

'Learning Exchange Market' Design Packet

SCHEDULE	PROCESS	PRINCIPLES
6:15 Check Bulletin Board for Announcements	1. Write Down Session Proposals	• Whoever comes is right. Whatever happens ... happens.
6:30 Mission Statement	2. Questions are as Appropriate as Answers	• Leave personal status outside. Bring ideas and knowledge inside.
6:40 Brief Introductions	3. Verbally Announce Your Session	• Be passionate about the topics. Take responsibility for creating things out of that passion.
6:50 How It Works	4. Post Session on Schedule Wall	• Law of Two Feet: If you aren't learning or contributing, go to a higher level of awareness or participation. Or move to another session.
7:00 The Exchange Market	5. Combine Proposals, Negotiate Times	• Stay focused on topic
7:30 1 st Period Sessions	6. Period A Sessions Begin, Take Notes	• One person talking at a time
8:00 2 nd Period Sessions	7. Integrate Notes into One Report	• Shift 'Yeah-But' responses to 'YES-AND'
8:30 Share Learning	8. Period B Sessions Begin, Keep a Log	• Listen empathetically, suspend judgment
9:00 End	9. Integrate Notes into One Report	• Encourage & build on the wild ideas of others.
	10. Note Sessions A and B may be Merged	
	11. Group Reporting of Sessions Begins	
	12. Bulletin Board To Post Ideas, Notices	
	13. Info Exchange meetings are bi-weekly.	
	14. Results Incorporated at Bi-weekly Strategy Meetings and Continued at Next Info Exchange Meeting	

Learning Exchange Market

The 'Open Space Technology' Concept

(From Co-Intelligence Website – Principles edited for simplicity)

In my experience open space is based on the belief that we humans are intelligent, creative, adaptive, meaning- and fun-seeking. It sets the context for such creatures to come together knowing they are going to treat each other well. When this happens there is no limit to what can unfold.

Alan Stewart

Open Space Technology was created in the mid-1980s by organizational consultant Harrison Owen when he discovered that people attending his conferences loved the coffee breaks better than the formal presentations and plenary sessions. Combining that insight with his experience of life in an African village, Owen created a totally new form of conferencing.

Open Space conferences have no keynote speakers, no pre-announced schedules of workshops, no panel discussions, no organizational booths. Instead, sitting in a large circle, participants learn in the first hour how they are going to create their own conference. Almost before they realize it, they become each other's teachers and leaders.

Anyone who wants to initiate a discussion or activity, writes it down on a large sheet of paper in big letters and then stands up and announces it to the group. After selecting one of the many pre-established times and places, they post their proposed workshop on a wall. When everyone who wants to has announced and posted their initial offerings, it is time for what Owen calls "the village marketplace": Participants mill around the wall, putting together their personal schedules for the remainder of the conference. The first meetings begin immediately.

Open Space is, as Owen likes to say, more highly organized than the best planning committee could possibly manage. It is also chaotic, productive and fun. No one is in control. A whirlwind of activity is guided from within by a handful of simple Open Space principles:

1. ***The most basic principle is that everyone who comes to an Open Space conference must be passionate about the topic and willing to take some responsibility for creating things out of that passion.***
2. ***Whoever comes are the right people.***
3. ***Whatever happens is the only thing that could have.***
4. ***Whenever it starts is the right time.***
5. ***When it is over it is over.***
6. ***The Law of Two Feet: "If you find yourself in a situation where you aren't learning or contributing, go somewhere else" (or move to another level of awareness and participation).***

*This law causes some participants to flit from activity to activity. Owen rejoices in such people, calling them bumblebees because they cross-pollinate all the workshops. He also celebrates participants who use *The Law of Two Feet* to go off and sit by themselves. He dubs them butterflies, because they create quiet centers of non-action for stillness, beauty, novelty or random conversations to be born.*

Open space conferences can be done in one day, but the most powerful go on for two or three days, or longer. Participants gather together briefly in the morning and the evening to share experiences and announce any new workshops they have concocted. The rest of the day is spent in intense conversation. Even meals are come-when-you-can affairs that go on for hours, filled with bustling [dialogue](#). After a few days of this, an intense spirit of community usually develops that is all the more remarkable considering that participants are all doing exactly what they want.

Open Space conferences are particularly effective when a large, complex operation needs to be thoroughly reconceptualized and reorganized -- when the task is just too big and complicated to be sorted out "from the top." On the assumption that such a system contains within it the seeds of everything that needs to happen with it, Open Space provides it with an opportunity to self-organize into its new configuration. For this to work, however, the system's leaders must let go of control so that true self-organization can take place.

Open Space Technology is also a delightful, useful tool for any group of people who are really interested in exploring something that they all care deeply about. I look forward to its broad use in organizing communities and exploring public issues.

Open Space is one of the simplest, most brilliant combinations of order and chaos that I have yet found. It has been applied in thousands of meetings around the world with between five and one thousand participants. It can be effectively used by virtually anybody. Owen has provided excellent instructions in his books, below.

Resources

H. H. Owen and Co.,
7808 River Falls Dr., Potomac, MD 20854,
(301) 469-9269, fax (301) 983-9314.

Print and video resources, training and consultation.

Books:

Open Space Technology: A User's Guide
Expanding Our Now: The Story of Open Space Technology
Harrison Owen, *The Millenium Organization*

Websites

Open Space Institute

<http://www.tmn.com/openspace/index.html>

Developing Multisector Collaboration

<http://ctb.lsi.ukans.edu/ctb/c18/c18s11.html%20>

The Co-Intelligence Institute

<http://www.co-intelligence.org/P-Openspace.html>

Learning Exchange Market

Session Posting Form

(complete and post into open time-slot on schedule wall)

Session

Theme _____

(Use big, bold, clear lettering)

Brief _____

Description

Author _____

Phone/Email _____

Sign-Ups

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Learning Exchange Market

Session Groups Reporting Form

(ONE Report Form Per Session Group)

Session Name: _____ Date: _____

Session Participants

(print clearly)

Phone/Emails

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Log 3 Key Items That Summarize Your Session (Use Short Descriptive Phrases)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Commitment To Action: What Is Your Next Step? (if any)

Learning Exchange Market Bulletin Board

INCLUDE NAME PHONE EMAIL WITH POSTINGS

POST

Announcements, Wild Ideas, Misfit Concepts, and Interesting Notices

HERE

Learning Exchange Market

Announcements

**INCLUDE YOUR
NAME, PHONE, EMAIL
WITH POSTINGS**

Summaries From Learning Exchange Meetings

Learning Exchange Market

Labels for Information Wall and Matching Session Locations

Session 1	Session 1
Session 2	Session 2
Session 3	Session 3

Learning Exchange Market

Labels for Information Wall and Matching Session Locations

Session

4

Session

4

Session

5

Session

5

Session

6

Session

6

Learning Exchange Market

Labels for the Information Wall Periods

1st

Period

2nd

Period

Learning Exchange Market

Wall Schedule: Typical Layout

	Time Slots ↙	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5	Previous Meeting Sessions ↓
1st Period	START TIME END TIME (30 Min)		Post Authored Sessions In These Boxes				Continue Previous Sessions
Break							
2nd Period	START TIME END TIME (30 Min)			(Negotiate Times) (Combine Proposals)			By Placing Them Into Time Slots