



## Performance Modelling Report

Excellence in Chairing and Facilitating

25th June 2013

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# 1 Project Overview

## 1.1 General features of high performers

In all of our modelling projects, we find the same general features of high performers:

1. They have a goal which is greater than that of the task which they are recognised for excelling at, so the task becomes a means to an end and not an end in itself.
2. Their intention, attitude or methods are counter-intuitive and not obvious to an observer.
3. They appear to get results easily because they actually do make it easy for themselves by implementing short-cuts or methods which are not obvious to an observer.

Our unique modelling approach therefore identifies and codes these hidden skills and behaviours so that they can be shared throughout the organisation.

## 1.2 Organisational environment

[client] is a not-for-profit company owned and funded by major stakeholders in the [industry], but is independent of any one party. [client] has around 250 staff, including experts in a wide range of technical disciplines and other professionals such as project managers, meeting facilitators and support staff.

[client] provides support and facilitation for a wide range of cross-industry activities and is funded by levies on its members and grants for research from the [government department].

[client]'s purpose, according to [www.\[client\].co.uk](http://www.[client].co.uk), is defined as:

“In a [industry] with multiple stakeholders, [client] builds consensus and facilitates the resolution of difficult cross-industry issues. [client] provides analysis, knowledge, a substantial level of technical expertise and powerful information and risk management tools and delivers this unique mix to the industry across a whole range of subject areas.

[client] will continue to build on this and:

Provide high quality support services to our members to help them deliver their business objectives. These services are provided particularly where there is a need for knowledge and co-operation. They will help our members and consequently the industry to:

- Where reasonably practicable, continuously improve the level of safety in the [industry].
- Drive out unnecessary cost and,
- Improve business performance”

### 1.2.1 Business drivers

[client]'s operation depends on effective consultation with [industry] representatives, taking up a facilitative position rather than a leadership one. Reaching agreements must be achieved through consensus to ensure that new standards and operating procedures can be adopted across the [industry].

[client]'s culture is changing as its traditional workforce of people who have worked in the [industry] for most of their lives is slowly replaced with staff with skills in specialist technical areas but who are inexperienced in the [industry]. Additionally, [client]'s role is changing to a more

consultative one, with additional revenue streams coming from outside the UK and from outside the [industry] in order to supplement the current membership funding model.

Therefore, [client] can no longer rely on [industry] experience to ease the decision making process, and more staff must develop effective skills for chairing meetings and facilitating discussions to ensure [client] continues to add value to the [industry] members that it supports.

### **1.3 Results being modelled**

This project is primarily aimed at understanding the key behaviours of [client]'s most skilled facilitators who are able to manage groups and committees in order to implement change in the [industry] through consensus amongst its member organisations.

These facilitators are able to deliver consistent results, despite meetings sometimes being challenging due to the adversarial positions taken by some industry representatives.

#### **1.3.1 Definition of consensus**

Consensus is achieved when there are no sustained objections to an agreement within a group.

### **1.4 Planned outcomes**

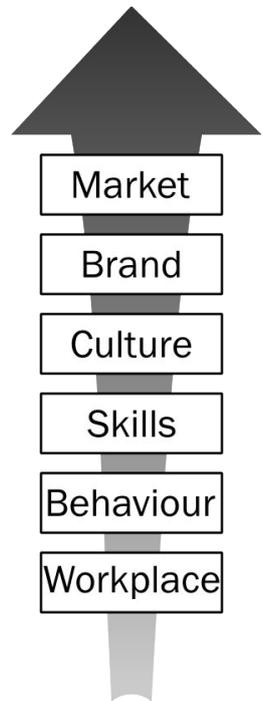
1. A model of high performance which will be used to build a three layer development program designed to instil high performing attitudes and behaviours into a broader population of [client] staff, enabling more staff to chair and facilitate meetings more effectively while preserving [client]'s unique culture and position in the [industry].
2. A template which can be used to recruit new staff who are predisposed to high performance in [client]'s culture and working environment.

## 2 Culture & Environment

The following table captures key information about the cultural environment within which this modelling project has been conducted.

High performing organisations have a high degree of alignment between these levels. For example, a company whose external brand accurately reflects its internal culture will operate more efficiently than a company which tries to present a brand image that is not backed up by its working culture. Staff will feel that leaders are 'hypocritical' and in extreme cases have used media such as social networking sites to vent their frustration.

A well-aligned organisation trades in a market for which its brand is well suited. Its working culture reflects that brand, and the skills and abilities of staff closely match both the working culture and the actual duties required of them. Finally, the working environment supports those duties and behaviours and makes it possible for staff to do their jobs safely and effectively. This drives operational efficiency, productivity and a sense of fulfilment and job satisfaction for staff.



Market or operating environment	<p>The [industry] is both regulated and competitive, creating an unusual operating environment. [client] occupies a similar position to that of a regulator but has no regulatory powers and therefore serves in an advisory capacity, facilitating discussions between [industry] representatives and helping them to reach consensus over the development and adoption of operating standards.</p> <p>[client] effectively operates as a monopoly in that no other organisation provides the same service, however its not-for-profit status greatly influences its culture.</p> <p>[client] does not 'trade' in an open market, however the dependency on the members' levy may create a perceived imbalance of power and a sense that [client] does not control its own destiny, despite publishing a business plan.</p>
Brand identity	<p>[client] does not have a strong public brand as it primarily faces towards its [industry] members and serves to support them in developing operational and safety standards. Whilst these standards are for the benefit of industry members and their passengers, the standards development process can be contentious at times, which [client] is sometimes caught in the middle of.</p> <p>[client] has no regulatory powers and the implementation of research and standards is therefore achieved by member consensus, creating an identity for [client] as a centre of technical and research excellence. This also means that [industry] operators must take responsibility for what they agree to, as they cannot blame [client] for imposing unpopular standards upon them. This most likely creates greater accountability in [client]'s membership which can be forgotten by younger working generations who have no direct experience of the nationalised environment of the past.</p>

Cultural rules & beliefs	<p>There are lots of meetings</p> <p>Decisions are made (or avoided) by consensus</p> <p>People are supportive</p> <p>People work collaboratively</p> <p>The [industry] interface is extremely political</p> <p>Powerless - because [client] has no power to impose standards</p> <p>Lifelong [industry] experience is being replaced with younger technical experts with little industry knowledge</p> <p>Fairly low staff turnover, so a safe working environment</p> <p>People largely manage their own work</p> <p>The most notable feature of [client]'s culture is that it is changing rapidly because of its changing workforce.</p>
Skills, ideas, capabilities	<p>High degree of technical expertise e.g. risk analysis, statistical analysis, human factors, research methods</p> <p>High degree of [industry] experience with some staff having served over 40 years in the industry</p> <p>Highly networked staff with many [industry] contacts</p>
Behaviours & key activities	<p>Research</p> <p>Consultancy</p> <p>Facilitating boards and committees</p> <p>Holding meetings to facilitate cross-industry discussions and projects</p>
Working environment	<p>Corporate</p> <p>Mostly open plan office environment</p> <p>Relaxed e.g. relatively casual dress rules</p> <p>Meeting rooms frequently bring stakeholders into the office environment</p> <p>Many people travel a great distance to work each day because of [client]'s unique industry position.</p>

# 3 Analysis

## 3.1 Behaviour

This section deals with the key behavioural strategies of the role, including what the high performer does, both internally (mentally) and externally (physically), to achieve their intended results.

Results are the primary means by which we identify a high performer. How they achieve those results is the purpose of the modelling project.



### 3.1.1 Role

Meeting chair or facilitator.

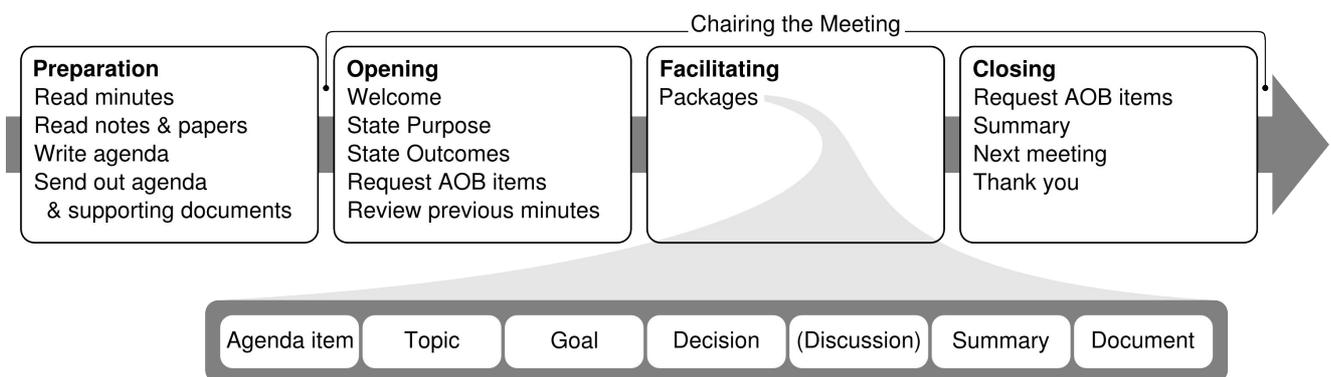
This is usually a secondary activity to the role model's primary role which might, for example, be that of a project manager or head of department.

### 3.1.2 Results

High performers are able to achieve the following results when compared to average performers:

- Accelerated progress of projects, standards implementation etc.
- Reduction in the number of meetings required to resolve an issue or progress a project
- Effective management of conflict leading to improved working relationships and greater productivity outside of meetings

### 3.1.3 Meeting sequence



### 3.1.4 Preparation

Preparation is a key focus for the high performer, and contains one of the most important distinctions between the high and average performers.

A poor facilitator will fail to prepare adequately, and will see the meeting as an entity in itself, with any necessary discussion taking place within the meeting boundaries. This is an extremely inefficient use of time because meetings are then used for group discussion rather than decision making. Therefore, the first difference is this:

**Poor facilitators see a meeting as a discussion activity, whereas the best facilitators see a meeting as a decision making activity.**

High performers therefore work hard to complete as much work as possible outside of the meeting, building relationships with members and stakeholders and carefully positioning any unpopular agenda items so that minimal discussion takes place within the meeting. A high performer will be very careful not to lobby or influence stakeholders, instead working on the wording of papers or standards proposals to lead to minimal contention within a meeting.

A typical belief from a poor to average facilitator is that any preparation is better than none, so when they are pressed for time they might send out a meeting agenda to participants the day before a meeting. This means that the facilitator is focusing only on their own preparation, and not putting themselves in the minds of the participants, as they will not have sufficient time to prepare. The consequence of this is that the poor to average performer's meetings take longer and more meetings are required to achieve a particular result, which means that the facilitator has to work harder between meetings, which means that they have less time to prepare thoroughly and give participants time to prepare.

The best facilitators will spend up to half a day preparing for a meeting, around 3 or 4 days prior to the meeting. The second difference between the average and best facilitators is the way in which they prepare:

**Poor** Prepare as if they are a participant

**Average** Prepare as if they are a chairman

**Best** Prepare as if they are the other participants

This distinction is not obvious from observing facilitators, as both the average and high performers prepare by reading previous minutes, papers, reports etc. The difference is entirely internal. When the average facilitator reads papers, they read them to familiarise themselves with the topics to be discussed. When the best facilitators prepare, they put themselves 'in the shoes' of the various participants in the meeting to see the issues from as many and as extreme points of view as possible which enables them to pre-empt any potentially contentious issues, giving rise to an observable output:

**Average facilitators struggle with conflict for two reasons, partly because they avoid it (by taking it personally) and partly because they fail to pre-empt it. The best facilitators handle conflict more effectively because they work to minimise conflict before it arises. They are not afraid of conflict and they know that they will save themselves time in the long run by 'putting it on the table' themselves.**

### 3.1.5 Planning the agenda

A meeting is rarely a self contained discussion; it is usually a snapshot of a number of activities which are at different stages of development. Some will be early in their lifecycle, requiring scoping discussions. Some will be in their mid term with lots of actions and updates. Some will be winding down with status reports and reviews.



Therefore, planning the agenda for a meeting requires the facilitator to know about the life cycle of each discussion item so that they can allocate sufficient time to it. If the previous meeting worked well in terms of the time available for discussion, then the next meeting agenda can use the same times, adjusted for any changes due to the life cycle of discussion items.

The best facilitators don't worry about having the agenda timing perfect because they will often dynamically rearrange the agenda anyway. Their focus is on concluding the highest priority items so that they can achieve their goals for the meeting. By stating the objective of the discussion item upfront, the participants are able to focus on it.

It is important that the right participants will be present at the meeting to achieve the stated objectives, so if a key decision maker will not be present then there is no point including the item in the agenda. Ensuring the right people are present for the planned agenda items means that the meeting time is used more efficiently and more is achieved.

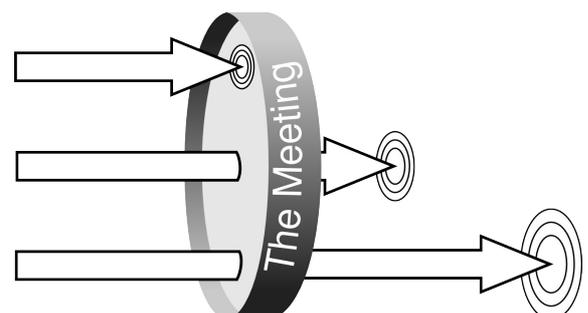
### 3.1.6 Objectives

High performing facilitators have clear goals, and their meetings are a means to achieving those goals. Their goal, which might be to see a standard adopted, or some research acted upon, or a change program implemented, serves as a fixed point like a star to navigate by, which makes it very easy for them to identify any deviations from the topic under discussion. They recognise that an off topic conversation may be interesting, but their meeting is not the time or place for it. Therefore, they do not undermine the value of the conversation, they merely refocus participants' attention on the matter at hand.

Conversely, poor to average facilitators hold the meeting itself as the goal and are therefore less flexible during the meeting. They are more likely to allow the conversation to go off topic because they don't have a clear goal as a point of reference. Because their goal is essentially 'to hold a meeting', the discussion can go off topic and they will still achieve that goal. They might even go as far as to consider the off topic discussion as valuable because it sounds interesting or useful.

Broadly speaking, we can identify the following traits relating to goals and objectives:

- **Poor facilitators see the meeting as an end in itself**
- **Average facilitators see the meeting as a means to a short term end**
- **The best facilitators see a series of meetings as a means to a long term end**



### 3.1.7 Process

The best facilitators are very process-focused when in a meeting. Paradoxically, they use the agenda to control the meeting, but the agenda does not dictate the meeting. Conversely, a poor facilitator will stick more rigidly to the agenda which increases the chances that the meeting will run over time and that participants will leave due to other commitments.

### 3.1.8 Time

High performing facilitators have a long term view of time, in that they will invest time in the short term in order save it later on during a meeting or in completing a project more quickly.

Conversely, a poor or inexperienced facilitator will save time in the short term with minimal preparation or an agenda sent out only the night before the meeting, and as a result their meetings last longer and more meetings are required to achieve the same results because participants are not adequately prepared.

High performing facilitators also value time within the meeting itself and will dynamically rearrange the agenda to adapt to changes and keep the group's focus on high priority items. As already mentioned, poor facilitators will tend to stick more rigidly to the agenda which means they're more likely to rush to fit the discussion into the time available and skip over items which need more thorough debate.

High performers will set the agenda based on two rules; the first is to place the highest priority items first, and the second is to make the best use of participants' time. They might group items that are relevant to particular participants who don't need to attend the entire meeting, and they might move important items back if key participants are late. Importantly, they will defer agenda items to a subsequent meeting in order to achieve their most important objectives.

High performers said that time management was perhaps their most important ability, which means managing the process of the meeting to ensure the highest priority items are dealt with first and that the time within the meeting is focused on the agenda items and decisions with minimal off-topic discussion. In fact, 'time management' is a generalisation and a result, what the high performers actually do is to manage a decision making process.

A poor to average facilitator will prioritise easy or quick items first to 'get them out of the way' and leave room for the more challenging items, which may be a by-product of avoiding conflict. However, the easy and quick items are rarely easy or quick and take up significantly more time than the facilitator had intended, leaving insufficient time to tackle the more important issues. This is more likely to generate conflict as participants do not have time to fully explore different perspectives, and is more likely to lead to superficial agreements, made just to finish the meeting on time, which are not backed up by genuine buy-in to actions and commitments. Therefore, by trying to avoid conflict, a poor facilitator creates it.

**A high performer pre-empts and deals with conflict, with the result that conflict is less likely to occur because participants have had their more extreme views aired in a more collaborative way which 'takes the wind out of their sails'.**

### 3.1.9 The meeting

Probably the single most important characteristic of the high performing facilitators is the way that they view the meeting itself. A poor facilitator sees a meeting as a time and place to get a group together and address any outstanding business such as project updates, presentations, decisions and actions. Whilst this may seem reasonable, it is a very inefficient use of participants' time, which has the following consequences:

- Since the participants' time is not valued, they don't give the meeting a high priority and are often late, leave early and 'multi-task' during the meeting
- Since multiple discussion types are permitted within the meeting (e.g. challenging, decision making, information gathering, knowledge sharing), it is much more difficult for the facilitator to keep the discussion on track, because it's impossible to tell what is a valuable discussion and what is not
- Because different activities are combined within a meeting, the participants are not always clear of their roles, resulting in decision taking longer to make and an increased chance of conflict

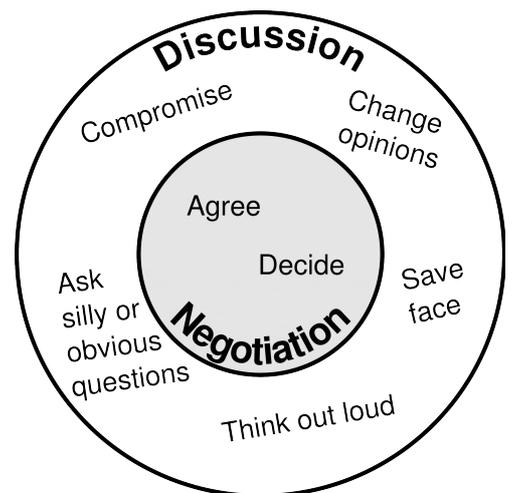
**High performers see the meeting not as a discussion space but as a negotiation space.**

This is a very important distinction, particularly given [client]'s need to operate as a neutral facilitator.

By treating the meeting as a negotiation space, the focus is on making decisions. The only discussion which arises is aimed at reaching a decision, and this enables the high performer to keep the discussion on track easily.

The downside of this approach is that a negotiation is practically impossible when the parties have strongly opposing views, and this is where the discussion space is used outside of the meeting itself.

At the beginning of a discussion on, for example, a new standard, we might say that the most extreme points of view, represented here as A and B, are simply too far apart to reach a discussion.



Any pressure on them in an open forum to change their views will simply entrench them more. Each [industry] representative is not a lone entity, they represent an entire industry sector or organisation, and they must be able to demonstrate that they 'hold their own' a[industry] meetings, otherwise they have no value to the organisation which employs them. They cannot be seen to be 'giving in' to pressure from their opponents, and so any pressure on them to do so will have an extremely counter-productive effect if done in front of other people, as the representatives have a strong incentive to protect their hard-earned reputations.





### 3.1.10 Starting the meeting

The best facilitators start the meeting by reviewing the minutes of the previous meeting. This may seem trivial, yet it is intrinsic to the consensual decision making process.

This serves a practical purpose of approving the minutes, and participants may indeed offer corrections which are then incorporated into a revision of the minutes.

Poor facilitators might focus on the meeting at hand, perhaps reviewing actions from the previous meeting.

The best facilitators review the minutes of the previous meeting, not just the actions, and this enables them to lead the participants through a mental re-run of the previous meeting. Whether each participant agreed or disagreed on each point, they can now agree that the minutes are an accurate reflection of that discussion, so the meeting actually begins with all participants agreeing about a shared past experience. This creates a powerful state of compliance which makes the decision process much easier.

### 3.1.11 Packaging

The best facilitators break the meeting down into 'packages' or self contained discussions. Each package follows the same format:

1. Direction to the relevant section of the agenda or notes
2. Announcement of the topic under discussion
3. Announcement of the goal for the discussion
4. Request for decision
5. Management of the discussion – if necessary
6. Summary of agreement and/or actions
7. Document the discussion for the minutes

The meeting itself follows the same format and represents an overall package into which the agenda item packages are contained. Even if items are deferred to a later meeting or offline discussion, the meeting itself always seems 'complete' because of the packaging of the discussion.

A poor facilitator starts at the beginning of the meeting and keeps going, without clear delineation between agenda items, which results in blurring of the discussion, deviations and over-runs.

A good facilitator notices visual and verbal signals that the participants use to signal their readiness to move onto the next package, such as sitting back in their chairs to indicate they are 'leaving' the discussion.

### 3.1.12 Engaging

It is often said that good facilitators are highly attuned to the group and are therefore externally referenced, however this is not the case within the [client] culture. The most likely reason for this is that [client]'s position, whilst impartial and consensual, is in fact driven by the organisation's own purpose, namely “Where reasonably practicable, continuously improve the level of safety in the [industry]”. If we consider a more neutral facilitation environment such as that offered by

Relate, the facilitator has no agenda other than to help the participants reach a mutually agreeable conclusion. In this case, an externally referenced facilitator would be able to draw out sensitive issues and encourage all participants to engage in the discussion. At [client], this could be counter-productive because forcibly involving a participant could lead them to withdraw from the discussion, and could be viewed as lobbying.

Good facilitators keep a close watch on the group and are able to see if any participants have a point to make but are reluctant to speak up. The signs that they look out for include:

- Leaning forwards
- Making eye contact with the facilitator or current speaker
- Raised eyebrows, head up
- Clearing throat
- Raising a hand
- Tapping a pen or pencil on the table
- Agreeing in order to grab an opportunity to speak
- Interrupting

Some of these signs may be very subtle, however the best facilitators are not great masters of 'body language'; their secret is very simple. A poor facilitator will become involved in the discussion and their focus of attention is on the point they are making, not on the other participants. The best facilitators are not involved in the conversation directly, their position is more like an observer, so they are more easily able to notice any behaviours which are different to the majority, much like someone would see the differences in a 'spot the difference' puzzle. If 15 people in a group nod and one frowns, it's easy to spot the frown and draw that person into the conversation. The best facilitators will do this in a very informal, casual way so as not to put undue pressure on the individual. Remember, the best facilitators want every participant to have an equal opportunity to participate. Whether they do or not is up to them.

Poor facilitators want everyone to contribute, so they are more likely to poll the entire group, asking for view or feedback, and this formulaic approach is more likely to disengage participants.

The consequence of not watching the whole group, in the words of one role model, is “minority dominance”.

The best facilitators will work to ensure that the discussion is balanced, so if the conversation is leaning to heavily towards a particular point of view and is not taking all possible positions into account, the facilitator will play 'Devil's advocate' and raise points that rebalance the argument. A good facilitator is careful to bring this up in a neutral way so that it doesn't sound like their own personal opinion.

Good facilitators openly offer the opportunity for participants to discuss agenda items prior to the meeting. Again, this offer is made in front of the whole group so that the facilitator can not be accused of singling participants out. This allows participants to air their more contentious or sensitive opinions in a 'safe' way prior to the open meeting. Often, in any negotiation, people will change or soften their positions once they hear themselves making a certain point, realising that it sounds perhaps aggressive or unreasonable. If they can only speak up in a meeting, they will cause a reaction from other participants which will often strengthen their position so that they

can save face. Staying consistent to our stated beliefs and intentions is a strong driver for people (Robert Cialdini, Influence Science and Practice) and so forcing participants to discuss their positions in an open forum will make them adhere more strongly to those positions. Giving participants the opportunity to air their views in a more private setting makes it more likely that they will adjust those views to achieve a consensus position.

There are times when a facilitator will have a vested interest in the group reaching a particular decision, perhaps for the adoption of a standard or the approval of a project. In such cases, the facilitator is no longer neutral, yet they must maintain their neutrality or lose control of the meeting. When a good facilitator wants to gently nudge the group in a particular direction, they will conduct the meeting as they normally would, encouraging all opinions and positions to be shared openly. However, they will also offer additional encouragement to participants who are speaking in favour of the facilitator's goal, and give less 'airtime' to participants who are not supportive.

Not every agenda item is relevant to every participant, so it is unreasonable to expect every participant to be fully engaged throughout the entire meeting.

A poor facilitator wants everyone to contribute because their focus is on the meeting as a whole and as an end in itself, so their effectiveness is dependent on keeping all participants engaged, like a school teacher who wants their students to pay attention to every word they say.

**A good facilitator thinks in terms of 'packages' and focuses on the participants who have an interest in the current package (agenda item). This gives the other participants some welcome time to 'tune out' and gather their thoughts.**

A good facilitator also makes frequent breaks in the meeting, again to allow participants to gather their thoughts, amongst other more practical needs that they may have. A good facilitator would rather have participants engaged at the right times rather than sitting there worrying about important messages and not paying attention to the proceedings.

### 3.1.13 Focusing

The best facilitators have a number of ways of knowing that a discussion is going 'off track':

1. The discussion is not serving to achieve the objective stated by the facilitator at the start of the discussion
2. The discussion is becoming overly emotional, either in an adversarial way or because the participants are personally interested in the topic
3. The participants have raised the same points at least twice, indicating that they have not moved any closer to a conclusion

The problem for a poor facilitator is that the more animated the participants become about the discussion topic, the harder it is for the facilitator to get the group's attention in order to regain control and bring the discussion back to the topic at hand.

Also, a poor facilitator, because they do not have control of the group, is more likely to experience the problem of the group splintering into subgroups with several discussions happening at the same time. A poor facilitator will deal with this by asking everyone to focus on the discussion at hand, disregarding the fact that they were; it just wasn't the discussion the facilitator was focusing on. A good facilitator will call the meeting to order but will also make sure that each splinter group has its say.

### 3.1.14 Influence

**Neutrality and impartiality are vital to [client]'s role in the industry, however the best facilitators are highly influential, using non-obvious methods to shape the outcomes of a meeting.**

By clearly stating that the meeting is “your meeting”, i.e. the participants', the best facilitators push accountability for decisions back onto the group. They cannot 'blame' the facilitator for influencing them, because he or she clearly stated that they are neutral in the decision.

By staying out of direct discussion as much as possible, the best facilitators encourage the participants to debate with each other. Therefore, any agreement or disagreement is made with another member of the group, not the facilitator. This also aids in conflict management, because the best facilitators manage the group such that they are arguing with themselves, not with the facilitator. This further protects the facilitator's neutrality.

By working outside of the meeting on the wording of agreements, papers, projects etc. the best facilitators are able to use resources such as documents to make a point for them. For example, a facilitator might refer a participant to the wording of a standard rather than debating directly. The participant cannot argue with the standard because the standard doesn't argue back. The facilitator protects their neutrality and further reinforces the point that, “these are your standards, not mine”.

The best facilitators use the people in the room to exert influence, for example building on supportive arguments and also using government representatives to indirectly influence the group.

### 3.1.15 Handling conflict

When conflict does arise, it is directed either at another participant or at the facilitator. Conflict will often arise for one of two reasons:

1. A discussion has become heated because participants are focusing on being heard rather than on listening
2. A participant is playing out a role in order to gain control of the discussion or intimidate other participants

The best facilitators rarely encounter the first reason because it is central to the role of a good facilitator, which we can sum up as follows:

**The participants come to a meeting to *have their say*, and the facilitator makes sure that they are *heard* by getting them to *listen* to each other.**

This connects back to the sense of equality; in order for all participants to have an equal say, they must also listen in equal measure.

The second reason is something that the best facilitators preempt with their preparation. By understanding the relative negotiating positions of the participants, they are able to distinguish between a genuine objection and 'bluster' or positioning and deal with it appropriately. Probably the most important behaviour in this case is separating the message from the tone; valuing and including what the person has to say irrespective of how they say it.

Once a valid point is made, though, the facilitator will deal with the way in which it is made by reminding the speaker that their behaviour is inappropriate and will not be tolerated; an approach based on the belief that all participants are equal and therefore deserve equal respect.

By pushing accountability back onto the participants (“it's *your* meeting”, “these are *your* standards”), the facilitator is reminding them that the conflict is theirs to resolve, or at the very least they are disagreeing with their own standards or previous commitments, not with the facilitator.

One of the most important points in any conflict situation is to avoid the language of direct disagreement, which can always be paraphrased as, “you're wrong”. Instead, the best facilitators use language such as:

- Yes, and...
- Perhaps, if...
- I agree, and...
- Yes, if...
- Not only, but also...
- And in addition to that...

By using such phrases, the best facilitators are able to build on the discussion, whereas negative language such as “no”, or “but” will tend to stifle a discussion. The best facilitators therefore use conflict to flush out alternative options, which if not addressed in the meeting will come back later on and cause bigger problems.

### 3.1.16 Decision making

The best facilitators do not open each agenda item or 'package' with a discussion. Because they know what the purpose of each package is, they open each item in a way that allows them to achieve that purpose or outcome using the minimum time and effort. They also ask very specific, closed questions in order to guide the discussion quickly towards their desired outcome.

Having said that the facilitator has an outcome, they are also not attached to it. In a way, they don't mind whether the decision is 'yes' or 'no' as long as the group makes a decision, quickly. This is another aspect of their neutrality which they work hard to protect.

The best facilitators' decision making process is:

1. State the outcome of the discussion item i.e. a decision
1. Give the context to the discussion item
2. Ask for the decision
3. If everyone agrees, close the item and move to the next

Only if anyone raises a concern does the facilitator open up a discussion.

Most importantly, when the group agrees, the facilitator does not overtly acknowledge the fact that the group have made a decision, they merely close the item and move to the next with the minimum of fuss. This emphasises that making decisions is quick, easy, painless and most of all, completely normal and to be expected.

### 3.1.17 Closing the meeting

The end of the meeting is very simple; asking again for any AOB items, summarising any significant decisions or progress, stating the date of the next meeting, if there is one and thanking the participants for their contribution.

## 3.2 Beliefs & Perceptions

The operating principles and behavioural rules that form the foundation of high performing behaviour.

These are unconscious processes which shape the resulting behaviours and as such are not normally available at the level of conscious awareness.



### 3.2.1 Beliefs

Beliefs are rules. Most people think of beliefs as fixed 'truths', however they have been learned through life experiences, just like rules about social behaviour and train timetables. The only difference with a belief is that we are less likely to question it when experience contradicts it, instead discounting the experience or looking for some other factor to blame.

### 3.2.2 Behavioural traits

The following behavioural traits can be thought of as perceptual filters, colouring a person's view of the world and thereby influencing their behaviour so that they tend to react in consistent, predictable ways. These traits can be highly context specific, and of course people can adapt to situations which require a different way of thinking. However, by identifying these traits, we can produce a recruitment template which makes it easy to identify similar people, and we can also build content into a training program which makes it easier for other people to see the world as a high performer does, which naturally leads to high performing behaviours.

Options	<b>Procedures</b>	Favours familiar processes and proven methods over new ideas
<b>Towards</b>	Away	Goals based on achieving results rather than avoiding problems
<b>People</b>	Task	Focuses on people and relationships rather than tasks and objects
<b>Team</b>	Individual	Achieves results through a team rather than by themselves
<b>Internal</b>	External	Bases decisions on their own internal frame of reference rather than on external benchmarks and comparisons
<b>Difference</b>	Similarity	Notices differences and exceptions rather than similarities
<b>Active</b>	Reactive	Takes action rather than waiting to react
General	<b>Specific</b>	Detail oriented rather than generalising or 'seeing the big picture'

### 3.2.3 Purpose

The best facilitators believe that [client] exists to help the industry to make decisions.

**The best facilitators believe that a meeting exists to make decisions.**

Therefore, meetings are not a time consuming non-work activity for the best facilitators, they are the fundamental way in which [client] achieves its purpose, and they are therefore a core activity for a good facilitator.

Participants have to feel that they have achieved something in the meeting, otherwise they will feel it has been a waste of time and will be more difficult to engage in subsequent meetings.

### 3.2.4 Confidence

The different role models who we interviewed attributed their talents to different factors, for example their extensive [industry] experience which they used in one of two ways:

- They could understand technical points, or the history behind them
- They knew the 'personalities' and were better able to handle them

40 years of [industry] experience is hard to gain without spending 40 years in the [industry], so in order to replicate these talents in others, we must understand what this experience gives the high performer.

Firstly and most importantly, it simply gives them confidence. They have a sense that they have 'earned their place' and that they can deal with some of the more challenging representatives because they see them as equals. Therefore, confidence is relative to the position and behaviour of people in the meeting, so high performance depends on the facilitator seeing the meeting participants as peers or equals and are put off neither by status nor challenging behaviour.

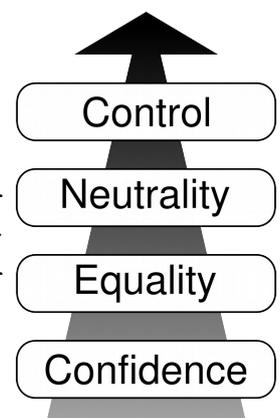
However, it is impractical for other staff to spend a similar time in the industry just to gain confidence. Each individual has a different way of generating confidence which we will tap into during the training program, removing this dependency on [industry] knowledge.

Secondly, industry experience gives the facilitator an understanding of the subject under discussion which they say helps them to keep a discussion 'on track'. In fact, they were using other methods to achieve this which were discussed in the previous section.

In fact, industry experience can sometimes be a hindrance in that it can lead the facilitator to form opinions which could bias a discussion. In [client]'s culture, neutrality is one of a facilitator's most valuable assets.

It is important to note that confidence is not an abstract feeling, it is part of a process that forms part of how the high performer achieves their results. Confidence is not an end in itself, it is a means; confidence to *do what?*

Confidence is the conclusion of a process of mental preparation, a state of readiness and for high performing facilitators it serves the vital purpose of levelling the playing field. A poor facilitator brings the perceived status of meeting participants into the discussion, allowing more 'important' participants to dominate the meeting and failing to earn the credibility and respect that would allow them to easily handle conflict.



An average facilitator tries to leave the participants' job titles out of the meeting because they know that each person has an equal right to be heard and an equal right to be treated with respect. However, they still feel some underlying sense of a 'pecking order' and this influences how they treat different participants.

The best facilitators don't need to try to remember this; they know what earns them the right to facilitate the meeting, such as years of industry experience, and it is easier for them to command respect from the participants, which in turn makes it easier for them to perform the most obvious tasks of a facilitator; keeping the discussion on track, keeping the meeting to time, ensuring that all participants have the opportunity to share their views and recording minutes and actions accurately.

### 3.2.5 Ownership

Good facilitators see the meeting as a means to an end, that end being the adoption of a standard, the progress of a project etc. In order to achieve that end, a number of people must reach an agreement, and a meeting is an efficient way to achieve that. However, especially when dealing with external stakeholders, the facilitator must protect [client]'s neutral position, so they focus on the process of the meeting rather than the content, and guide the participants to focus on the content without having to worry about the process. However, by managing the process, a good facilitator is able to focus the participants' attention in such a way that the content leads the participants towards the facilitator's desired outcome.

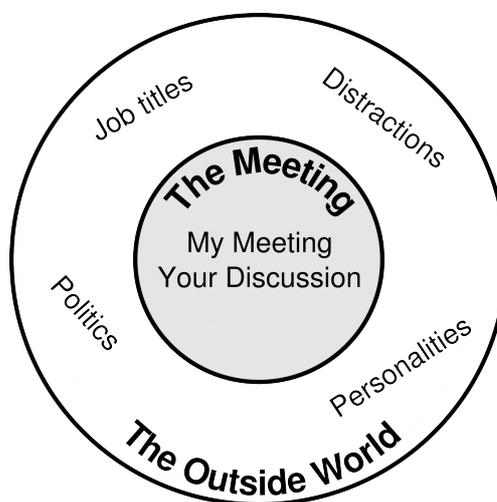
If a facilitator allows themselves to get drawn into the content of the meeting then they risk losing control of the process.

**The best facilitators regard the process of the meeting as theirs and the content of the meeting as the participants'.**

With this perspective, the best facilitators essentially mark out their territory within the meeting room, and set out the ground rules that go with that.

They will also remind the participants where these boundaries lie, e.g. “remember, these are your standards, not mine”, pushing the responsibility for the negotiation back onto the participants. This is useful if the participants start to make the facilitator the centre of the discussion.

A poor to average facilitator, in contrast, *tries* to control the meeting which signals to the participants that the facilitator is not in control, opening up the potential for participants to dominate the meeting.



### 3.2.6 Preparation

A poor facilitator will fail to send out sufficient information prior to the meeting and will therefore waste time during the meeting reading minutes, notes, papers etc. This teaches the participants that they don't need to prepare in advance.

A good facilitator assumes that the participants have read through any information that was sent to them in advance, even saying, “If they haven't, that's their problem, not mine”. A participant only needs to attend a meeting once without having prepared, and they will likely not do it again.

### 3.2.7 Time

A poor to average facilitator sees the meeting agenda as constant and time as variable, whereas a high performer sees time as constant and the agenda as a variable. This attitude enables them to focus on getting their highest priority items resolved in the time available, or the time made available by participants as a result of travel problems, other commitments etc.

### 3.2.8 Equality

The best facilitators believe that everyone participating in a meeting is equal, in that they have an equal right to be heard and an equal right to share their views, irrespective of their job title or the organisation they're representing. This beliefs leads to three conclusions:

1. The facilitator is also equal to the participants and is therefore not influenced by job titles
2. The participants must treat each other with respect since none has superiority
3. A participant has a right to share their views or not

It's interesting to note that while a good facilitator does not respond to job titles, the participants do, and the atmosphere in a meeting is notably different when a government representative is present. The facilitator will sometimes use this to their advantage, asking the government representative to leave the room or arrive at a particular point in the agenda so that participants can have an 'off the record' discussion. This further strengthens the facilitator's ownership of the meeting space.

A good facilitator believes that the more senior the participant (in terms of their 'day job'), the more valuable their time is, therefore the more value they choose to invest in the meeting. Therefore, an 'important' participant does not daunt a good facilitator as they would a poor facilitator, they actually strengthen the role of the facilitator, because the facilitator knows that they would not give their time freely if the meeting wasn't worth attending.

### 3.2.9 Engagement

If all participants have an equal right to share their views then it must also be true that they may or may not choose to exercise that right. Therefore, the best facilitators think in terms of 'providing an opportunity for participants to share their views'. They believe that there may be social factors such as peer pressure, or personal factors such as uncertainty or confusion which may prevent an individual from engaging in a discussion, so they are aware of the 'body language' that indicates that someone has a view which they are not sharing. However, they do not 'push' individuals to engage as that would violate their belief about the individual's rights. The right level of discussion is preferably to discussion for its own sake, even if that means a "no comment" from every participant.

Poor to average facilitators measure their effectiveness by the number of people who *do* speak, rather than the number of people who have the *opportunity* to speak, because the discussion is an end in itself, therefore more discussion is good.

### 3.2.10 Conflict

The best facilitators' beliefs about equality determine how they handle conflict. In particular, because they treat all participants as equal, regardless of their job title or external status, they are able to apply the same rules of etiquette to all participants.

In contrast, a poor facilitator will fail to tackle inappropriate behaviour from someone 'important' and therefore treats the meeting participants differently depending on their perceived status, which may come from their job title or from their superior or intimidating behaviour during the meeting.

Furthermore, a poor facilitator will handle inappropriate behaviour outside of the meeting, essentially placating the perpetrator and encouraging discussion to take the group's focus away from the inappropriate behaviour, which:

- Shows the 'victim' that they are not respected or protected
- Shows the 'perpetrator' that they can get away with it
- Shows the other participants that inappropriate behaviour will not be addressed
- Shows the group that the facilitator is not in control of the meeting

The effect of this is that healthy debate will be suppressed, as quieter participants will fear conflict with the more bullish members of the group because they believe that the facilitator will not 'stand up' for them.

### 3.2.11 Influence

A good facilitator believes that they must understand a person's point of view, otherwise they cannot help them to find a solution.

They also believe that if they allow a person to talk freely, that person will often talk themselves in to or out of a particular position or point of view.

These beliefs make it easier for the best facilitators to influence a group whilst maintaining their neutrality.

### 3.3 Culture

Cultural rules provide the foundation for the individual high performing behaviours. They provide the environment which shapes and dictates which thoughts and behaviours will lead to average results, and which will lead to exceptional results.

These cultural elements describe the environment around the role being modelled and are in addition to the corporate cultural elements described elsewhere.



#### 3.3.1 The [industry]

[client]'s culture is largely defined by the [industry] that it serves. Neutrality is important in every activity, with some staff being almost paranoid about not being seen to be influencing the [industry]. This can lead to staff being overly cautious at times, particularly when presenting research which they fear will not be well received by [client]'s members. Rather than 'tell it straight', there is sometimes a tendency to 'tone down' information rather than risk offending a member. This opens the door for political behaviour from the members, with some representatives actively working to develop a “fearsome reputation”, designed to make it easier for them to get their own way. Managing these 'strong characters' is a concern for many [client] staff.

Many [client] staff exaggerate this neutral position into a sense of powerlessness, saying that [client] has no regulatory powers to impose standards and is therefore subservient to its members. However, if [client] had regulatory powers then [industry] operators would have no accountability for safety standards. They could always blame [client] for making them introduce changes and improvements, and they could, for example, blame increased passenger fares on the cost of introducing [client]'s unnecessary and over-protective standards. By taking up an advisory position only and introducing standards through industry consensus, [client] is actually in a more powerful position because it can recommend what is right or best and leave its members to debate how to introduce change. By achieving this through a consensual process, members must accept responsibility for the decisions that they make and the standards that they agree to implement. The [industry] therefore relies on [client] as a source of expert knowledge, and [client]'s value is therefore greatly underrated by many of its own staff.

#### 3.3.2 Support

Overall, the culture seems to be participative and supportive, however some pockets of political activity cause frustration for some staff who are outside of those power circles.

#### 3.3.3 Organisational size

[client] has now grown to a size that means that staff no longer recognise all of their colleagues. This can lead to the development of 'silos' where staff focus on their own roles and teams and forget how their purpose connects to the rest of the organisation. Networking sessions would be a good way to add to the lunchtime learning sessions that are currently in place, with the focus being on getting to know people across the business rather than focusing on technical knowledge.

### 3.3.4 Change

One of the most important features of [client]'s culture is that it is changing rapidly. Since [client] was established, it operated in much the same way, with its culture and its people emerging from that of organisations such as [industry]track and the train operating companies.

However, a number of factors are converging to change this culture.

- The move to a new office meant a new corporate identity and a new working environment
- The change in [client]'s constitution signalled a change in its thinking
- The imminent departure of the Chief Executive creates uncertainty
- The retirement of staff who have spent a lifetime in the [industry] shifts the focus away from that as the primary source of value
- The attraction of staff with technical skills but not [industry] skills

The last point is important because it also opens up the culture to change, as fewer staff are attached to the ways that the [industry] has worked in the past and perhaps look more objectively at how it might work better in the future. [client], and therefore the [industry], must begin to value generic technical skills over historical industry knowledge. However, both are vital to [client]'s operation, and therefore the loss of that historical knowledge to retirement must be very carefully managed.

## 4 The Difference

### 4.1 General features of high performers

*They have a goal which is greater than that of the task which they are recognised for excelling at, so the task becomes a means to an end and not an end in itself.*

We observed high performers setting long term goals, such as “to build a coherent change strategy”, for which meetings were a means to an end, not an end in themselves.

*Their intention, attitude or methods are counter-intuitive and not obvious to an observer.*

High performers do not set out to build consensus within a group, because this would be contrary to their neutral position. Building consensus implies influencing the group towards a particular decision, and whilst the high performers did indeed use covert influence methods to achieve this, it was not their primary goal.

Preparing from the participants' points of view is not obvious, as it looks exactly like preparing from any other point of view in that the external behaviour simply involves reading.

High performers avoid conflict by tackling it head on, whereas a poor facilitator tries to avoid conflict, thereby causing it.

*They appear to get results easily because they actually do make it easy for themselves by implementing short-cuts or methods which are not obvious to an observer.*

High performers make it easy to gain agreement and manage conflict within a meeting because they do the majority of work outside of the meeting. When a group gets together, they are focused on making a decision which then happens quite efficiently.

High performers therefore excel at gaining consensus within a meeting because they have already stacked the odds in the favour prior to the meeting. However, at no point do they lobby or try to influence any participants, as this again would conflict with their need for neutrality.

### 4.2 Specific differences

	High Performers	Average/Poor Performers
Purpose of a meeting	To make decisions	To discuss or debate
Ownership	The facilitator owns the process, the participants own the content	The facilitator owns the meeting
Equality	Sees all participants as equal	Is influenced by job titles and status
Preparation	Extensive, ensures participants have enough time and information to prepare thoroughly	Minimal, focuses on own preparation and may not give participants enough time or information
Preparation perspective	As if they are the other participants, considering all positions	As if they are a participant or chairman

Objectives	The meeting is a means to an end	The meeting is an end in itself
Direction	Has clear goals for the meeting and keeps the conversation on track by checking against their goals	Does not have clear goals, therefore tends to value any discussion, even if it is off topic
Opening	Invests time in reviewing previous minutes, building group compliance through shared experience	Reviews minutes where necessary but mainly focuses on the current agenda
Process	Packages the meeting into agenda items	Treats the meeting as a single entity
Agenda management	Dynamically rearranges the agenda to achieve its objectives	Sticks to the agenda and works through from start to finish
Time	Time is fixed, the agenda is variable	Time is variable, the agenda is fixed
Negotiation	Works outside the meeting to resolve differences, making it easier for participants to compromise	Debates within the meeting, causing participants to become entrenched in their positions
Personal involvement	Not directly engaged in conversation, therefore easier to spot	Gets involved in the conversation so doesn't always notice
Engagement	Knows that not all participants will be engaged in each agenda item and focuses on those who are involved, allowing the others to gather their thoughts and maintain concentration	Wants all participants to be engaged throughout the whole meeting, causing participants to become disengaged when they are realistically unable to maintain concentration
Contribution	Gives all participants an equal opportunity to contribute, whether they choose to or not	Wants all participants to contribute equally
Neutrality	Protects their neutrality, pushing accountability onto the participants	Becomes directly involved in the debate
Decision making	Presents a decision at the start of each agenda item and only opens up a discussion by exception	Opens agenda items as discussions and then concludes them with a decision
'Strong personalities'	Separates the message from the behaviour and doesn't take it personally	Discounts the message because of the behaviour and takes it personally
Handling conflict	Reminds the group that their conflict is with each other	Becomes involved in conflict

Inappropriate behaviour	Tackles it directly in the meeting	Smooths over it in the meeting and tackles it outside of the meeting, if at all
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## 5 Recommendations

The following recommendations are organised around the 'people cycle' illustrated below.



The people cycle breaks down the lifecycle of the people in an organisation into three phases. Each phase feeds back to itself so that successful selection refines the attraction of new employees, successful development refines the induction process and exit management drives team alignment. The overall cycle enables an organisation to evolve while protecting the unique culture which makes it successful.

**Attraction** A good facilitator prepares thoroughly and is procedures oriented. The language of a job advert should reflect this and should avoid words like 'freedom' and 'challenge'. They are also 'towards' oriented and seek results.

All external communication serves to attract the right people to [client]. [client] may not be well known outside of the industry, however with the culture shifting away from industry knowledge and towards technical skills, it would be useful to explore the role of social media in building a brand for [client] as an employer of choice.

**Recruitment:** The most notable quality which can be tested for at interview is the high performer's practice of preparing from the other person's point of view. A simple test would be to ask the candidate to set the agenda for the interview. A poor performer would not thoroughly prepare for the interview, but both the average and high performers would. The agenda would enable you to see how they prepare. You can expect an average performer to create an agenda biased towards them 'selling' themselves, whereas the high performer would bias an agenda towards the interviewer's needs. Having set the agenda, you would also expect the high performer to 'manage' the interview.

**Selection** Overall, the selection process needs to give successful candidates a good understanding of [client]'s culture. Any candidate who thrives on being in the limelight and driving change is probably not a good choice as they will struggle with [client]'s neutral position in the industry.

Good facilitators achieve results through a team, which may be their colleagues or their meeting participants. Once a candidate is past the first stage of the recruitment process, an assessment centre would therefore be a better test of team behaviour than an individual interview.

**Induction** The most important part of any induction process is a cultural alignment. New recruits should attend a wide range of meetings to get a 'feel' for the [client] facilitation style and the unique working environment.

Performance	<p>Performance management of new recruits needs to be structured to support high performing behaviours.</p> <p>Regular reviews of meetings should be held, with colleagues acting as observers who are able to give useful, objective feedback to a developing facilitator.</p>
Development	<p>Aside from a formal training program, we recommend that staff occasionally attend meetings which are outside of their normal work area. In particular, attending any standards meetings as an observer would give staff a valuable insight into one of [client]'s core activities.</p>
Alignment	<p>Any team that has to participate in, chair or contribute to meetings must have an understanding of how to support the facilitation process. Freeing up time to prepare for meetings is one of the most valuable things that a manager can do to support their team.</p>
Succession	<p>The most obvious succession planning activity is to have staff attend regular meetings to get to know the people involved, and to stand in for regular meeting chairs to develop their skills, confidence, and their understanding of the topics under discussion.</p> <p>More broadly, it is important to manage the transfer of industry knowledge to younger staff. In a software company, the methods and working practices can be totally different today than even ten years ago because there is no 'real estate' to manage or protect. [client] has to build modern operating principles on an infrastructure whose roots go back hundreds of years. Therefore, lunchtime storytelling sessions, where industry veterans can talk about 'when I was a lad' would be of huge value in passing on that deep industry knowledge, and would be hugely entertaining too.</p>
Exit	<p>The key consideration when managing a high performer out of the business is to manage the handover of the relationships that they have created. It is very important that their replacement does not try to step into their shoes and instead makes a committee their own, establishing their own ground rules, expectations and standards of behaviour.</p>

## 6 Methodology

Typically, any organisation or team has a number of high performers who consistently outperform the average. It is becoming increasingly common that organisations have two sets of measurement criteria; explicit, task focused criteria such as sales targets and customer service metrics, and implicit, cultural criteria such as attitude, working environment and customer experience.

It is not enough to simply benchmark performance, because that benchmark is a static measurement in a changing environment. Managers often say that they have to “run to stand still” in a fast changing business environment, and part of the problem is the use of static performance benchmarks which give the illusion that the environment is changing.

In fact, it is easier to harness and direct this natural momentum for change than to create change based on an illusion of inertia.

By analysing a person’s ability to get a certain result within a cultural system, we are able to discover not only the person’s intuitive behaviour but also the cultural system within which that behaviour works best.

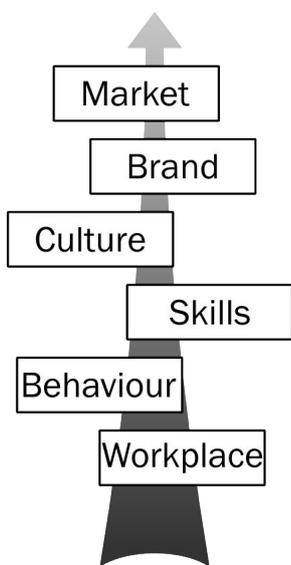
It is very common for companies to hire ‘star players’ such as high performing sales people and executives, only to find that they do not perform as expected. There was nothing wrong with the person, they were simply used to working within a different set of rules. Some people, over time, will learn the new rules and adapt to them, some will not.

Often, ‘culture change’ programmes are introduced at the development stage of the people cycle, by sending people on training courses to learn new organisational values. The problem with this is that it is rarely tied into the other parts of the people cycle – attraction and retention – so over time, the ‘new’ culture works its way out of the system, and the incumbent culture is preserved.

Culture change can be viewed as a natural process of evolution which is itself a learned adaptation to a changing environment. If your business environment is evolving, you need to evolve with it, supporting people at all stages of the people cycle at the same time. By changing the way you attract new people, those people will evolve the culture iteratively and systemically. In the long term, this creates a stable organisation, but it does require commitment and consistency of business strategy, because it will take a year or two for the new cultural rules and beliefs to become ‘the way we do things around here’. Also, this is not a one off process. It is important to be constantly adapting and evolving as the market evolves. When companies only run change projects when the gap between their behaviour and the market environment is so big that profits start to fall, it is already too late.

So in modelling high performers and using that information to align the people cycle behind a vision and business plan, the result is greater alignment of the culture and the people within it. The result of this is that more of each individual’s time, energy and commitment is focused on realising that vision.



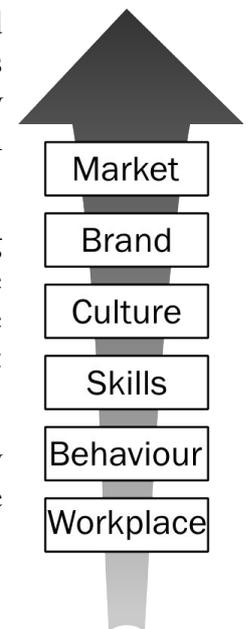


The diagram to the left illustrates a poorly aligned organisation, where many people feel frustration as a result of being unable to contribute and make positive changes. Effort is wasted, re-organisations are common and, ultimately, people will disengage and do the minimum that they can.

Frustration is the feeling that forms when a person's desire to achieve a goal is blocked or hindered by a barrier which is not under their control.

This situation leads to small effects on a day to day basis, and those daily frustrations are compounded over time to lead to a real and measurable impact on business performance.

Aligning the skills of individuals with the rules and aspirations of the business as a whole encourages individuals to commit their time, energy and ideas. They feel recognised and rewarded because they feel they can make a positive impact on the business or their team.



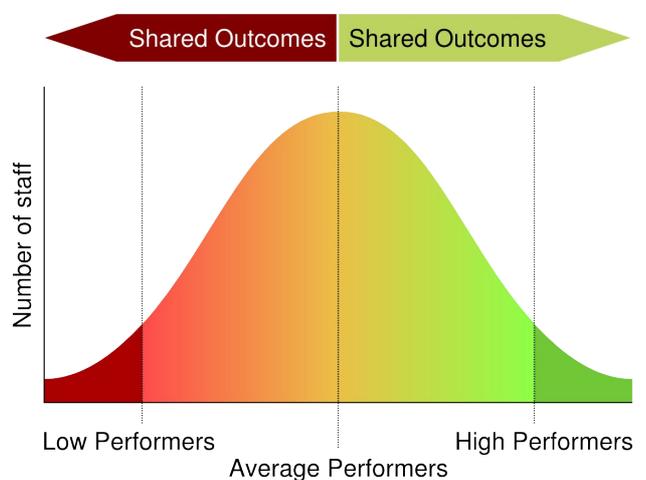
In short, people feel that they are making a difference to their working environment and their colleagues and customers. As each person experiences the sense of achievement that comes from seeing their ideas and desire to achieve being put into action, they want to achieve more. This creates a strong sense that people have control over their personal effectiveness.

This situation also leads to small effects on a day to day basis, and those daily successes are compounded over time to lead to a real and measurable positive impact on business performance.

## 6.1 Benchmarking

We define a high performer simply by the results that they achieve. We don't look for who are popular, or who seems to be working hard, or who is doing things 'the right way'. Fundamentally, a high performer behaves in a way that is right for them, and because their perceptions and attitude are aligned with that of the organisational culture, high performance is the output or result. We determine the qualities which make someone a high performer and which can be replicated by comparing the perceptions, beliefs and behaviours of high performers to those of average performers.

The reason for comparing high to average rather than poor performers is that the role model's behaviour is governed by a goal or outcome. High and poor performers do not share the same goals, but high and average performers typically do. What we are therefore modelling is the difference between two people who are both aiming for the same goal, one of whom has a set of skills and abilities that the other does not. Those skills are the result of typically many years of 'trial and error' learning, so their high performing behaviours have not been taught; they have naturally evolved.



## 6.2 Modelling

Since we are looking for the difference between a high performer and an average performer, it is not enough simply to model the high performer, because they will share many traits and behaviours with the majority of staff. What we are seeking is the small number of differences that give rise to a measurable difference in performance.

We use a hybrid approach to modelling which generates a model of individual behaviours within a cultural, systemic context and this is the key to our unique approach which preserves the cultural context for high performers.

### 6.2.1 Installation

The next stage is to install the model into people who are looking for improved performance. Ideally, we need to have contact throughout the installation process to ensure the model is being correctly installed. It is not sufficient to tell people what the steps of the process are, the installation requires an element of experiential learning which must be carefully facilitated to ensure consistent results.

### 6.2.2 Testing

We need to ensure that the model is correctly integrated into the wider system by testing the model in the live environment. Possibly the most important reason for testing is to understand how the model evolves in the live environment so that we can build that evolution back into the model.

### 6.2.3 Service integration

A logical extension of this work is to build the high performance model into areas such as recruitment, induction training, performance management and succession planning. If these systems are not integrated with each other, you're left with a number of disjointed components.

For example, if you don't learn why people leave then it's very difficult to recruit people who are more likely to stay. Very few companies conduct serious exit interviews or actively manage individuals out of the organisation, instead focusing on the 'numbers game' of recruitment and hoping that enough people stay to make it cost effective. Equally, very few companies think about how their recruitment activities attract certain personalities, and how those personalities thrive or struggle in the working culture. By seeing the people cycle as a snapshot of your culture, you can align all of the components activities to increase efficiency, engagement and productivity and reduce foreseeable attrition.

## 6.3 The people cycle



We can apply the modelling data throughout the people cycle as follows:

Attraction	Ensure that marketing and branding are aligned with what the organisation is actually delivering.
Recruitment	Ensure that the recruitment process attracts the right people and sets their expectations correctly for the working environment and desired behaviours.
Selection	Create profiling templates and assessment centres that select in people who are most likely to perform well within the cultural environment.
Induction	Further refine expectations and align them with the reality of the organisation.
Performance	Create performance review processes that focus on high performing behaviours.
Development	Create development programmes and coaching frameworks that further enhance performance within the cultural context.
Alignment	Align individuals into teams and lead those teams in a way that enhances performance and positively reinforces the culture and environment.
Succession	Plan for the progression of individuals through the business in a way which evolves the culture against market changes and preserves high performance over time.
Exit	Use exit data to adapt the performance model, and manage individuals out of the business in a way that is aligned with the culture and which reinforces your brand as one which people would want to work for.

The three broad phases of the people cycle work as follows:

- **Attraction** gets the right **people**
- **Development** shapes **behaviour**
- **Retention** builds a **culture**

# 7 Workshop Outlines

## 7.1 Overview

### 7.1.1 Level 1 – Presenting

One of the most important skills in any organisation is the ability to stand up and present your ideas or achievements to internal colleagues and external stakeholders. Yet this is also one of the most often avoided activities. Whilst some people will go to great lengths to make sure they never have to do it, others relish the opportunity to present at anything from project reviews and team meetings to research debates and [industry] conferences.

In this one day workshop, we'll be exploring and practising the qualities and behaviours of the best presenters, giving you new ways to structure and deliver your presentations, whether you're a new presenter or an old hand. Most importantly, any nervousness that you might feel will be gone, and if you find your presentations have gotten stuck in a rut, you'll definitely leave with fresh inspiration and new ways to engage your audience and get your message across.

### 7.1.2 Level 2 – Facilitating

Meetings are an important activity in any organisation, because people need to get together to share ideas and make decisions. Yet, without structure, meetings can easily become disorganised and frustrating, resulting in disengaged participants and missed project deadlines.

The best facilitators can structure a meeting and keep the participants on track with only the lightest touch, enabling everyone to get on with the discussion at hand and not worry about timekeeping or staying on topic.

In this one day workshop, we'll be working through the most important characteristics and behaviours of the best meeting facilitators, learning and practising both their methods and their 'secrets'; the things that aren't obvious yet make the difference between having to wrestle a meeting into line and gently keeping everyone focused, on track and productive.

### 7.1.3 Level 3 – Engaging

[client] has a unique role within the [industry] and in fact a very unusual role for an [industry]. A vital skill for anyone in a stakeholder-facing role is the ability to position [client]'s strengths, convey the value of [client]'s service and engage with multiple stakeholders who each have different views and different needs.

On the surface, it seems an impossible task to build consensus in such an environment, yet some people achieve this easily. Following an in depth analysis of [client]'s culture and working practices, we have developed a unique, two day workshop which will enable you to practice and develop an approach which combines your own personal style and experiences with the innate, hidden talents of expert facilitators.

We'll cover both chairing meetings and presenting to large groups; two situations where a high level of expertise is required and which present perfect opportunities for you to strengthen the credibility of [client] within the [industry].

## **7.2 Level 1 – Presenting**

### **7.2.1 Workshop Purpose**

By the end of the workshop, each participant will have the skills to stand up, any time, any where and present any subject to any audience.

### **7.2.2 Workshop Duration**

1 day, 09:00 to 17:00

### **7.2.3 High Level Content**

#### **Introduction**

What is a Presentation?

Excellent Presenters

#### **How do you Design a Presentation?**

Your Outcome

Share your Outcome

When Does the Presentation Start?

#### **Getting Ready**

Planning Outcomes for the Audience

#### **Communication Channels**

#### **Credibility**

#### **Questions**

#### **Narrative Communication**

Framing your Communication

Question-Story-Question

#### **Structuring the Presentation**

Framing

Outcome focus

Timeframe

Frame/Story/Question

Six Questions

STAR

Association (shifting referential index)

Reflecting current experience

Getting the Timing Right

Using Presentation Aids

[client] Style Protocol

Handling Questions and Answers

Err...

When Should you Take Questions?

Closing the Presentation

Putting it all Together

## 7.3 Level 2 – Facilitating

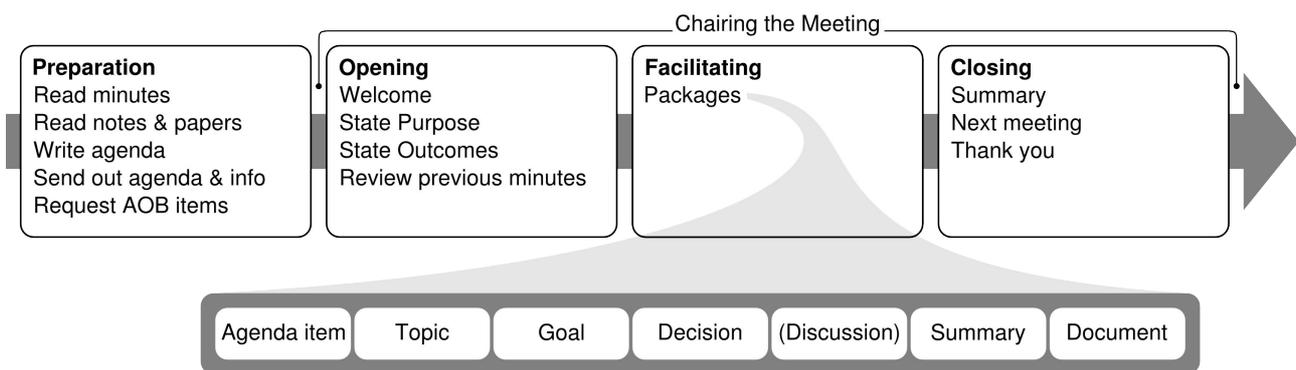
### 7.3.1 Workshop Purpose

By the end of the workshop, each participant will have the skills required to chair a meeting so that it achieves its purpose.

### 7.3.2 Workshop Duration

1 day, 09:00 to 17:00

### 7.3.3 High Level Content



## Meeting Planning & Design

What is the purpose of the meeting?

What is the shortest route required to achieve that purpose?

e.g. Decisions, Discussions, Debate, Knowledge sharing

Build the necessary agenda items into packages, each with its own purpose

Prioritise the packages

Write the agenda

## Meeting Preparation

Send out the agenda and accompanying notes in time for the participants to prepare

Plan the meeting, thinking about the different participants' positions on each agenda item

## In the Meeting

Keeping the meeting on track

Time management

Handling conflict

Taking minutes

Closing the meeting

## After the Meeting

Follow ups and reminders

Managing actions and deliverables

Managing regular meetings

## 7.4 Level 3 – Engaging

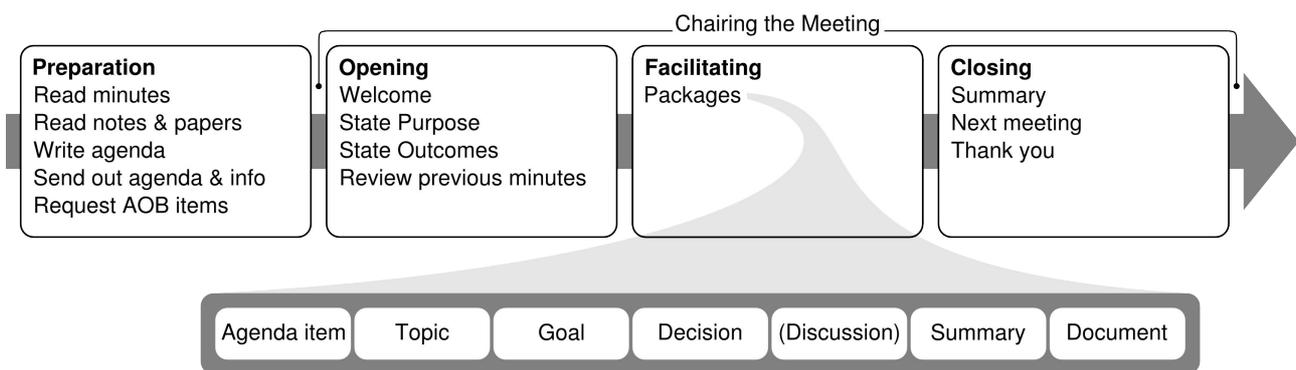
### 7.4.1 Workshop Purpose

By the end of the workshop, each participant will have the skills required to enable a group to reach a consensus decision.

### 7.4.2 Workshop Duration

2 days, 09:00 to 17:00

### 7.4.3 High Level Content



## Meeting Process

Participants already know the basic process above

## Excellent Facilitators

What more do the best facilitators do, over and above the average?

Equality and confidence

Neutrality and impartiality

## Meeting Preparation

Pre-meeting research and communication

Creating an environment where participants can rethink their positions

Mentally rehearsing extreme positions

## In the Meeting

Opening the meeting to build group compliance

Packaging

Advanced conflict management

Dealing with inappropriate behaviour

Dynamic agenda management

Accountability

Maintaining neutrality

Maintaining the right level of participation and engagement

Using breaks and other resources to manage the meeting

## **After the Meeting**

Communication

**Managing regular meetings**