



Project Summary

You Only Know What You Know

New Knowledge Comes From The Outside

New insights emerge when knowledge is shared during a structured investigative activity and using a facilitated dialogue.

One example was an aerospace part used to keep dirt and water out of a sensitive area of the end product. The part was expensive for what it did and complicated to build. From a business point of view the part was an extremely minor cost of the final product. However, the complications it caused to the organization made it worth a study for improvement.

A group activity called Value Engineering workshop was convened. The attendees consisted of the specialties involved with this part; product design, manufacturing, installation, finance, workers, engineers, managers, and others. Each brought their own solution, mainly telling the other departments to just do their job better.

The group went through structured activities which supported the main questions of: 1) What is it? 2) What does it do? 3) How much does it cost? 4) What else will do that? 5) What does that cost? They found the old design consisted of

- 10 Sheet Metal Components
- 57 Rivets
- 90 Linear Inches of Sealant
- 9 Suppliers
- \$4,000 each

After several convergent and divergent activities, the group proposed a new design consisting of:

- 1 Machined Component
- 0 Fasteners
- 0 Linear Inches of Sealant
- 1 Supplier
- \$200 each

The process of sharing while focused on a mutually beneficial project produces amazing results. One example is while a design engineer was looking at the actual part, he said *“in the 23 years I’ve designed products, I’ve never been told how much it costs to install a fastener. All I have to do is place a cross on the drawing where the fastener should go. And I’ve always figured the more the better.”*



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Take Away

Many Theory-Methods-Tools bring out what is hidden. Once discrepancies, and their meanings, are exposed the group will generate their own improvement ideas. The idea is that you make things visible because you never know what you will find, keep it simple so everyone understands, then move the project forward at one unit. The result is a High Performing Team.

Highly Performing Teams - Thinking As A Community

Traditionally, companies are departmentalized by functional expertise. This has allowed companies to make more efficient use of their limited resources. Such functional structures frequently lead to silo thinking or a myopic attitude. A simple situation is not usually so simple, issues run many levels deep and specialized knowledge does not necessarily mean understanding. Only through cooperation and collaboration will progress be made. Structured events or workshops bring people together, with the same focus, at the same time.

