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What comes as second nature to us in our positions as leaders, may not be so clear to others. Sure, "I'm a facilitator," you say, or "I'm the CEO," but others may be wondering or confused about what exactly it is that you do. When you clearly define your role to your team members and to potential clients, you ensure that you meet their expectations. So this month, define your role and share your values!

Kristin

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WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A FACILITATOR AND A CONSULTANT?

I am often asked the question, "What's the difference between a 'facilitator' and a 'consultant'?" It's a good question, especially since my legal company name is "Quality Process Consultants, Inc.," specializing in high stakes meeting facilitation and training others to facilitate!

So let's start with the definitions:

- A **consultant** has a depth and breadth of expertise in a specific topical area. An organization hires a consultant when the organization does NOT have the needed expertise on the payroll. You hire a consultant to "do it" (whatever is needed) for you. Companies do this all the time. Need an in-depth analysis of your target market? Because you don't have the talent inside the company, you go look outside the company and hire someone with the experience and expertise to do it for you. OR you bring on a specific person to bring that expertise to the table on an ongoing basis – be it on demand, retainer, fractional or full-time position. That's a consultant.
- A **facilitator**, on the other hand, has a depth and breadth of expertise in *process*. The organization has a good understanding of the subject matter yet they need some help processing the information and helping them think it through to make the best decision for the organization.

You hire a facilitator when you believe the knowledge is already resident in the room whereas you hire a consultant when you DON'T believe the group knows what to do. I use the distinction of being the "guide on the side" facilitator vs. the "sage on the stage" consultant.

When you hire the consultant to facilitate, there is a real danger that the consultant may:

1. Manipulate the conversation in such a way that the group agrees to the consultant's recommendation. Unfortunately, once the consultant departs, you may or may not have complete buy-in to the decision.
2. Dive into the content side of the conversation and forget to guide the process. In essence, they revert to the consultant role with no one making sure we stay on task.
3. Hijack the conversation making sure their point of view is heard.

There are plenty of consultants who can facilitate – just be clear about what you want the consultant to do – facilitate or consult. Or, many of my clients hire the consultant to participate in the meeting as one equal voice among many, and hire someone like me – a professional facilitator – to guide the process.

WHAT EXACTLY IS A PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE RULES ANALYST?

Since I have proclaimed myself as the [2019-20 Presidential Debate Rules Analyst](#), a few people have asked what that actually IS.

So let me give you the background:

During my strategic planning session in January (yes, I try to "eat my own dog food" and practice what I preach!), I decided that I wanted to comment on the Presidential Debates - Presidential, VP, Democratic, and Republican primaries. Why? Because I have never seen the current political discourse so heated, uncivil, and disrespectful.

Since I covered the moderator role during the 2016 Presidential Debates, I envision this round of debates will be a shit-show (If I want to pretty my potty-mouth up, I'll call it a free-for-all). That is, unless the moderator(s) are able to reign them in and keep it fair and objective. So I'll be watching and reporting on ALL of the debates. The Democrats alone are scheduling twelve....one a month until the Convention!

So where does the "Rules Analyst" come in? I was looking for a "shorthand" way of describing the fact that I am dissecting how well the debate moderator(s) follows and facilitates the format prescribed by the Commission on Presidential Debates in order to achieve the stated outcomes.

A week later, we happen to be watching the Super Bowl when a "Rules Analyst" commented on a field official's debatable call. The Rules Analyst provides in-depth and on-the-spot analysis. He provides "nuance and understanding" to the otherwise complicated set of NFL rules.

Hey! That's what I am doing - just for the Presidential Debate Cycle rather than the NFL! I'm pretty excited about the possibilities - to be a neutral voice reporting on a raucous debate season! I am available for media interviews, articles and will be posting my observations here. So stay tuned!

FROM THE BOOKSHELF: DARE TO LEAD: BRAVE WORK. TOUGH CONVERSATIONS. WHOLE HEARTS

[Dare to Lead: Brave Work. Tough Conversations. Whole Hearts](#) is not the first book written by Brene Brown on my bookshelf. I doubt it will be the last.

But what I like about this book is it takes the work she has done on courage and being brave and placed it in a business context. Her premise is that without courage and the ability to be vulnerable, you can't be an effective leader.

But it's not vulnerability for vulnerability's sake. That's called manipulation. She defines a leader as "anyone who takes responsibility for finding the potential in people and processes, and who has the courage to develop that potential."

It does take courage to develop potential. And initiative. And time. And patience. That's my list. Hers is much more extensive: It takes the ability to "rumble" (have a vulnerable conversation) with your people without "armoring up" (get all defensive).

She has a great section on living your values – which I found to be quite valuable and affirming in the work that I do with leadership teams. Brown says, "Having values is a massive trust and connection builder for teams."

Here are two ways she has done this:

1) Have your team share their top two personal values (and if they don't know, she gives you a process to determine them) as well as three behaviors that support the value, three slippery behaviors that are outside the value, and an example of a time when you were fully living into this value.

2) At the beginning of a two-day event, every person wrote his or her two values on a large poster. Over the course of the two days, they all wrote down on each poster one reason they appreciated that person and how they live into their values. She says, "It was beautiful. I still have mine. It's hanging in my study as a reminder."

This book is a great reminder of how to be compassionate and human while leading your team.

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USA: 28150 N Alma School Parkway #103-615 | Scottsdale AZ 85262 | (480) 399-8489
Toll Free: 1-800-589-4733