

## **Welcome to the new Virtual ToP DesignPatterns Team.**

We need to meet soon and develop an action plan for our work. We are expected to share our plan with the rest of the Virtual ToP Facilitation Team at a virtual meeting in the first week of March. We will use “TimeBridge” to determine the best time for us to meet. I’ll send that message this week. We anticipate meeting in the last week of February.

This message simply says where we are at the moment and what we think are the immediate next steps.

Our **focus** has been on the methods and applications covered in the ToP Facilitator Competencies we are using as the foundation of our facilitator certification process.

- The ToP Consensus Workshop Method
- The ToP Action Planning Method
- The ToP Wall of Wonder Workshop
- The ToP Strategic Planning Method

We decided to bracket the Focused Conversation Method for the moment, because it does not exactly work with the DesignPattern idea and we don’t immediately know how to approach it as a DesignPattern. The best thought so far is that we may be able to identify several types of conversations and the kinds of questions most appropriate to each. This method may need it’s own DesignPattern Template.

**Our task** is something like this - using the broadest brushstrokes, .

1. We **document the approaches** to each of these methodologies as they are being used by ToP facilitators.
2. We **identify the specific virtual functions** needed to facilitate these DesignPatterns or processes. We have not begun this in any kind of systematic way.
3. We **identify or develop the virtual tools** that will provide these functions; so ToP facilitators can use appropriate virtual technology. We have experimented with several virtual tools and we have a great “mindmap” from Danny that identifies a wide range of virtual technology that can be used. We will need to relate the tools to the necessary functions. We will likely need to describe each tool, identify its strengths and weaknesses and make some recommendations for use in the ToP facilitation context. As a group, we have done little thinking in this area.

Doug Druckenmiller and Danny Mittleman have begun work on a website that will provide us with a database for these DesignPatterns and a kind of “virtual ToP design lab.” It will be a site that ToP facilitators can go to search for DesignPatterns to use in their practice.

## **Documenting the DesignPatterns – where we are now**

There are several variations of each of these DesignPatterns in current use. This approach acknowledges that there are several variations of these process in use. They have each been developed in specific situations and our task is to make them all available and determine ways they can be used in the virtual world. It sidesteps all of the arguments related to finding the one way or making judgments about the best way. The best way is the way that an individual facilitator will use when they are called upon to facilitate an event. We need ways that each ToP facilitator can work in the virtual world in the way they choose for the given situation.

To document these Design Patterns, we are using a format that I distilled from the work on Collaboration Engineering done by Bob Briggs, Danny Mittleman and Doug Drukenmiller along with their colleagues. We have several background documents that run through this process.

We begin with the procedures we use when we actually facilitate these processes. What we do in training is a totally different matter. We want to document what people actually do when they facilitate these processes in their clearest form.

### **> Our Current Situation**

Here's a slightly annotated list of what I currently have. They are all posted in our Huddle workspace.

#### *The ToP Consensus Workshop Method*

- Setting the Context – done by Jerry Mings, an ICA Associates facilitator and trainer
- 60 Ideas – Brainstorming for a ToP workshop – done by Wayne Nelson
- Brainstorming - Brainstorming for a ToP workshop – done by Jo Nelson – very close to “60 Ideas”
- Organizing Data – done by John Epps
- Clustering – done by Jo Nelson and Eunice Shankland
- Naming – done by John Epps
- Naming – the basic steps and key assumptions – done by Sheila Legeros following the Toronto meeting June 08
- Resolve – the basic steps and key assumptions – done by Sheila Legeros following the Toronto meeting June 08

#### *The ToP Action Planning Method*

We have a set of DesignPatterns for Action Planning as done by ICA Associates.

### *The ToP Wall of Wonder Workshop*

We have a reflection on this process as done virtually by Sheila Legeros and Eunice Shankland. The DesignPatterns involved in this process have not been documented in this way.

### *The ToP Strategic Planning Method*

There is some initial work on this as a “DesignApplication.” In Jon Jenkins’ work on the IAF Methods Database, he distinguished complex processes that are made up of many individual DesignPatterns as “applications” as they are at a different level than the DesignPatterns themselves.

> **What we need** – this is a start for the list.

#### The ToP Consensus Workshop Method

- We need to see if there are any substantial variations of the context, brainstorming and clustering steps.
- We need to document ICA Associates’ approach to the naming step.
- We need to document the resolve step.

#### The ToP Action Planning Method

- We need to document other approaches that are in current use. There are several variations . We may need to determine what is in current use when ToP facilitators move to the implementation stage.

### The ToP Wall of Wonder Workshop

This needs to be done. This workshop is used in a couple different ways, but I believe our focus is in the way it would be used at the beginning of a complex strategy planning process. It is also used as a way to reflect on project implementation. I have those procedures, but I think that usage is a “phase 2” thing.

### The ToP Strategic Planning Method

I have worked on this and have come up with an “Application Level” Design Pattern template. That template needs to me looked at and, no doubt, refined. Since this method involves a series of modifications of the ToP Consensus Workshop, it is probably best that we work on it following our work on the other DesignPatterns; so we can make the appropriate references.