

Open Space Technology Facilitator Training – Hong Kong, January 2003

Issues and Opportunities of Empowering People Saturday, 18 January 2003

	A	B	C	D
1		What stops empowerment?	What is empowerment?	Current corporate culture for/against empowering people
2	How to help people/supervisors who have not experienced empowerment empower their subordinates?	How can we empower ourselves?	What benefits for empowering others?	Do we really need effective empowerment to achieve a common goal?
3	How to handle Ego	How to make money by selling ideas/methods of empowering people?	What are some practical means of empowerment? (in an organization, company)	Democracy: empowering the community to speak out

1-B What stops empowerment? - Catherine

1-D Current corporate culture for/against empowering people - James

- Traditional Confucian Culture doesn't encourage empowerment. Kids are suppose to follow parents/family. Not to make decisions on their own. It's more so in HK/TWN than in China.
- Environment: Strong local culture
- Family value
- Three types of hierarchy:
 - Chinese Family Hierarchy
 - British Neo-Colonial Hierarchy
 - US MBA Hierarchy
- Corporate environment
 - Performance target setting
 - Family/school/military create a feeder group for corporate
- Leadership vs. Entrepreneurs
 - Corporate career structure vs start-up and entrepreneurship
- How will empowerment happen?
- Why the boss also feels insecure? trust

1-C:What is empowerment? - Lee and Cynthia

- Process
- Freedom/Total flex.
- Sense of responsibility
- Buzz word
- Energy
- Giving/sharing of power to do something
- Power/knowledge
- Appreciate/enabling
- Authority? Top-down? Bottom-up?
- Limitations – perceived roles/titles
- Individual thing/Cultural thing
- Shorten power distance

- Feeling of being more able/confident
- How does it compare with motivation
- Need support of group to be effective
- Needs buy-in from others
- Enabling someone/enhancing someone's power – to accomplish an objective by increasing their abilities and/or resources, whether internal (e.g. energy, motivation, etc.) or external (e.g. authority, budget, etc.)

2-A: How to help people/supervisors who have not experienced empowerment empower their subordinates – Cynthia

- Background
 - Culture of disempowerment, both at work and home
- Possibilities
 - Remind past experiences where they are empowered/took responsibility
 - Can we change a paradigm?
 - Create image shift → influence behavior
 - Working from the top

2-B How can we empower ourselves? – Lee

- How to get academics to facilitate (as opposed to making presentations...)?
- Provide training in facilitation per se?
- One path (Jimbo)
 - Make offers/requests
 - Provide a role model/provide permission
- Act from heart/belief/integrity
 - Passion comes first (to empower themselves)
- Risk-taking ←→ overcoming cultural factors
- Challenging oneself
- Empower others (or disempower others) in order to empower yourself
- Add value (ask yourself “how can I add value?”)
- Be present in the “now” (not future nor past)

2-C: What benefit for empowering others? – Ying

Participants: James, Maria, Wong, Vinci, Catherine

- Improvement
- Modern management concept
- Incentive must be provided
- Empower people to make them “use their brain”
- Better performance: empower workers to make improvement
- Build up organization culture
- Risk management: to measure the risk, people would take responsibility
- Give space for lower level to try
- Building good relationship

2-D: Do we really need effective empowerment to achieve a common goal? – Maria

Participants: James, Maria, Catherine, Wong, Ying, Vinci

- Empowerment can also mean competency
- It is a means to achieve a goal
- It helps increase competency and confidence
- We want improvement
- Empowerment helps improvement, therefore empowerment is always needed
- Can come with incentives
- Have to consider the risk before empowerment

3-B: How to make money by selling ideas of empowering people? –

James

- Actions speak louder than words
- OS is KM
- Market U.S. products → product push/market pull base (needs to meet customer requirement.)
- By-products out of OS learning
- Timing is important
- Differentiate yourself/position yourself
- Protect yourself (legal protection)
- China market (selling ideas – non-physical) some politics behind a project (Li Yon's "Crazy English")
- Marketing strategies