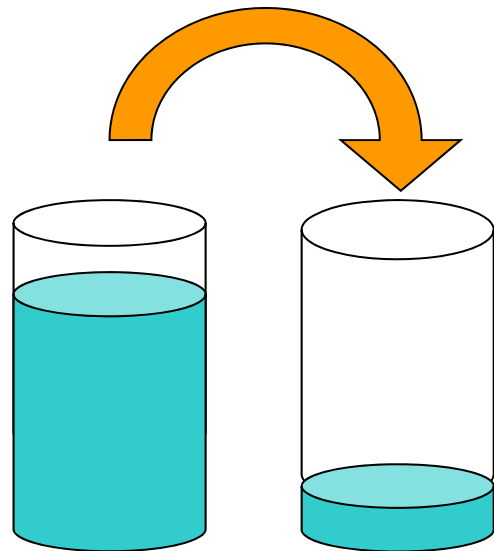
Drawbacks

- People: two-way
- Use it or lose it
- Silence, or "I'm clever, too!"
- Many tangents. Success is random
- So many mini-conferences
- Congestion on One-Way Street



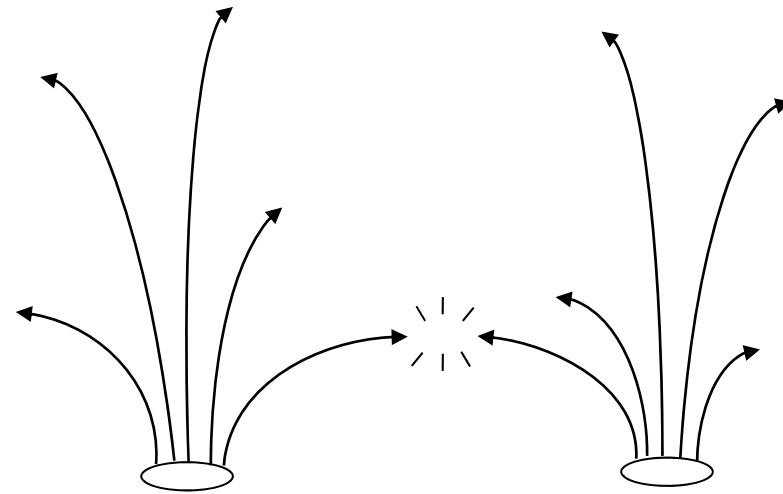
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3. The empty-container model of education



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4. The conference as a forum for human co-flourishing

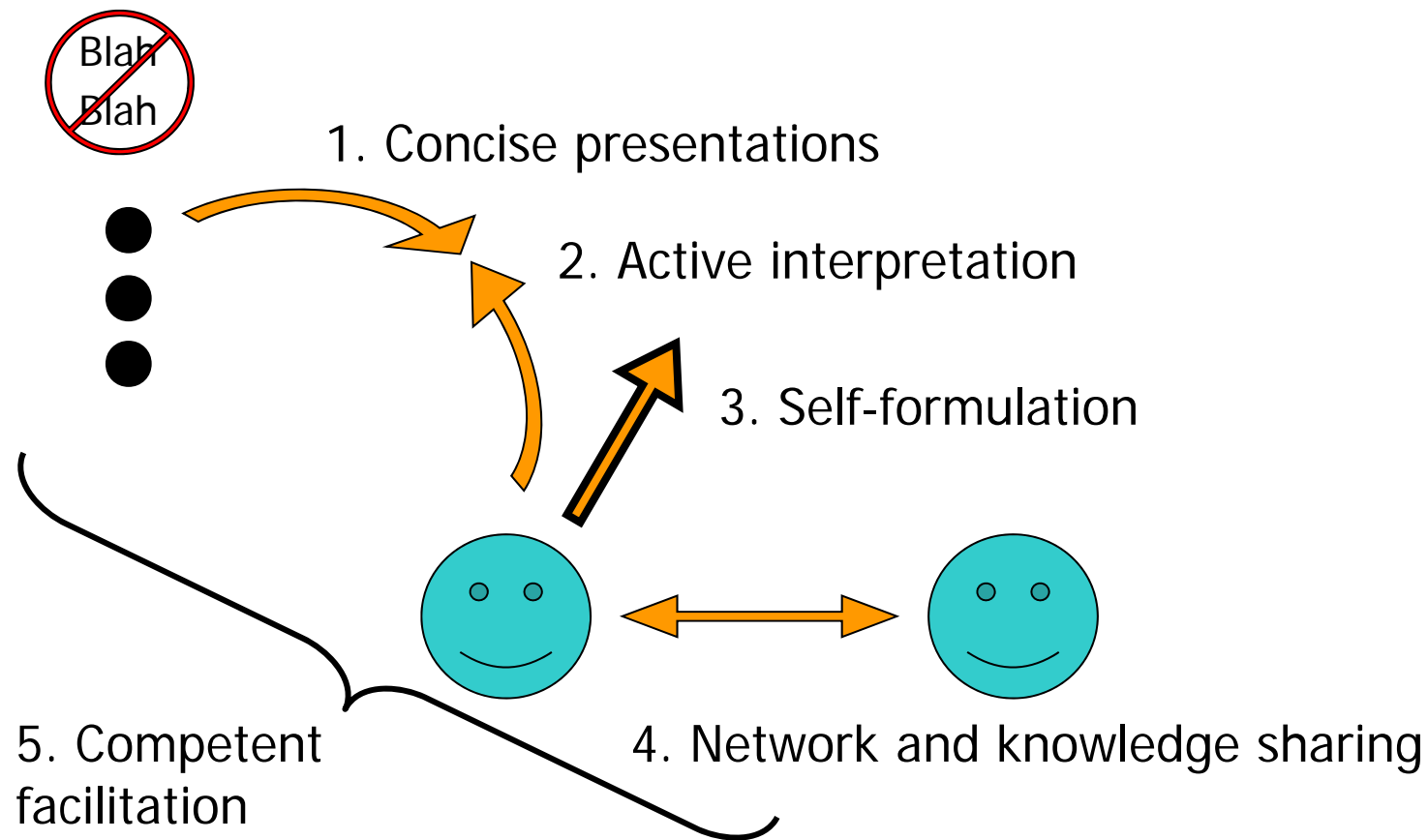


- People have potentials, interests and projects
- We want to learn and flourish
- We go to conferences to get inspired by others and **co-flourish**



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5. Design principles for learning meetings



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6. The design principles (for your own reading)

1. Concise presentations. Fewer, shorter, more provocative.
2. Active interpretation. There must be processes that help participants actively relate what they hear to their own experience. Time to digest, think and talk.
3. Self-formulation. There must be opportunities in pairs and small groups for participants to talk about the personal interests and projects that brought them to the conference in the first place.
4. Networking and knowledge sharing. Facilitated activities that help participants discover each other as resources.
5. Competent facilitation. The facilitator must create a safe and trusting space where people will go along with the new learning processes.



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7. Task: What was interesting?

In my presentation, what did you find interesting?

- Jot down a few things (2 minutes)
- Share them with a stranger (5-6 minutes)
- Let's hear some of them, and your questions and comments



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8. Learning processes today (with page numbers)

1. **Inclusive seating.** So people can see and take part (17)
2. **Meet people.** Warms up the room, creates trust (58)
3. **Include the audience.** Ask a few participants about stuff
4. **Concise presentation, cut in two.** Helps attention (64)
5. **Q: “What was interesting?”.** Focus on the constructive (24)
6. **Silent reflection** and notetaking. Clarifies your thinking (70)
7. **Minimeeting** with neighbour. Articulates your thinking (72)
8. **Plucking** before Q and A. Helps people inspire each other (76)



9. Today's basic ideas

- Passive participants are bored and get little out of the meeting. This wastes money and time.
- Active participants learn more, have more fun and return next year
- Meetings need simple processes that involve participants
- Facilitator must create trust before participants will do it
- Start with one new process. Then two. Don't overdo it.



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10. Group task

- Silent reflection: “Two actions I will take as a result of this session” (2 minutes)
- Get up and find two strangers. Tell each other what you will do and why (6-10 minutes)



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11. More about learning conferences

- My research group "Facilitating knowledge processes": www.dpu.dk/fv -> English
- Steen Elsborg and Ib Ravn: *Learning meetings and conferences in practice*. People's Press, Copenhagen (2007) (the book you received)
- The Learning Meeting Module: A web-based tool. www.ims.dk
Papers downloadable from www.dpu.dk/about/ibr -> Publications:
- Ib Ravn and Steen Elsborg: Creating learning at conferences through participant involvement (25 pp., scholarly paper)
- Ib Ravn: The learning conference, *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 33, 212-222, 2007 (12 pp., fun-to-read scholarly paper)



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