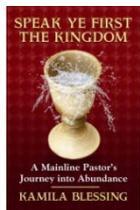


Depth Perception

17 April 2012 -- Commentary from Design Group International™

Making use of Informal Process



Kamila Blessing's book [Speak Ye First the Kingdom](#), is one of a kind—spiritual biography, minister's manual and primer on stewardship education. Enter our April [drawing](#) to win a free copy. You must enter by 30 April. Click [here](#) to enter. All entries receive a **free** copy of the supplemental materials Kamila developed for congregations.

Our resident I/O psychologist, [Eric Vincent](#), and I were privileged to bring [The Art of Agreement](#) to the recently completed [Christian Leadership Alliance](#) conference. Those in attendance represented a nice cross-section of service organizations, financial institutions, congregations and consultants. All who were present knew how badly meetings and decision-making situations can go. They also knew there are rare moments when meetings reach high and accomplish something wonderful no-one could have done on their own. Together, we looked at the elements of a good decision, the process a working group might follow, and the commonly held foundational beliefs essential to productive decision-making conversations.

One "ah-ha!" that occurs every time I lead this workshop is the difference between informal and formal process. *Formal* is the officially called meeting. *Informal* is the parking lot, bedroom and coffee shop conversation. Each is capable of trumping the other in ways harmful to the mission if they are not working together. Here are some key talking points:

- No matter how much you try to limit conversation to the formal process, informal conversation around the official meeting will take place.
- Formal and informal processes are mutually beneficial.
- When informal process is incorporated prior to the formal it helps to create alignment of people and resources. When informal process is not given opportunity until after, the informal dynamic creates dissension and temptation for leaders to misuse power.

We hope to repeat the presentation at next year's conference, but there is no need to wait. If you feel your decision-making within your board, executive team and/or work groups requires greater skill or an improved approach, please consider inviting our assistance. When we conduct this workshop on site, we are able to tailor the instruction to include the real decisions you face. When it is real, the learning goes even deeper.

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CEO/Senior Design Partner