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**TTN Certification Task Team  
Planning Session  
January 7, 2010  
Carondelet Retreat Center  
St. Paul MN**

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***What can we do to improve the  
CTF certification program & process?***

**Participants:**

Nadine Bell	Dennis Jennings
Jane Stallman	Barbara McKay
Judy Weddle	Sunny Walker
Lynda Lieberman Baker	Marilyn Oyler
Jim Wiegler	Linda Alton

**Facilitators:**

Ester Mae Cox  
Mary Flanagan

## **Hopes & Expectations**

- Get refreshed regarding assessor competencies
- Get a larger body of people asking questions & committed to using consistent guidelines
- Create an “us” stance
- Explore what is enough
- How to build community among CTFs
- How do we hold ourselves to standards in assessment – our ability to assess – learnings
- Assessment accountability with different styles of assessors
- Distinctions between IAF & CTF
- Certification applications – level of experience – MToP, beyond – real clients
- Clarify CTF journey – mentor process
- Larger voice for client (people who use the service) in certification process
- Get a feel for candidate pool – what are they hoping for? Market.
- Increased understanding of what’s behind the standards
- Examine the process which excludes observation by assessor – too short a time for review of portfolio

## **Ground Rules**

- Take frequent breaks
- Before speaking, check to see if others have spoken
- Speak up
- Cell phones on vibrate
- Balance taking a long time to say what we have to say – GO DEEP
- Wait for the MIC
- Be aware of the Methods
- Share of ourselves
- Acknowledge when a point is received
- Monitor sidebar conversations
- Be patient with who we are

# Strategic Choices<sup>1</sup> for ToP Certification

## Customer Focus

*Who will we serve?*

TFM serious participants

TTN & other ToP Trainers

People who want to be accredited

Organizations who value participation

Emerging leaders from non-dominant groups

ICA & other partners



## The Winning Proposition

*What will we do differently or better than anyone else?*

We strengthen, enhance and sustain quality practice of ToP facilitation methods by conferring Certified ToP Facilitator status (CTF) to candidates following a highly individualized and supportive process which results in candidates' demonstration of mastery of general facilitation skills & ToP methods.



## Strategic Priorities

*What are those few things that will make the biggest difference?*

- ▶ Increase the number of facilitators in the CTF pipeline.
- ▶ Increase excitement about CTF
- ▶ Refine CTF processes & procedures.



<sup>1</sup> Pietersen, Willie, Reinventing Strategy: Using Strategic Learning to Create & Sustain Breakthrough Performance, New York, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2002, P. 62. (adapted from)

# Customer Focus

## *Who will we serve?*

<b>TFM serious participants</b>	<b>TTN &amp; other ToP Trainers</b>	<b>People who want to be accredited</b>	<b>Organizations who value participation</b>	<b>Emerging leaders from non-dominant groups</b>	<b>ICA &amp; other partners</b>
<p>“Believers” who value the “stamp” approval Certification</p> <p>“Passionate” TFM grads</p>	<p>Users; mentor-qualifications; apprentice; trainers Current ToP/YFL trainers</p> <p>ToP Trainer Network</p>	<p>Experienced facilitators desiring ToP in tool kit</p>	<p>Organizations wanting a qualified facilitator pool Marketability, competitive advantage</p> <p>In house leaders already facilitating or using facilitators</p> <p>Org/groups looking to foster higher levels of participation</p> <p>Orgs committed to participation &amp; collaboration</p>	<p>Young immigrant leaders (eg. From NHCI) (access to multiple cultures)</p>	

## *What is their hierarchy of needs?*

<p>Growth &amp; deeper capacity w/ ToP</p> <p>Community</p> <p>More experience &amp; groundedness</p>	<p>Access to more customers</p> <p>Co-facilitators people to work with – succession plan</p> <p>New way to offer growth opportunities to grads</p>	<p>Marketability, competitive advantage</p> <p>Validation of competence (credibility, a credential)</p>	<p>Results: ROI-P</p> <p>Model/ image/ roadmap to build internal capacity</p> <p>Possibility of a customized process/ program</p>	<p>Ongoing peer/ mentor support in a community they can identify with</p> <p>Courage &amp; confidence to lead in a participatory way</p> <p>Credibility in organizations/ culture &amp; larger society</p>	<p>ICA: stimulant energy to commit to possibilities</p> <p>Great product CTF</p> <p>Channel to market methods</p>
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# Winning Proposition:

*What will we do differently or better than anyone else?*

***We strengthen, enhance and sustain quality practice of ToP facilitation methods by conferring Certified ToP Facilitator status (CTF) to candidates following a highly individualized and supportive process which results in candidates' demonstration of mastery of general facilitation skills and ToP methods.***

## **Ideas leading to the development of the winning proposition:**

- Donate time – generous volunteer commitments
- Explore the ROI like never before
- Customize & tailor what we're doing for needs
- Work with individual to craft journey. *We're partner in journey of mastery.*
- We provide the how
- Provide learning community
- Ensure quality through personal attention
- We believe in the methods
- Fledgling capacity for virtual participation
- Pull in our network of diverse expertise to meet needs
- Provide community of practice *A bazillion years of wisdom*
- Focus on life methods - & have materials that bridge to that end
- Care about excellence
- Live our values: honor, support, respect WE TRY!
- Spirit stance

# Assessor Handbook Review

<p><b>General Standards</b></p>	<p><b>What's in Place?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certification guide on website, freely available</li> <li>• Application Process</li> <li>• Competencies (in form of checklist)</li> <li>• Program application</li> <li>• Fee outlined plus non-refundable \$100 fee</li> </ul> <p><b>What's working Well?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guide</li> <li>• Certification process – people using it and coming up with good products</li> <li>• Competencies holding up + include international (e.g. IAF consistency)</li> <li>• Website now has Guide link visible</li> </ul> <p><b>Not so well?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pp1-8 – conflicting/confusing – 3 different people's versions (e.g. have to do 2 full strategic plans &amp; agendas (p. 13/ p.7 contradicting competency 4.3)</li> <li>• Evidence of understanding – no clear way to document this</li> <li>• Candidate access to certification information not all on website.</li> <li>• P.4 first paragraphs are first 18 months/ last 3 are last phrase</li> <li>• CTF explained in 2 disconnected places on website</li> <li>• Suggested ADD to Guide – a mentor must sign off on portfolio complete</li> </ul> <p><b>Sticky Point/Issues?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• P 4 – should not be a co-facilitator who is not ToP qualified – potential income for “mentor” – co-facilitator</li> <li>• No clear rules/guidelines on how we measure</li> <li>• Missing: coherent, imaginal or flow chart of the ToP certification journey so people can “imagine” how it will look</li> </ul>
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- “Any additional expenses incurred for on-site observation” OK if in MToP – but mentor not paid otherwise
- Our curriculum focuses on 4 – MToP could expand – Training gap > need also 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 competencies capacity > Growth > \$\$
- Balance Value of Portfolio – Candidate – Client – ToP – Shared Confidential
- Consistency of planning facilitation event, reflection worksheet, rational/objective, rational aim
- Assessor training – use portfolios to market self & ToP
- Sign off permission to use
- Make one copy of whole portfolio for “org”
- No clear rules/guidelines on how we measure

**What needs fixin?**

- Pass/Defer Criteria
- Page 3-8...confusing – inconsistent – observer qualifications – page 13 (TSP) – edit the details
- Need strong timeline for process deadlines
- Process flow chart
- Need adequate time to review portfolios
- Assessor script needs to include chance for assessors to confer

**Learnings:**

- A lot of pressure to grant CTF – related to already planned celebration
- Too much work for \$\$\$ - Need to streamline

**Need Recommendations:**

- Electronic portfolios and surveys
- Reconsider demonstration piece for assessment (maybe video)
- Have all assessor work done onsite?
- Encourage candidate to bring copy

**Work Ahead:**

- Page 8 – Get Candidate to write evidence of.....
- Observation vs. Interview

<p><b>Assessment Interview Process</b></p>	<p><b>What's in place?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Task Guide</li> <li>• Assessment Interview Guide (script)</li> <li>• Interview worksheet</li> <li>• Competencies Checklist</li> </ul> <p><b>What's working well?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flow of the interview – of Assessors Guide</li> <li>• Shared Transparent Competency Checklist – Give Big Picture with details</li> <li>• Interview Worksheet Gives place to record and prepare</li> </ul> <p><b>Not so well?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ratings per competency – 3 levels of detail – competency, subgroup, example</li> <li>• Inconsistency of language (capacity vs. competency)</li> <li>• Client/mentor may use language differently also</li> <li>• On Assessor's Certification interview worksheet change "capacity to competence"</li> <li>• On Task Page Add in <u>Review Portfolio</u> (not mentioned)</li> <li>• No time for assessors to confer throughout the process as to "rating" of candidate</li> <li>• What does candidate "get" before interview to understand what will happen in interview?</li> <li>• When do assessors talk – share – make decisions?</li> <li>• How to balance/edit materials for consistency?</li> </ul> <p><b>Sticky points/issues?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to balance style   audience?</li> <li>• Rubric – Basic level? &gt; "smokin"</li> <li>• Pressure on assessors to pass candidate</li> <li>• No model in assessment interview – for assessor to review portfolio + surveys</li> <li>• If /How does candidate get written feedback?</li> <li>• Clarity on record to go to ICA – No place for recommendations</li> <li>• What are standards to evaluate by (Guide to make decisions)</li> <li>• Add assessor "conferencing time" to script</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Client/Mentor Surveys</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>What's in Place?</b></li> <li>• Survey Monkey version</li> <li>• Paper available if required</li> <li>• Bring together data</li> <li>• Both client and co-facilitator version</li>   <li>• <b>What's Working Well?</b></li> <li>• Can provide good information</li> <li>• Place for more than a rating (numerical)</li> <li>• Offers both options (numerical/anecdotal)</li> <li>• Both client and mentors</li> <li>• Anonymity to candidate</li> <li>• Descriptive Survey – Areas helpful</li> <li>• Transparent/anonymous</li>   <li>• <b>Not so well?</b></li> <li>• No feedback to participant)</li> <li>• Handbook needs Survey Monkey documents/templates – not hard copies</li> <li>• Leave it last minute (could be conference call with assessors)</li> <li>• How to get mentor piece paid for/accessed</li> <li>• Too many words – “bewildering” to our poor clients (e.g. Historical scan – Did they use 3 levels? Did they name chapters? Reflection?)</li> <li>• What does the rating reflect (inside the competency)</li> <li>• Missing R level everywhere</li>   <li>• <b>Sticky Points/Issues?</b></li> <li>• Documents we are looking at – no monkey info</li> <li>• On hard copy – Phoenix address needs updating</li> <li>• Get to assessors in advance</li> <li>• Model for distribution to assessors of the surveys prior to assessment</li> <li>• How get whole picture (not just “good” surveys)</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to get more informative feedback from client – “no response” not helpful</li> <li>• What about the underlying theories – how does that come into the process?</li> <li>• Survey ought to streamline the job</li> <li>• Mentor observer needs a worksheet for the observation</li> </ul> <p><b>Learnings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candidate needs report of all surveys</li> </ul> <p><b>Needs Fixin’:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candidate needs assessor written feedback</li> </ul>
<p><b>Infrastructure Issues</b></p>	<p><b>What’s in place?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Components of business plan</li> <li>• Certification Task Team &amp; Coordinator not in handbook</li> <li>• Direct costs/indirect costs</li> </ul> <p><b>What’s working well?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 regional active regions – Bay Area, MNTOP, Partners in Participation</li> <li>• Designated section on website for Certification ToP’ers /On Canada also</li> <li>• MToP &gt;&gt;&gt;&gt; Relationships with Mentors/Trainers</li> </ul> <p><b>Not so well?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lower number of candidates than hoped for</li> <li>• Assessor fee levels, economics needs more volume</li> <li>• Little response from trainers to become Certified ToP’ers</li> <li>• Documenting source of applicants</li> <li>• Other than brochure/relationships – no marketing nationally to target organizations</li> <li>• Tracking of ROI for certification</li> <li>• Work with CToP’ers Post Certification</li> </ul> <p><b>Sticky Points/Issues?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How streamline the assessor process?</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How launch income stream for mentors</li> <li>• How launch income stream for ICA/TTN?</li> <li>• What constitutes a pass/defer/fail?</li> <li>• Every assessment event must be self-supporting</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Roles &amp; Responsibilities</b></p>	<p><b>What's in place?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Description of 3 roles</li> <li>• Sample press release</li> <li>• Assumption that trainers will do recruitment yet don't have support to do (not so well?)</li> <li>• Region (local site) 20% of assessment revenue</li> <li>• Coordinator 10% of assessment revenue</li> <li>• ICA 10% of assessment revenue</li> </ul> <p><b>What's working well?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certification cohort with mentor support</li> <li>• Get facilitation gigs for practice</li> <li>• Experienced trainers are encouraging candidate</li> <li>• Coordinator role is working</li> </ul> <p><b>Not so well?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentors are donating a lot of their time</li> <li>• Recruitment of new candidates</li> <li>• ICA tracking of finances &amp; communicating</li> <li>• Need column on role of assessors + mentor</li> </ul> <p><b>Sticky points/issues?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What's in it for trainer to support a new candidate it is not obvious</li> <li>• No expectation on trainers to promote it or do it</li> <li>• How to make MToP regionally available?</li> <li>• Need to delineate roles for all trainers, for all CTF's, all Registrars in certification program</li> <li>• Role: Observer Mentor Role delineate</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Needs Fixin’:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role of Observer</li> <li>• Timing of Observation</li> </ul>
<p><b>Assessor Qualification Standards Guidelines Procedures</b></p>	<p><b>What’s in place?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current list of 8 assessors (4 also IAF Assessors)</li> <li>• 4 Potential ready assessors</li> <li>• Being a Participant Observer of CTF Current Process</li> <li>• First Draft Assessor’s Handbook</li> </ul> <p><b>What’s working well?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 28 CTF’s in US/ 31 in other countries</li> <li>• Dedicated pool of assessors</li> <li>• Cut cycle time to “produce” competent ToP facilitators from 30 to 3 years!</li> <li>• Meetings September 2005, January 2006, July 2008, January 2010</li> <li>• Assessors work well together accustomed to working in teams</li> <li>• IAF has experience we may draw from</li> <li>• CTF Handbook very helpful</li> </ul> <p><b>Not so well?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very few trained MToP Instructors (N=6 – all “old”)</li> <li>• No structured “community of practice”</li> <li>• Assessor guidelines, processes limited</li> <li>• Limited pool of assessors to draw from to do assessments – People can’t assess those they worked with and/or trained</li> <li>• Limited pool from which to develop assessors</li> <li>• Lack of cultural &amp; other diversity amongst assessors – all current assessors near retirement</li> </ul> <p><b>Sticky Points/Issues?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don’t have assessor competencies</li> <li>• Procedures to qualify assessors is needed</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No curriculum to train assessors</li> <li>• Tremendous cost to assessors – time/money, etc.</li> </ul> <p><b>Needs Fixin':</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessor compet &amp; guidelines &amp; trainings</li> <li>• Assessors need time to confer</li> </ul>

### Overall Learnings

- We've done a lot
- Folks have invested a lot + created coherent program
- None of these have addresses pass/defer
- We've tested value of certification and passed! For trainers and others
- Why aren't other trainers enticed – perhaps haven't heard benefits from CTF's
- Economic model is dependent on the good will of people – not viable without volunteer
- ICA might go for funding for capacity building
- We're an aging group of assessors
- We need to go after young – to pass on this work for future
- We need serious affirmative action
- Process of succession planning for ToP is bound up in CTF
- Might we go after organizations/associations to mandate/require CTF
- Are we wrestling with conflicting frames of reference?

# Decisions Made to Standardize Assessments

1. **CTF assessments result in PASS, or DEFER.** *This is based on value that CTF journey is a partnership to mastery of ToP Facilitation Methods*
  - a. **Insufficient evidence of competency demonstration is rationale for deferment.**
2. **Portfolio requirements: must include all documentation listed on pages 6 & 7 of Certification Guide.**
  - a. **Candidate must provide evidence of LEADING each of the pieces of a TSP.**  
*(Future consideration of written response to requirements listed on page 8 will be determined. Evidence of capacity to reflect must be in portfolio – number of reflection sheets required will be determined in future.)*
3. **5 Client surveys and 2 observation surveys are required prior to assessment.** After first deadline is missed by the referral, Certification Coordinator sends reminder to the candidate and to the referral. It is ultimately the responsibility of the candidate to have the surveys in place prior to assessment.
4. **Certification fee must be paid in full prior to assessment interview.**
5. **Quality Assurance is made of three components: Portfolio, Survey Responses, & Assessment Interview.** Assessors use all three tools to make their determination of the demonstration of competency. Using the *Assessor's Certification Assessment Interview Worksheet*, assessors score the first 12 categories listed (through competency 7). Prior to final decision, assessors review their ratings and discuss any discrepancies. They agree upon a single rating for each category. The average of all scores must be  $\geq 4$ , with no single agreed upon score less than 3.
6. **If a candidate is deferred, assessors will put in writing the competency/ies that must be demonstrated in order to pass.**
7. Observers in assessment interviews: **Candidates are expected to complete the interview without their mentor present.** In special cases (second language, cultural expectations, etc), mentors may be present.
8. **Each assessment interview will conclude with verbal feedback from assessors** including 5 strengths & 2-3 growth recommendations.

# Assessor reflections following assessment interviews:

- ▶ Preparing for assessment interviews proved challenging:
  - Not enough time for thorough review of portfolio
  - Written materials including: A Guide to Creating your Portfolio, ToP Facilitator Competencies Checklist, and the ICA Facilitator Assessment: Checklist & Portfolio Table of Contents, are not well aligned, & are contradictory in places. Confusing.
  - Need to simplify materials. Clarify. Streamline.
- ▶ Characteristics of an effective assessor:
  - A high degree of discipline & integrity
  - Depth knowledge of methods & experience & depth
  - Be able to analyze: ability to know when you have sufficient evidence of competence
  - Ability to work effectively with co-assessor
  - Ability to ask good questions -- to surface evidence you are hoping to see
  - Genuine curiosity - & ability to let it show. You've got to love what you do
  - Skill at facilitating that conversation
  - Ability to listen with heart level
  - Capacity to keep the candidate comfortable & calm enough to answer the questions & use his/her resources to reveal competency