

Jennifer de Gandt

CLEAN PROCESS



Access to a Deeper Field of Information for Business

What is Clean Process? Clean Process combines David Grove's innovative facilitative practices of Clean Language, Clean Space, and Emergent Knowledge.

How does Clean Process Improve and Accelerate Learning ?

1. FIRST, by teaching FACILITATION of the living processes that underlie our individual and group thinking. They put our attention on the non-linear processes - 'the secondary process', as psychologist Arny Mindell calls it - that catch our unconscious beliefs, feelings, and reactions to what we think is our stated objective or direction. The linear or primary process can be defined, named, quantified, and measured. It refers to consensual reality: what everyone agrees is real. The stated business objective for a project, for example.

The secondary process holds the information that prevents us from simply advancing to our stated objective. The feelings of different group members towards each other, past history, different motivations for the project, for example. In David Grove's coding, we in the space of A want something that we project outside ourselves into space B. Between the two, in C, the space between and around them, is all the information on why we cannot simply move towards what we want in a linear fashion. With David's Clean procedures, we learn how to put our attention on the non-linear world where cross-motivations, conflicts, and obstacles wait to be transformed into useful information.

2. SECOND, by learning how to facilitate the living experience of the moment, in oneself or another person or a group, without interfering with our left brain certainties, theories, and interpretations. We learn how to hold off "knowing" in order to let "not-knowing" reveal itself.

When we learn something new, we enter a process unique to each of us that allows us to let in new information and to compare and contrast it with the learning we have already installed in our mind-body and nervous system. We are always adjusting and updating what we “know” with whatever new stimulus is coming our way. Learning with Clean Process means respecting this unique and intricate process of learning, and facilitating that process with the minimum of interference.

As managers, trainers, and coaches we can learn to facilitate the living processes that underlie our individual and group learning. We can listen to our client’s words, enter their rhythmic dance, ask minimalist questions that point out a hidden direction for thought to follow, and we can leave behind our desire to control, advise, interpret, and direct. In other words, we can learn to use Clean Facilitation.

- Facilitation is different from Training. Training defines and transmits specific content that has been chosen as useful in a certain domain. It transmits a model that is then overlaid on our existing experience as learners. Facilitation, on the other hand, uses our here and now experience and accompanies us in a way that allows a model of our individual processes to emerge. The same applies in groups, where the group’s process of investigating a problem area can be facilitated “cleanly” to allow the deeper, more sustaining, meaning to appear.
- There is a place for both Training and Facilitation in Management Training. Usually the difference becomes clear when we have learnt and applied a number of existing models and are still confronted by times when they don’t work. When the standard procedural models do not work, we need to switch to facilitating the unexpected, to follow whatever emerges. The ability to encourage and make articulate unusual, difficult, out of the box, or conflicting information requires particular facilitation skills. Clean processes offer the experiences and skills necessary for recognising and dealing with such situations. Being in the now with what is happening is an art: a significant addition to the skills we need in a world of rapid change and complexity.
- On a one to one level of coaching or problem solving, we can facilitate ourselves and the other party to self-model thinking, feeling, sensing, and intuiting around our problems and concerns in order to reveal new resources and solutions. No expert model is used to overlay our experience. We are facilitated instead to let our own knowledge of the field re-organise. New decisions emerge from this self-re-organisation.
- When these processes are used for group process, teams or departments can assemble a maximum number of interested parties and with Clean Facilitation allow hot spots of reaction to transform into vital information. Clean processes use our actual business problems and concerns as working content. We want to know where things are going wrong, where there are rumours, tensions, and unspoken difficulties in a work situation. Decisions and action plans then emerge from the field of exploration of diverse reactions and opinions. The process is dynamic. It allows people to explore a large number of different

perspectives in order to sense the field of information. Typically, as the process is non-linear, greater amounts of information can be processed than in standard meeting procedures. Maximum participation leads to maximum motivation and commitment.

What does Clean Process offer at an INDIVIDUAL LEVEL?

In Coaching sessions using Clean Language or Clean Space or Emergent Knowledge:

- We learn to access our own resources, to identify our own patterns of thinking, including inhibitory loops and blocks, and to step back and reflect so that new patterns can be seen. We gain confidence in our ability to process seemingly chaotic situations, which contain their own hidden order.
- We learn to facilitate these processes - in ourselves and others - to reveal their self-structure without the imposition of old default models from the past. We learn to facilitate the emerging future rather than reproducing the past.
- We enlarge our thinking. Clean Learning goes beyond the conscious cognitive thinking of the sort we use for planning, monitoring, and evaluating in a rational mode. It invites us to discover the power of our right-brain, *metaphorical* thinking, which accesses deeper levels of intuition and creativity. Accessing this cognitive unconscious thinking takes us to the life-sustaining images and symbols that motivate and energise us.

What does Clean Process offer at a GROUP LEVEL?

- By participating in Clean Group Process we learn to position ourselves; to participate with the feelings, thoughts, and reactions that come naturally to us; to try out multi-perspectives; and to sense the polarities in the informational field.
- We also learn how Clean Facilitation serves the life processes of creativity and conflict. The invisible forces present in the group process are seen as polarities that can be named and transformed.

How else can Clean Process benefit Management Training?

By helping us make sense out of potential chaos

In today's complex world, business tasks demand enormous energy and initiative. And the pressures to perform are increasing. When we demand of everyone that they both execute and create, the simple strategy of following instructions is no longer enough. Existing guidelines and strategies need to be respected, but we also need to innovate and participate fully.

Stress and burnout are constant reminders of the difficulties we face. Each of us has to contribute to a shared task while coping with the constant updating required by real-time changes.

The capacity to process information and get high quality feedback on how the task is going requires managers to make sense out of complex, highly charged situations. We need new facilitation processes that can utilise powerful natural forces in our own minds: the ability to see patterns, to change perspectives, to tap into intuition and inner knowing: life processes that create both motivation and energy.

By increasing our ability to examine Mind Maps:

Peter Senge, in his work on 'The Learning Organisation' in the 90s, named the skill of challenging the 'Mind Map' that each person uses to make sense of their world as one of the core communication skills for managers. Asking questions that challenged assumptions and revealed the roots of people's beliefs and convictions was proposed as a vital communication tool.

Today, I would add to this the use of Metaphorical thinking to develop and reveal people's maps of the world. Through the use of Metaphor and Symbols, we reach a deeper level of the mind's informational fields - discovering, for example, the default programmes that we are holding onto from the past. Past experience is always useful in understanding what happened in the past, but the information will tend also to reproduce the past. When we let a metaphor express our out-of-date thinking, it is easier to let it transform, and to reveal through imagination the emerging future. It is interesting to note that Peter Senge expresses these ideas in his latest book 'Presence'.

We have discovered that Metaphor work facilitated by Clean Language gives a royal road to this emerging future: one that is accessible to anyone ready to listen to their own inner images and sensations.

By developing high-quality Feedback

The ability to give informed feedback depends on our ability to map our own reactions and to state them in a way that is free of outdated inhibitions. Managers increasingly deal with problems of information overload. Team motivation, matrix management, conflicts, and time-management press in in such a way that distinguishing information from noise becomes more difficult. Using Metaphorical thinking is a way to access the largely unconscious but powerful models which are at the root of conflicting views and actions. Teams who use metaphors to share information and vision increase the ease and precision of their feedback.

By facilitating Inner Space and Group Space so that self-organisation can emerge:

The ability to facilitate Inner Space in such a way that symbols and metaphors can emerge increases a manager's confidence and ability to make sense of otherwise chaotic situations. When an individual can handle their own inner processes, they contribute more to a group process which in turn is then able to face and use the energy of 'hot group conflict'. Individuals cannot self-organise if they are unconscious (unaware of their own symbolism) and a group cannot self-organise if it ignores the information and positions represented by each of its members.

What are the Presuppositions used for Clean Process?

Self-Organising Systems

- Human beings are self-organising organisms
- New levels of performance can be reached through increasing self-organising abilities in individuals and teams
- Information from different experts can be taken in but is only potent when 'self-organised'

Accessing Information Fields

- Creative energy comes from a hidden source below surface reality
- Below the conventional surface of our working reality is an informational field of symbols, metaphors, and emergent realities which is life generating and life sustaining
- Sustainable motivation and powerful vision emerge from this deeper informational field
- The findings of this unconscious field can be organised and clarified by deliberate conscious thinking, but they cannot be created by it
- Both the deeper mind and the deliberate thinking mind have different modes of access

Facilitation as a vital skill

- Training provides information on content and facilitation gives access to process skills
- Clean Learning uses the presenting reality of the participants as its content and concentrates on the process by which new information emerges and is re-organised
- A facilitator learns to be responsible for the whole as well as its diverse elements
- Successful conflict management depends on the use of facilitation skills. With facilitation, vital conflicting polarities emerge to support creativity and new order

What are the Sources for Learning with Clean Process?

1.Clean Language Clean Space Emergent Knowledge. Source David Grove.

Clean language uses a minimum of questions, usually 9-12, to encourage the maximum of information to be processed. The questions invite Metaphorical thinking and space for an individual to process the depth and complexity of their thinking without interference from the presuppositions of the questioner. This allows teams to share each other's perceptions as part of building shared symbols, visions, and objectives.

Clean Space uses the principles of 'small worlds' and uses a client's space to let different perspectives emerge and interact, leading to new insights and actions.

Emergent Knowledge is clearly presented in Philip Harland's book, 'The Power of Six'.

www.cleanlanguage.fr www.powersofsix.com www.wayfinderpress.co.uk

2. Symbolic Modelling. Source Penny Tompkins and James Lawley.

www.cleanlanguage.co.uk

Using Clean Language, this process allows the client's model of the world to become apparent so they can see their operating metaphors and their effects. Challenging assumptions is well-known to be a vital part of management communication, but finding the deep sources of these assumptions goes further and opens up possibilities for belief changes and new options for action.

3. Process Work. Source Dr Arnold Mindell and Maurice Brasher

www.processwork.org

Process Work offers a framework for group interaction which allows all elements of information (including feelings, intuition, and repressed emotions) to be expressed and to influence the moment to moment decision-making process. It stabilises the collective understanding of the presenting problem, thus creating shared vision and commitment. Under the guidance of facilitation, the legitimate existence within the same space of varied and opposing views stimulates creativity and allows new perceptual positions to be tried out. It also models facilitation skills for acquisition by group members.

CONCLUSION

Are we ready to accept that we can no longer give exclusive power over our lives and future to our reasoning, linear, left brains, but that we have to include and understand the balancing power of our right brain to create the patterns of newness that will emerge to guide us? If so, Clean Process can teach us new skills of navigation on extremely rough seas.

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Jennifer is a consultant, trainer, and coach based in Paris. Her career started with the British Council, teaching in Universities in Poland, Iraq, and India, and then moved to the Business world with 13 years in Management Education in IBM France. She formed her own company in 1986, giving some of the first NLP Trainings in France and developing a 12 year Training relationship with HP Grenoble and EM Lyon for Alcatel-Lucent. Jennifer introduced David Grove's work in 'Clean' into France in 2000 and has been developing training in Clean as her main speciality ever since.