

TOP TTN Virtual Team Interview Questions

Prepared 9/09

1. HOW DO YOU ELICIT AND SUSTAIN PRODUCTIVE ENGAGEMENT IN A VIRTUAL MEETING?

Dana Bowler

- First set up to set the container by planning it. In a virtual meeting you can't get people standing up, see their eyes so you need to prepare processes to include sets of engaging activities, or check in every 3-5 minutes.
- Check in's – check for agreement using green check's or red x's so you can poll audiences quickly – determine “who agrees with this statement?” etc.
- Verbal check in's - ask what do you think about that and use the participant panel to your advantage – to know who is talking – list of participants tells you who is talking and contributing.
- To obtain order you have to be more formalized you can't just ask a virtual group how does everyone feel about that. Everyone is good – you get silence, due to the fear of speaking over each other.
- Set the norms if you want to talk raise your hands and I'll call on you. To find out from the whole audience use the check marks.
- What else sustains the energy – annotation – if I'm having a discussion about instructional design I structure the meeting with a PPT slide that is mostly blank that I can get participation from everyone. Say 9 participants have the PPT with 9 open slots build a target questions and they claim their space go in fill in the answer for them this is in WebEx).
- Why is this important to you? Use a blank ppt straight line on left with slots they fill in at the same time, gets robust responses in a short amt. of time. Can take out some of the points and dig deeper.
- Go for visual engagement then verbal engagement (gives you the depth).
- Maintaining focus or not paying attention – reading chats etc., it is OK if it's about the topic can create some depth and interaction – if off topic and out of scope can say this is out of scope bring back or turn off chat. Set expectations upfront.
- Allowing private chats allows participants to have more control and depends on your facilitation style.
Multitasking may not be fully controllable don't think you can stop all of it – again a control and style issue.
- To check for understanding can do a poll or other check in – preferably individually or in a chat – I want you to give me feedback and send it to me personally so they're not picking up what someone else says.
- Brainstorming – create your answer in chat box but do not hit send until I tell you so they aren't influence by each other too much.
- What do you do with the technology challenged – teach how to use the tools in the meeting. Know what tools you are going to use in advance and have people practice the tools in the first few minutes – can have directions on PPT slides. Helps you see who cannot do it - those who cannot find what you are referring to you can use your pointer to show where the tools are you are using. Level the playing field in the first 3 minutes of the meeting.

LaDonna Coy

- Much like face to face, but using different tools. First create a solid process. How do I want it to flow? Then make another pass – Ken Homer – collaboration series in CA..Getting them into the container – screen, ears, fingers (and you have no control over who walks in the door, or phone ringing, etc.) People have a button to push to step away to take care of their own needs. Apply everything we've learned about facilitation

we transfer to the virtual environment. You first need a good process and can do the same things, just doing it differently.

- Inviting people to participate and being very open and supportive, be a good host.
- What to do about clear multitasking...perhaps they are using mute and doing other things? It depends on the platform – if based for presentation like GoToMeetings or Webex, it's harder. A platform that has facilitation tools makes it a lot easier. People will absolutely do other things and get caught at it...will have to confess. Laugh about it and move on. People wise up over time. Just repeat the question, as you now have their engagement.
- When people ask, can you hear me? (use applause) Or check in – smiley face if okay, confused face if need to slow down, thumbs down if need to stop and deal with what's going on.
- EM: An additional moderator answering chat questions helped in something I was in recently. Is that distracting or frustrating? LDC: Yes. It is for some people. Better to do everything in twos. Otherwise you are totally tapped out trying to watch everything on the screen at one time.
- EM: if presenter looks at the questions and stops and reflects, it's hard for the group to stay engaged. LDC: When being the moderator, can send questions to presenter to pay attention to in a different color to make it easy for the presenter

Doug Druckenmiller

- My most frequent use of virtual facilitation is in teaching a course. I have teams of students (mostly dyads) doing projects to analyze a company and identify its challenges. They're in different locations. We meet f2f 3-4 times, and this really helps groups to jell. When that's impossible, I do 1X1 on Skype.
- Team meetings are usually done in Skype Chat or Instant Messaging which has the advantage of keeping a record. Documentation and history is really helpful. I've used it with a trans-Atlantic team that's been meeting weekly for 2 years, and there are 170 pages of documentation available. It's an excellent record.
- Visual displays of ideas with a modeling tool are useful -- it provides people something to look at while we discuss.

Joan Eisenstodt

- Virtual training and facilitation is in its infancy
- The things we do to with Face-to-face training and facilitation also apply to the virtual environment such as soliciting input ahead of time; use of old fashion forms or setting up a chat area.
- Elluminate has that functionality; e.g. leaving messages on the wall
- Twitter chat gives you a sense of the group; find out who is and who is not comfortable with the issues beforehand; during the training or facilitation, it helps sustain productive engagement.
- Phone interviews
- Second Life provides us with the ability to ask questions as in F2F. Facilitator can have back and forth interaction with the participants
- Toys - send toys such as modeling clay, silly putty (pliable materials) ahead of time to the participants. This will give them something to do and provide an alternative to multitasking which is an issue with virtual interventions.
- Emoticons are helpful to get people's reactions

Mike Katagiri

- I'm still experimenting a bit but sometimes start with an asynchronous discussion and do that before a virtual or f2f meeting.

- Can cut down f2f meeting time by doing this. Some people are reflective and like the discussion forum prior to meeting. Some hate it - blend so it accommodates all learning styles.

Jerry Mings

- All of my work is done through word of mouth and repeat business. I tend to sustain my clients over a two to three year period.
- The focus of my work is the most senior person in an organization along with the Board Chair. I maintain relationships with leadership in health related organizations on an ongoing basis. Currently, my best method of keeping in touch with key people is through my Blackberry. I tend to use PIN messages or short e-mail blasts to obtain work and support the relationships. The focus is understanding and anticipating the future work requirements of senior people in organization and then positioning the practice to respond to the needs.

Anne Sturdvant

- Are you thinking of how to do ToP training virtually? Yes. My ideal situation is to have both people on the phone and on something like Webex. I have no clue if that's possible for you. That is like the Cadillac of virtual work. They are not very good from a facilitation point of view. That isn't because the tools are bad, it's because people don't know how to use them -- they don't know how to translate them into a facilitator world. Most of those Webex-like tools have white boards, question areas, polling areas. A few years ago I was doing a project with American Express with 25 people around the world who were local extensions of me (a change coach). We would have a 90 minute call with training. I would do an icebreaker with the whiteboard capacity of Webex. I asked participants to draw a picture of what kind of day they had or what kind of mood they were in right at the moment. It was incredible. This was a bunch of techy guys and they didn't think I was nuts. They were drawing pictures of their day right there on the white board. Then we proceeded to do things like a change project that impacted employees worldwide. They were to keep in touch with their supervisors worldwide. We brainstormed employee issues. I kept notes on the whiteboard and used it like a flip chart -- only I typed it. They were easily talking about what they were seeing. We turned it into an action plan and to do's and the whole thing. If you can manage it, it gives you the capability to really move into a virtual kind of situation with very few changes.
- Yes, you can't see their non-verbals. I've learned to start asking them, "what's going on in your face". "It's quiet right now, tell me what's happening." In the beginning I started sweating bullets, but I got so that I trusted when they would tell me when they had reactions that would be helpful for the group to know.
- Is there anything in terms of timing or pacing that's different in virtual meetings vs. face to face? One of the things is that people will try to multi-task. In some cases you can't control that. In other cases I outline up front that if it doesn't demand their attention then something is wrong with what we're doing and they need to say so, and we need to pause and figure that out. When you're in a learning mode multi-tasking is not going to work. I don't think people can last more than 90 minutes in terms of an attention span. When people sit on the phone for 3 hours or a whole day, it's a total waste of people's time. It's about being aware of whether people are checked-in or out. You can't see when they're restless. You have to ask them. It has to be a ground rule that they tell you when their brain is worn out or they are getting distracted. The pacing is about keeping people's attention when there is limited sensory perception available. The pace is somewhat faster. I think you need to be more directive as a facilitative in some situations. I'm not the kind of in person facilitator who will say, "what do you think Susan?" because it's not my responsibility to pick on Susan. But, I might tend to do that,

or use a round robin with a particular order in virtual settings. I am more apt when there is a decision point to do that.

Nancy White

- How do you do that offline? We can build off the principles we use to “see each other” and create energy in the room in a face-to-face setting. If I am trying to keep a group moving, I am going to add some sort of synchronous element to it -- a web conference, a phone call, a video conference, whatever, because synchronous focuses our attention at the same time. Then I’m going to say, “Go back to that slide where you wrote your name on a chair. Take your hands off the keyboard. Look at that circle. You can add people’s pictures. Imagine we’re sitting together on the couch and we’ve got a nice cup of coffee or tea. We have some chocolate biscuits, and we’re looking across the room at each other.” I’ve triggered on that thing that human beings have used for aeons of looking at each other. I’ve called up my imagination to augment our conversation. By asking people to remember that you’re tapping into a very deeply understood experience of sitting in a circle, listening and talking. So, it gives people a signal to listen in the same way we listen when sitting in a room together. These are reminders or cues.
- Years ago before long-distance phone calls were affordable and we just did chat, and one person said, “I’m overwhelmed”. So we all stopped what we were doing, we opened a separate window in the browser and called up a site that had a beautiful piece of harp music on it, and we asked everybody just to listen to that for a minute. And all the people who were crunched over their keyboards sat up and breathed more deeply, and became more coherent in the conversation. We were more spacious in giving each other a chance to type. We were slowing down. We used music designed for hospice to change our experience.
- Not only visual does it -- sometimes it’s just a different auditory experience with an invitation to do it. Some of my friends, like Peggy Holman begins by taking a moment of silence before starting a phone call. Sometimes that’s a bit extreme, but it does cause me to slow down.
- As the group gets to know each other, what cues remind us that we’re here for something with each other, not multi-tasking and giving partial attention. So, synchronous stuff and processes to get people together.
- The second one is agreements. If you’re working asynchronously, we have an agreement that we’ll all check it daily and put our comments in by Friday at noon. It’s making things that we could do with nonverbals in a room explicit.

2. HOW DO YOU DESIGN A VIRTUAL MEETING?

Dana Bowler

- Structure and repetition – structure everything informal – including icebreakers, etc. not much flexibility plan everything.
- Have a visual report on PPT for each breakout session or each agenda topic
- Every activity whether content or activity have a same slide look for content same slide I look for an activity – this helps shorten the learning curve.
- Give a cadence and structure so they get accustomed to it.
- The Agenda they may see four time – four bullets – first bullet colored in blue, second bullet in blue else in black – gives visual clue to where we are at in meeting.
- Time of preparation 8 hours for every 1 hour is best practices, actual 4-6 if you’ve done it before – can be shorter time to develop.

LaDonna Coy

- To think about designing, think about a puppy or dog who goes around and around before lying down – same with virtual design. Start with the intents. Think about the

group, their technical skills, visuals you may want to use, comfort with technology, something to do before session or after the session. Then start to lay it out – can mindmap it out. Transfer to little sticky notes on a big sheet – begin to sequence them, making notes about visuals that will help.

- Then take it to PowerPoint, building the visuals and thinking about the activities. Then another pass to be sure to add more interaction. Write up a script, especially the opening and closing – maybe not every word, but to have clarity about what I’m doing at every point.
- Then practice it in the virtual classroom, usually twice, checking how it feels in the body, then make adjustments as needed. Use it like a story board – what’s the visual on the screen, what’s my part in this, and what’s the interaction. So design first, then visuals, and then come back to several times on the interaction. usually takes three good long passes to get it down. The visuals trump all other senses.

Doug Druckenmiller

- It's like any meeting: You first identify your rational aim and your existential aim.
- The issue is which tool supports which aspects of the meeting. For example some tools support brainstorming, but aren't so good at organizing; you need something different for that.
- We use Group Decision Support Tools so that a;; can see; but they're text-based and have little or no graphic capability. You will need to know the limitations of the tools you use.
- Transitions have to be much more intentional in a virtual meeting to be sure everyone is on the same page (literally). Stuff that can go wrong in a f2f meeting are amplified in a virtual meeting -- they go REALLY wrong!

Joan Eisenstodt

- Designing training is easier than facilitation - Design has to allow pre-meeting time to give the participants opportunity to use the tools
- If using avatars in Second Life, that will take longer - when people are seated, it is easier, moving around makes it harder - Movement is trickier virtually and people (avatars) tend to bump into each other
- Apply voice, text messaging, emoticons
- Keys: tools must be simple
- NORMS are critical (how they need to participate; what they would like to get out of this; minimize multitasking – difficult
- Design must be consistent:
 - In training, the predominant mode of delivery is still the lecture method with Q &A. This makes it difficult to engage people especially because you do not have face clues; emoticons are not enough
 - Maybe include cameras to be able to have live interactions\
- Use engagement tools; this takes a lot of work

Mike Katagiri

- Thinking about the blended engagement methods Sync./ asynch, virtual, f2f
- If I know the group I don't hesitate to start an asynchronous discussion.
- I don't have a lot of track record - did do strategic planning for ASTD chapter
- Taking the ORID - O questions good for Asynch. - let those go for a while, then a virtual meeting asking for clarification about discussion forum which led to a f2f session which got into strategic directions, then reflection asynchronous could be done at the end.

Jerry Mings

- For me, a virtual meeting is just one tool in the ongoing work of a virtual team. A group working together on-line (Virtual Team) usually has a specific result they need to accomplish in a timely manner. The Virtual Team is pulled together to achieve the desired result.
- As a facilitator, my job is to make it possible for the team to accomplish the required results in a timely manner. Using open source and store bought software, I enable teams to work in a virtual framework. My work with teams include:
 - a) Virtual meetings - conference call with web based technology to watch screens
 - b) Survey Tools - Zoomerang
 - c) Discussion Boards - used to track dialogue and activities inside projects
 - d) Virtual Work Centres - Huddle, HyperOffice

Anne Sturdvant

- I'm trying to think if it's different. I did a webinar a year ago. We consciously did things to prompt as much interaction as possible. To do a typical design, and then translate it into technology. If you design it for virtual you'll have blinders on about what's possible. We pushed as much as possible to insert interactive stuff.
- I have also run work team meetings virtually. You know when you might do a small group thing -- I've had them actually do that at one site -- they come back to the larger group. The more you can do that the better.

Nancy White

- I've been mainly working with international NGO's who need to do stuff together whether it be one-on-one or in a group. I help them to develop their practices and configuration of technology. By configuration I don't mean help them with code, but help them figure out which features to use and how.
- I build my own visual literacy through offline graphical facilitation and then understand the impacts of that in the online space, because some of the real difficult barriers that we find in online work are that the tools are built for a group but experienced by an individual. And because we each have our own way of taking in information of processing of thinking those experiences online sometimes lead to an incredibly fractured experience by the group as a whole. So really thinking about multiple modalities to check-in with each other, and really thinking about when we need those experiences to be convergent rather than divergent. They're the same sort of facilitation stuff you do offline, except that you're doing it with a blindfold on.
- It depends on the process and the context. Pay attention to the size of the group. There's this continuum I've been using called, "We, Me and the Network".
- With "me" being what do I need to be doing to manage my work, my learning, my relationships with others? It is what I am doing to help myself. It may absolutely accrue benefit to others, but the point is, what do I need to do to get through the day?
- The "we" would be what are the interdependent tasks? Our work teams, our voluntary teams, where we're trying to accomplish X by a certain date, and I need you and you need me to do it. Interdependencies have different sets of processes and we may use tools differently when we're interdependent. Particularly our agreement around the way we use tools is very important when we're talking about the "we" thing.
- Then there's the "network" piece. The network is loosely overlapping interests, not congruent interests. In the team, we're all interested in getting the task done. In the network, I may be interested in organic cow growing, and you may be interested in being De Bar Chocolate, and we do have an overlapping interest in chocolate, but it's not required to get our work done. But there are times when our connection can be very beneficial to our learning or doing whatever it is in the world.
- And this is the part of the interaction that has really changed over the last five years with the technologies that have been introduced. Which is how do you send out to the wider network

to share what you've done, how do you solicit the content from the wider network, how do you ask questions, how do you learn together, how do you explore the boundaries. The network is where your innovation can happen, where dissemination can happen, where actually if you don't expand to a network level change doesn't happen. That's a gross generalization, but I think you get the point here of the continuum between me, we, and the network.

- On top of that the point here is that how do all those things accrue back to the me? How much can I handle from the network without getting overloaded? How much can I handle from the we without getting overloaded?
- So, when you start thinking about design, you start thinking about where do you land in that continuum of me, we and the network. That's one thing. For example, if you land on the we, there are issues such as "how many relationships can we manage?" The more deep we need to go with people, we need to break the large groups into small groups -- you see this in face-to-face collaboration. We can't manage the conversation at the scale of 250 people. We break it down into small bits, have those conversations and build it back up, and break it down and build it up.
- The same thing goes for online things in thinking about people's connectivity. If you have a group of people who are all getting online everyday you can use an online tool without too much negotiation; but if you have some people who are logging on every hour, some once a day, some once a week they become out of sync very quickly if your process is designed to happen over a week.
- So, number of people, and frequency of connectivity then determine time spans. Time cycles are typically much slower online than they are face-to-face. And then the question arises, "how much do you blend synchronous like we're doing now on Skype with asynchronous?"
- So, what you're doing is laying over these different aspects of togetherness and separateness of time and space of the individual or the group, and that then starts informing your design.
- We've been calling the technology "stewardship". What do you need to do to serve the group, the community? The more complex the group, the more complex that work gets. Now, if you have a group that clearly knows what it needs to accomplish, it's actually simple, because that group will ignore most of the technology barriers because they are so driven to achieve their goal.
- If you have a group that has far less cohesion around what it wants to do, every little nitpick of the technology will start getting in the way. With little cohesion and little shared interest you want to go with the simplest possible solution that gives them different ways of accessing that information to meet their individual needs, because they're really operating more from the "me" side than the "we" side of the continuum.
- So, when I'm designing I gather the context and the purpose and assess it at the level of "what activities am I trying to support?" And then I go into design. This has been a long way of saying, context and what you're trying to do matter.

3. WHAT RESOURCES HAVE YOU FOUND TO BE MOST HELPFUL?

LaDonna Coy

- Elluminate is the most efficient platform – emoticons, chat window, voice, whiteboard, polling, touring, etc. The emoticons make a HUGE difference and the facilitator needs them to understand what's going on. Invite people to use them and they will, so you have clues what to do next.
- What's the learning curve for Elluminate? As a presenter, more than others. Need a moderator who knows the platform. New people who are fascinated by it don't facilitate it very well. The learning curve is more than for most platforms but the payoff is HUGE. For participants, a live workshop takes about an hour and for people, they teach them ahead of

time how to use what's there. Then in the session, allow a little extra time, remind them of what's about to happen – you will be doing something different...the hour upfront makes all the difference and without it you wind up focusing on the technology and not the content.

- How long have you used and loved Illuminate? Using it for about 3 years. Hope no one takes it away from me and I'd be lost. I was in GoToMeeting today, but most of the time I'm calling in from a distance and everyone else is in the room. THIS highly limits engagement. They need to be in front of their own computer. Otherwise, it REALLY slows the work down. I don't want to use those tools.
- Do people keep it upgraded? Yes, it's been upgraded since I bought it in October. And new things on the back end, podcast out of it, video podcast (haven't used them yet) and Elluminate Plan is great. Came out of educational arena.
- Illuminate has "three for free" access fully functional except for recording. This is a great way to learn it. And they have many recorded teaching sessions – very brief and you can get a PDF file of it. And there are online people for real help. They train moderators and (? some other role). They do technical assistance from the virtual classroom.
- Other resources? Nancy White is the best, the one I look to. She is witty, funny, charming and very smart. Also being in Elluminate training sessions has taught me a lot. One book is by Ruth Clark *The New Virtual Classroom*. I love that one (of several she's written). Helps you understand what's happening with the brain. EM: Sheila LeGeros and I were in Atlanta with Nancy White. Even her blog, newsletters, are helpful, well-written and brief. Re Ruth Clark, the book on using graphics virtually is really good.

Doug Druckenmiller

- Huddle is a good virtual team platform for asynchronous sessions.
- Skype has lots of possibilities, and some interesting add-ons. We need to find one for synch and asynch sessions.
- Group Systems is good but VERY expensive. A group at U. Neb. is working on an open source version. We need something that is inexpensive or free.

Joan Eisenstodt

- Read everything you can
- Virtualis: uses it a lot because as a learner, Joan has a need to walk through the process
- Currently, the technology (other resources) are on training and less on facilitation
- Training is more one way and more on presentations
- Developing avatars is expensive. Dan Parks from Virtualis has extensive sets of avatars he has built. It costs between \$10-14K to build avatars and specialized sessions for hundreds of people; He has also built a virtual computer that allows for scavenger hunts.
- Key: keep your tools simple (maybe a sticky wall that is transferable within the Virtualis location)

Jerry Mings

- Mindmanager by Mindjet - This is a power tool I use in 90% of my work for clustering, documenting and developing Facilitation Designs. I strongly recommend it for any ToP Facilitator (<http://www.mindjet.com>)
- phpBBS Discussion Board - However, this application just took down my entire website so I would suggest not using this tool right now. <http://www.phpbb.com>)
- FeedException for Newsreader software - This is another power tool. It is windows based. However, I use for 90% of my intelligence work on the Internet. Easy to use yet powerful in developing indepth threads for materials. (<http://www.feedException.com>)
- iGrafx for flow charting - A detailed flow charting program. I'm still learning and finding new and innovative ways to use this tool.
- It is a Windows based tool that really helps me see the process related to the work of a senior team. (<http://www.igrafx.com>)

- C4 Dreamweaver for Web design and editing php files - Not something I would recommend for ToP Facilitators. I use for my work on websites. (<http://www.adobe.com>)
- MySQL for data base back end work - This is a popular data base program used on the web. Some people would use Filemaker Pro or Access. I think it is important to have a good understanding Database structure as well as how to "normalize a table". Second Life - The emerging place on the Internet. It takes some getting use to. (<http://www.secondlife.com>)
- The Bat! email client - I encourage people to try using at least three different e-mail clients to understand the real structure and design of e-mail. During our call, I'll share how insecure e-mail really is and how it should not be used for client files. (<http://www.ritlabs.com>)
- Groupmail by Infacta - One of the best bulk mailing programs I know of at this time. (<http://www.infacta.com>)
- Copernic Software Search tool - Research tool I use for monitoring information on the net. I like because it tracks emerging information and sends to the client with me having to work at. (<http://www.copernic.com>)
- Evernote - An excellent program for keeping my notes on a daily basis. This response was drafted in Evernote (<http://www.EverNote.com>)
- CMap Tools - This is a great program to use when working with groups on obstacles. It is free. (<http://cmap.ihmc.us/conceptmap.html>)
- Go to Meeting - This serves as the back bone for my online meetings with clients to help them see materials in advance. I also use it live during facilitation session to tie in people who are participating in the event. (<http://www.gotomeeting.com>)

Other:

- Hyper Office is another virtual team space patterned on MS Outlook with some ability to mail other team members and store files some of these virtual spaces allow you to edit in the space, some don't. Some have tasking functions allowing you to go in and assign a task which notifies the other person and they can accept it or reject it.
- Google Docs is a master information monster. Security is relative
- Need some kind of webconferencing platform many have a download problem except GoToMeeting and a few others

Anne Sturdvant

- There is probably a lot more out there now. When I first started doing virtual facilitation at least 15 years ago. I just had to figure it out. There is probably a lot more out there than there was then. I haven't done Google searches. I used to do a seminar on virtual team leadership. I've read a lot of books. They are more general in approach. They don't carry as many practical suggestions as I would like.
- Once you've done a design in your ordinary mode and you've adapted it to virtual, aside from interactive pieces are there any other things to think about? If you are constrained by just phone, then for sure. You can do a combination of PowerPoint with a participant booklet and be on the phone. It's a way to get around the expense of Webex. If you're on the phone only then that's one consideration -- the pre-work in terms of getting things out to people, and making sure they know what they're supposed to have out in front of them. I ran a check-in meeting for American Express for managers around the world. I was super diligent about watching time, being clear on the agenda, doing pre-work beforehand with people who had items on the agenda so they were clear about their timeframes. I had a tip sheet that I made up when American Express internals were going to be taking that phone calls over. Mostly good meeting management skills. It's super important to do it especially if you are just on the phone.

Nancy White

- Beth Kanter, who is now a Packard scholar for the year, "Beth's Blog" on the social media side. She's attentive to technology and process.

- The book that Etienne Wenger and Jonathan Smith and I are on the verges of getting published called “Digital Habitats”, will be out on Amazon by the end of July. Etienne developed the concept of communities of practice and how we learn in communities.
 - There is not a good central source. This is an aggregation page for people who care about online communities and networks. Use the RSS feed to popup some interesting stuff. Some of the people who I think are good, their blogs filter into that. <http://cc.fullcirc.com>
 - Otherwise, it’s very diffuse. Some of the most innovative stuff is coming out of the education field, people in libraries. I don’t find that the facilitation community has done a lot.
 - Holger Newmeyer (sp?) out of Germany has really dived into experimenting with this in the last 6 months. But, I think he’s still very enamored with the technology side of it. Watch him, because there will be a phase where he’ll back away from that a little bit. Because that’s typically what people do. “Oh look, there’s technology, think of what we could do!” And then they back away from it a little bit, because then encounter problems with adoption and diversity, and they ask the question, “what is the fundamental thing about this technology that is changing interaction, and then they focus back again on process a little bit more.”
 - David Sibbet has been asking this question a lot. He doesn’t blog often, but he’s good.
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4. HOW DO YOU ACCOMMODATE A VARIETY OF LEARNING STYLES IN VIRTUAL FACILITATION?

Dana Bowler

- How you structure matters. Example - In 30 sec or less I’d like to hear your thoughts on this.
- Do you do a break in 1 ½ hours? – depends can use time trackers – type in time and when you want people back ... or count down timer. Definitely break for 2 hours sessions
- Virtual opportunities can engage visual and kinesthetic learners – providing handouts helps. Use good PPTs best practices.
- Do you summarize points? - chunk in groups of 5 – give handout with all but PPT’s in chunk of 5.
- Manage to the rule not the exception.

LaDonna Coy

- This is always tough – in F2F and in online. Doesn’t get easier. It’s the paradox you live with. One thing is to slow down.
- Extraverts will want to grab the microphone. Introverts will be in the chat room chiming in, but not on audio. (Brain science says you can’t multi-task, you can only jump back and forth really quick.)
- You translate the live session to the virtual environment – perhaps use a virtual flip chart, have them draw, give quiet time, etc. to address all those needs.
- Session time that works? No more than 90 minutes because it’s as long as people can be in front of the computer without taking a break. Have done a 3-hours session, but took a healthy break and had many things going on, break-out pieces, etc. Recommend 90 minutes and take healthy breaks if you are going to have people come back.

Doug Druckenmiller

- Provide multiple ways of access to information -- verbal, visual. It’s really important for conceptual models.
- In virtual meetings, one difference is that you get little or no feedback. We need more channels and new ways to use them to be able to get participant feedback.
- Second Life has some free resources; some at De Paul are trying to use Second Life and developing free resources there.

Joan Eisenstodt

- Use more tools; e.g., inventories that participants complete and send back to the facilitator/trainer
- Send people handouts (printed materials) to accommodate this learning style
- Most difficult is accommodating oral learners who have a need to ask a lot of questions because there is no way to accommodate their questions in the virtual environment
- Use of break outs (Virtualis: transport the participants to various areas. Although it is not seamless, it is easy to do that. Dan is willing to do anything; try working with him on various learning styles
- Twitter time - 25 seconds is a lot of time in the virtual environment
- Combining tools like Twitter chat with photos - at least you are able to "see" the person talking
- Key: do what you normally do in F2F situations
 - Find out as much as you can beforehand - use surveys
 - Send materials to them before the session
 - Adapt your style to the platform you are using
 - Accommodate short attention span with use of emoticons, polling, etc.
 - Take into consideration the various roles: facilitator/trainer; technician, designer (such as Dan in Virtualis who will do the customization)
 - Preparation /delivery ratio is about 1:1 - include rehearsal for participants

Mike Katagiri

- I think this combo of asynch and synch if designed carefully can do things a bit faster and appeal to the different style some who like f2f or who don't. Still testing that out. I can see in the future it won't be difficult to post electronic sticky notes.

Jerry Mings

- I tend to see groups using a research model developed by Dr. T. Thomas of Austin Texas. The Thomas Concept allows me to better understand groups both face to face and on-line. You can learn more about the theory by visiting <http://www.oppositestrengths.com>. In a nutshell, I design around the eight patterns of core strengths. My experience has taught me that Riskers have a real challenge working through on-line sessions while Thinkers will work through the process. Practical Thinkers need technology that works in short order while Theoretical Thinkers get frustrated or lost in the process. Finally, the Dependent riskers really would prefer to be in a face to face meeting and will continually state that throughout the meeting while the Independent riskers will be on-line long enough to get their assignment and then get off the meeting. We need to balance the thinkers and riskers.
- As an example, The Riskers, Theoretical thinkers and Independent Riskers would be boarded to tears with a "focused conversation on-line". However, to keep them engaged, I would run a back channel to allow them to pick up an assignment and get off the virtual meeting in just under 15 minutes.
- Understanding the core strengths of the individual is key to really building strong virtual teams and the use of on-line facilitation methodology.

Anne Sturdvant

- I would be tempted to help people find out their learning style and have them be responsible for getting what they need out of the session. As an opener you could introduce resources to help them figure out their learning style and talk about ways that virtual learning might be approached with their learning style so they themselves take responsibility for their own learning.
- I tend to use Myers Briggs. In my design I think about how to give think time for the introverts, and what's going on for the sensors who need concrete things to think about vs. floating in conceptual thought. I run the the design through as many modes of communication as I can, and through the Myers Briggs styles.

Nancy White

Where have you found success conveying visually for a group what's happening?

- I'll give you a couple examples. We don't have a chat window open now, so we're all operating primarily at an auditory level. So, I can see your pictures in my Skype window, I see your smiling faces, I see you both have glasses. It's funny you're both wearing dark jackets and turtle neck shirts and I'm thinking that's kind of funny. But, that's a fleeting visual impact. If we were using chat we could be taking notes in the chat. If Sheila were talking, Eunice could ask another question in the chat.
- For people who aren't so good at listening, adding the chat helps them focus into the conversation. Some of us listen better when we're doodling. Not everyone consumes the modalities the same way.
- If something is important for everybody to do at the same time, we do that through process. "OK everybody, I want you to take your hands off the keyboard, close your eyes and listen to this one line." So it's something that focuses people very deliberately rather than expecting the technologies to focus people.
- But in the meantime you've got some people who are augmenting what the speaker is saying on the telephone call by adding something in the chat and deepening the conversation in a way that you can't on the phone because only one person can talk at a time. Again, do you want that sort of "building the network conversation" or do you want to really focus on one person at a time? These are some choices in using chat.
- Using visuals there are web conferencing tools that have whiteboards. One of the tricks I learned is to put up a slide of clip art that has all kinds of funny chairs and when people enter into the web meeting room, there's a little note saying, "Welcome: click on the text tool and put your name under a chair." I upload the Powerpoint slide into whatever tool I'm using and it's worked with every tool I've used; people can write on the slide with the text tools in the application.
- Vyew and Dimdim are free ones, Elluminate are tools I've used where this works. I don't recommend Webex nor Microsoft Live Meeting. I like Adobe Connect. The reason I like Elluminate and Adobe Connect is you can have multiple people with multiple roles. So if you are not trying to have a controlled delivery of content, you need to be able to delegate multiple roles to multiple people, in other words have more than one moderator at the same time. With Microsoft Live Meeting there is no group chat, it is only participant to facilitator, which is ridiculous. I never work up that way, I work across. Webex is slightly better; it does have a chat, but you can't have multiple moderators, and when I find that you're trying to create a live web meeting you want one person who is kind of wrangling on the facilitation process, and you want one person who's simply helping on the technology side. And both of them need admin privileges to use the tool fully. And so if a tool doesn't allow multiple administrators or moderators then you lose the power of co-facilitation which you guys know is really a fabulous thing to do regardless of whatever environment you're in.

5. WHAT CRITERIA DO YOU USE IN CHOOSING TOOLS AND TECHNOLOGIES FOR VIRTUAL FACILITATION?

Dana Bowler

- Lots of people want to use the bells and whistles which are not always effective – what is the objective and engaging point? What tool will help us meet the objective. Use a front end activity or icebreaker – puzzle, build your Kaleidoscope, build games to be related to your topic to keep people engage at the front end until your meeting starts.
- Virtual meetings and technologies are a privilege not a right - not everyone has – cost from facilitator and attendees perspective also tech capability of audience.
- Use work arounds for ToP virtually when the technology doesn't really accommodate it – FC can put a word or two on PPT. CW doesn't really work in Webex can give everyone the

rights to annotate – in mindmap or in PPT. You can give everyone rights to brainstorm at the same time can even make it anonymous (change color of text).

- Submitting ideas put on Visio or Mindmap have chat to facilitator, ask personally their top 5 or 3. Chat window is open but they can't see it.
- Other technologies – Mindjet they can see it and can check for consensus.
- How do you manage the timing – quickest most effective thing is priority. Which set of tools will get me where I want to go. 90-120 minutes maximum for a virtual meeting.
- If you structure a virtual meeting appropriately you should be able to cut out ¼ of the time you would normally spend in a f2f mtg. Less social interaction and noise but you can't sit for the same time together so you have to do more than one session and get people up to speed.

LaDonna Coy

- It depends on what I want to accomplish, my intention, and number of people in the room; the level of their expertise (are they comfortable with technology, brand new, or a mix – and if a mix, enough with comfort to help each other). And on what I want to know – something on white board, or chat, or polling – and mix them up so people are doing something different as you move through.
- **Re numbers in the room? 200????** Have never had more than about 120. It gave me shivers. Most in Elluminate was 80. It takes more work. you need more moderators, someone to help people having trouble. You will do less of the whiteboard activities because it goes very slow. So with more than 25, or than 50 for sure, stay with polling, chat, emoticons – much more controlled because higher numbers change the dynamic – becomes more of a presentation. In non-Elluminate platforms, you are highly limited with what you CAN do. In Elluminate, you do things really quickly. The chat there is harder to use because all talk at once and it flies. It's wild with a lot of people.
- **End of meeting documentation in Elluminate?** I do it at the end of every session. Save chat in a text file. Save whiteboards (in addition to the presentation slides). As a matter of practice, I take a screen shot of the participants. I can see all 25 names (my copy limits me to 25).
- **What kinds of follow-up are usual with your participants?** People will use the chat information. Some will have a web-based session after the event with a couple of questions, wrapping it around as a form of follow-up. And this lets people bring some form of summary to it, using the “what did you take away from this?” types of question. The session can also be recorded and kept at the website?

Added question: what tools really work for you?

- Polling, multiple choice questions, or yes/no question. May show a video and then do a whiteboard (like a virtual flip chart) – example “the power of vision” (1 ½ mins) -- do an ORID type questions. Will comment on them via the chat and the whiteboard, giving the mike to them and leaving it open for people. Then it gets really quiet – tell them up front to take advantage of the quiet and facilitators sit on their hands and wait until someone picks up the microphone. Someone will, and then it catches on. It's a learned skill to live with that silence. And it's longer than in a F2F.
- Don't pack in as much as you would in a face to face environment – the technology actually slows you down.

Amount of time to design?

- At least twice as long, but if something brand new, even longer.

Doug Druckenmiller

- You have to be cognizant of the group. There is not one tool that will do everything you want to do.
- The least competent member of the group has to be able to get on and participate. You probably need a one-hour pre-meeting to orient people to the tool.
- There's a list of 200 + tools that Danny has.

- Even Skype, which seems so simple, gets very complex when you add some new wrinkle. Once people get accustomed to one tool, it's hard to get them to switch and try another

Joan Eisenstodt

- "I only do virtual sessions if I am begged by someone." (Client says "we have to...")
- Prefer to use tools I am familiar with
- If clients have their own virtual program, I have to learn their system.
- Polling is a standard tool for most platforms
- Second Life is more fun and is visual
- Key:
 - Do what the customer wants (in-house facilitator/trainer are familiar with their platforms)
 - Bring your own platform: important to understand the desired outcome; the number of participants; tricks and what you have used that best deliver the outcome(s)
 - Choose platform with greatest flexibility
- A checklist does not exist now - can be developed
- Interesting finding: students (this case with hospitality program; Gen Y do not use Twitter; they use texting and prefers F2F over virtual)
- Virtual meetings, training, facilitation is considered a lot because of the economy. The question is do we really need to go virtual? Write a white paper re the value of F2F meetings and the real cost savings of going virtual. (also look into the ROI for the stakeholders)

Mike Katagiri

- From participants standpoint needs to be easy to log into. Requires little or no training.
- From Facilitator's standpoint nice to see the engagement of people even seeing people's names light up or webcams, being able for everyone to share their desktops

Jerry Mings

- I determine the virtual tools based on the needs of the client. Over the years I have found client needs and group capability are the best factors to determine the tool of choice for facilitation events.
- I use the ToP Design Process when building a design for a group. Once I have a design, I build a virtual design to support the rational and experiential aims of the group design.

Anne Sturdvant

- Generally, the flexibility to genuinely engage people to interact. I do not like what some people do with one-way communication. Who ever learns that way? To me, it's about the ability to engage people actively -- it's at the top of my list.
- Cost effectiveness is another one. How reliable it is is crucial. I do not want to spend 20 minutes at the beginning of a session helping people to get in. That's a mess. I teach at the University of St. Thomas. They have an online asynchronous system. That's OK for certain kinds of things, like post something for everyone to read and give your observations about it.
- By the way I use ORID a ton virtually and everywhere. Like when I'm dealing with the American Express group, I teach it to them and have them use it to. So when they see I am moving into ORID they know what I'm doing.

Nancy White

How do you build capacity for virtual collaboration with a group over time?

- I think the first question is, "How big is that group, and how inter-related is their commitment to each other. Is it shared, or is it sort of dispersed?" With 10 or fewer people, committed to each other over time, it's worth the time to build the collaboration. I try to build a technical and a process skill each time we do a synchronous event. If I'm working asynchronously I try to add an asynchronous tip.

- My rule of thumb, which is very gross, is one hour of face-to-face time ends up being 1 day online asynchronously. Unless the group is all online at the same time, you can't expect the group to have completed a process you want them to do asynchronously in any time span shorter than a day. The equivalent of a full day face-to-face could stretch out over 8 to 10 days asynchronously. That's a really general rule of thumb.
- I like to mix synchronous and asynchronous, and these days I think people have a higher expectation for synchronous for their meaning-making and their active learning; and the asynchronous perhaps for reflection, going off and doing exercises, whatever it is (it depends on what you're doing together of course.) I used to be able to do far more asynchronous stuff with groups, but the expectation for synchronous in my world has grown enormously.

What tools do you use for reflection?

- It depends on what kind of reflection -- is it public or private reflection, is it reflection for the group or the individual, and what tools are people already using? Because I think the most important thing when you think about tool selection is to try and spring off of where people already are. People have a diversity of technology comfort, need and familiarity, and if you need to keep people together you have to make something simple enough that those on the furthest end of discomfort can participate, but with enough interesting things that those early adopters won't get bored and say "this is a really dumb tool." It's tricky when you have that diversity.
- I'll use either forums if it's a little old-fashioned, or blogs. I like blogs because the person who is doing the reflection is the primary author, so it reflects that this is your personal reflection, and comments allow people to interact with that person, but the primacy is still the author of the blog.
- In forum, I often give people their own forum, which acts sort of like a blog. Forums give primacy to the group. Every post has equal weight in how it's presented. It's post, post, post. If it's a group reflection, a forum subtly sends out the message that everybody's voice is important, whereas a blog sends the message that the primary blogger is primary.
- For people who don't reflect well in writing there are some interesting new tools. Howard Weingold, who is kind of a father in online communities has been building an open source learning platform called Social Media Classroom. <http://www.socialmediaclassroom.org>
- It's using an open source content management system called Drupal. It's got a little plug-in that allows people who have a camera in their computer to add a video response rather than having to type. So, if I'm working in a second language and they do not feel secure in English, having an option for video reflection is really freeing for some people. It's intimidating for others. But once again it reflects that we may need different things to do the meaning making or the work we're doing together. The video discussion is built into it -- I can write or I can leave a little video.
- The technology is still a little bumpy. If we all have a commitment that we will have this reflection done by this date, it becomes less critical that some are writing and some are video-taping their reflection.

6. WHAT ELSE DO WE NEED TO KNOW ABOUT VIRTUAL FACILITATION, NOT ALREADY COVERED?

Dana Bowler

- Virtual facilitation is fun and can be more effective depending on how you structure it.

LaDonna Coy

- The whole idea is to translate as much as possible of what we do in the F2F environment into the virtual.
- We are about to try the World Café dynamic in Illuminate.

Doug Druckenmiller

- These are unique times: software geniuses now sense the importance of procedures. Previously they looked only at their interest. Now some key tool builders are master facilitators and understand the importance of procedures. They understand that the process is important. ToP isn't totally unique, but one unique aspect of it is the imaginal nature of what we do. That has to be maintained and supported.

Joan Eisenstodt

- Virtual platforms - are here to stay: get into it; embrace it; and do it cautiously
- Tools are being developed
- Weigh the value for each individual facilitation/training
- Is it appropriate for the group?
- Are the tools adequate - appropriate participation?
- Will the use of these tools reach our goals?
- Look at what will meet the needs of the client
- Identify the pros and cons
- Tutorials do not always work; one cannot stop to ask questions

Mike Katagiri

- Not sure what I can add, one thing that has surprised me is how fast y generation is pushing us along. Get them involved they may have great ideas about additional methodologies.
- Challenge how do we engage generational styles as well as learning styles.

Jerry Mings

- Like music, I encourage a hands on approach to practice. There is simply no one tool or approach that will work. It is important to work hard at working with existing technology to support client needs.
- I am big supporter of the following:
 - Learn as much as you can about how e-mail really works. You will be surprised about how insecure it really is. Learn how to identify factual information from false information. Email is not secure it can be intercepted, read and passed on to others when it may not be appropriate. Need to be careful where email comes from – you just don't know what's at the other end of the line and sometimes you are blocked and don't know it. You must create a discipline of not relying on email all of the time.
 - Set up a virtual space for project and run it. It's one of the best ways to learn about how group work in a virtual space.
 - Avoid using "face to face meetings" as the "standard" for doing virtual team work. It will be very frustrating transition. Instead, start with a blank page and focus on design with the client and the group. The focus on "building a virtual sticky wall", can lead one down the wrong road very quickly. Instead, focus on developing solid rational aims with a group. Then, the required technology will follow. You will be surprised about the wealth of tools that will do the job. (I am amazed at skill level of the average team member in using the Internet. I think people often over estimate what people can do with the Internet. Also, I find people often fail to take the time to work outside their comfort zone)
 - Have a mix of web based tools and machine based tools. This is helpful when you are working in a place with poor Internet connection
 - Practice using the tools everyone day. I have four key tools I use for most facilitations that include Mindjet, Go to Meeting, RSS and Evernote. I set aside about hour a day to practice in these areas. I'm currently expanding my list to add back in Crystal Reports and iGrafix
 - Remember the world of Windows. I enjoy working with my colleagues who love their Macs. However, there are lots of windows users out there in today's world. The client does not want to hear about, "well on a Mac". It really makes them crazy.

Stay focus on the application and the end result. I have found that really does make a difference in working with clients.

- Read the literature on Virtual Team - To make a difference in working virtual facilitation, it is important to read the literature on virtual teams. The best way to sell the practice is to demonstrate that you are a strong virtual team. Give people a chance to see your "virtual team" in practice (eg., Host gotomeeting client design sessions instead of a face to face meeting, turn over design results in 60 minutes or less, use computers in live sessions with virtual writer and graphic team members. People need to see the virtual demonstrated before they will trust on-line sessions)
- Security is relative. Huddle is pretty secure. Privacy is different depending on the country you're in. USA has the Patriot Act – problem is they can raid a server at any time and don't have to tell you about it.
- Most websites including Facebook is a composition of many many fields of a database. When you want to create a database ther are 28 – Drupal, Mombo... many are open source

Nancy White

We always focus on the limitations of virtual facilitation. What does virtual collaboration bring to a group that is not possible in face-to-face?

- Networked external support. Face-to-face collaboration privileges those who are in the geography. If the support you need is not in that geography you have to find a way to tap them. Combining online and offline strategies is a real powerful thing. The face-to-face is the one we know how to do best for that "we", but face-to-face doesn't work well for the "network" piece because it doesn't scale. So, the online piece really supports that network side of things.
- I think the other thing that online works very well for those who are excluded. You know there are ones in an organization who can fly to meetings, and there are those who can't. Those who can't make use of crappy technology and inadequate process to get things done because they're so motivated. I can see collaborations outside of North America going very well simply because these people are starving for it. They're not given that privilege or the support for their work.
- There are definitely powerful things that online collaboration can add, and it goes back to the very first question, "what's the context?"

7. WHAT DO YOU FIND MOST CRITICAL IN CHOOSING TOOLS FOR TOP VIRTUAL FACILITATION?

LaDonna Coy

- Have done some things like the workshop method – put things up on a whiteboard and move them around, as the moderator. And you can turn participants into moderators. They can easily move their own stuff around. It depends on the size of the group and the amount of stuff you have on the screen. Ask people to choose a certain font size, maybe choose a color. Maybe we could choose a time and play with creating the sticky wall dynamic.
- Haven't really done ToP methods specifically inside Elluminate (other platforms aren't nearly as flexible). Yugma is one, very much like GoToMeeting, but they have a few other things. Not facilitation tools, but presentation tools.
- Most platforms out there aren't designed for facilitation and learning. Don't know what Nancy White's favorite platform is. We need to find out. She's a member at CPsquare. She uses asynchronous stuff, and also voice and chat together. Audio can get dicey with international work – use a bridge that allows both bridge call and Skype AND chat. Some can only listen and use chat for their responses.

- What about mobile learning devices? I'm playing with it. Haven't built any apps yet. I have a colleague in Washington, DC who is building apps. Anyone with a smartphone for sure (web accessible) – it's moving in that direction in a big way?

Doug Druckenmiller

- The only way is to decide on the design patterns so we know the process. That sets up the requirements for tools. Trying to find as few tools as we need. We can be flexible in combining design patterns, but need the tools to provide support at that level.
- We can sort of implement ToP on lots of platforms.
- The most difficult step is organizing. Most tools are set to operate vertically, so it takes some work to find those that do it our way.
- The next step with the design patterns is to get them into a data base online, then identify the next level up as "methods" then several methods become an application.

Mike Katagiri

- Gordon taught me about voting and ToP isn't really about voting yet some of those are actually additive to the process. Need to keep reminding myself of the philosophy of participation so I don't get too carried away with the technology.

Jerry Mings

- The Design eye process is critical in determining which virtual tools to select. You can find additional information on the tool in the Huddle Website. Also, consult Wayne Nelson at ICA Associates for additional information
- Keep a very open mind when exploring tools. Please remember there is no quick fix. Instead, start with the group first and then explore tools last. That process has worked well for me.
- Complete no less than five facilitations before considering teaching this material to ToP facilitators. One needs to develop a real comfort with this before it can be taught to others.
- Mindjet can cluster live time – no cards or markers allowed in the room – have to do it real time on screen. Clustering gets very powerful with that and with one click can Cluster to a Word doc or PPT, can convert action plan to a GANTT chart.
- Seems to me there are places in our processes where we should push to asynchronous

Anne Sturdvant

- I have taught other people ORID so much, and have attributed it to ICA. I do consensus workshop type work virtually. If you have Webex you can use the whiteboard for that. You can use the polling feature to facilitate that. You can do grouping and naming. You can take notes for them and ask them to tell you what to do and you do it in front of them.
- I don't remember if a mindmap is part of ToP. I have tried to do that too. It can get kind of bananas -- I've experimented with mindmap and other brainstorming kinds of modes. If it's not workable, sometimes I have them use a blank sheet of paper in front of them, and have them do their own flip chart individually for themselves so they can stay with the whole group and can be seeing what's emerging in front of them.
- I've done nominal group technique where you go round robin. I've had them keep track of the ideas as they go round robin and then try to generate a consensus after the round robin. Some of the facilitation tools we use are adaptable. You just have to think outside the box about what is possible.

Nancy White

What technology replicates the sticky wall experience virtually? How do you get a group to see what each other is thinking?

- I don't think we have good visual technology for doing sticky wall stuff. There are some post-it note programs -- they come and they go. They come and they go for a reason. The idea is great but the execution is still limited by a couple of things. One is we all have

different size monitors. If we all had large monitors we could make a useful sticky wall experience.

- I have even make a sticky wall on my own wall and taken pictures to send, but then I am the only one with the sticky wall. Or, we've done it where we all have our own sticky wall, but then it's way too complex. I hate to tell you I've not found a good way yet to integrate large amounts of data.
- What I have done is to break it down into smaller chunks and then build it back up. Some of the mindmapping tools like Mindmeister are still hub and spoke in their design. That's the closest I've come to a satisfactory group experience, but it's still hub and spoke design, and the data that I am working with is not always hub and spoke.

What about SecondLife?

- The person who has done the most interesting work in SecondLife is David Sibbet at The Grove. He has a customer conference room and gallery. It's a special skill to create objects. If I have an island, there is a lot of pre-design to build the things there. It gets stuck here.
- David has done ThirdLife island with a sacred native American circle, and has a group that meets there regularly for their spiritual practice. They've paid great attention to the role of beauty and sound in their space. That is a really powerful thing. SecondLife gives us a sense of a shared environment. If we're all hearing the same ambient sound effects it's important.
- I struggle with SecondLife because if you have an older computer, it doesn't work well. My processor on my desktop works too slow for SecondLife so I had the uncomfortable experience of falling down all the time. Nobody likes to look stupid. I could not do those things, and I thought it was me, but it was my processor. I felt like a clutz, and I already am a clutz and didn't want to feel even more of a clutz.
- The most successful experiences I've had in SecondLife is when everyone got a personal orientation to get comfortable, which is a big investment. So, it's still hard. But look at Sibbet's work in SecondLife.
- Nancy Margulies has been doing amazing work with online graphic facilitation. This is mainly because she's a brilliant artist. She can get on a phone call and do graphic recording on a tablet. It's not participatory. It's in service of the group.

8. WHO ARE OTHER EXPERTS WE MIGHT WANT TO CONTACT?

LaDonna Coy

- In addition to Nancy White and Ruth Clark (author) – Ken Homer in San Rafael, CA. Will send his email. A masterful facilitator. Has developed some of the best process questions I've ever run across. And he developed the idea of getting people into the space and being comfortable, more than just looking at a screen.

Jerry Mings

- I would encourage you to talk with Dr. Thomas to learn more about the Thomas Concept. It is a very power tool to use with groups and can make a significant difference when selecting tools for virtual work.

Anne Sturdvant

- One of my colleagues at the U of St. Thomas -- her research is in the arena of virtual. Rama (Ruma) Hart. Her email is rkhart@stthomas.edu. She is on summer break and she still does her email. I would give her a little background on what ToP is and what you're trying to do. Ask her for resources or tips. A lot of what she deals with is the trust in virtual teams. In the situation that you're going to be in -- would you be teaching ToP over a period of time? Ask her for sources to help. And leave the door open to come back later as you know more.

9. WHAT OTHER CRITICAL DOCUMENTS, ARTICLES, BOOKS OR RESOURCES SHOULD WE READ?

Doug Druckenmiller

- There is a Culture of Collaboration Science at University of Nebraska: Omaha that has many resources.

Mike Katagiri

- I am fascinated by all of the technologies supporting social learning trying to get people to participate and have conversations

Jerry Mings

- Please read through the Baldrige Quality Award Standards as you continue your exploration of virtual facilitation.

Anne Sturdvant

- When we did the workshop for virtual team leaders we put together what we hoped would be a book. At the time most publishers already had something or didn't know what we were talking about. I still have that.
- We took the stages of team development and we took situational leadership as an organizing principle. It's about 75 pages long and have no problem sharing it with you. See if there is anything helpful. If you do end up using some of it, then attribute it. You can integrate it into your own stuff.
- There is a Harvard Business Review article that I will look up and send to you. It's indirectly related to training virtually. It helped me with intact dispersed work teams. The research says that virtual teams can actually be more productive than face-to-face. That was a big turning point for me. All of our assumptions about face-to-face our couched in some myths about personal interaction. We're not talking about second best. In some cases it can be better. Some of why they turn out better is because they don't waste time chatting during staff meetings. They can talk instantly with each other and solve problems -- there are sites for product teams with a chat facility in this spot. It's like having their own combination of Webex and Twitter -- they're the only ones that can get into it.