

Peter S. Adler, PhD

Leadership, Planning, and Conflict Management

CUSTOMIZED WORKSHOPS AND TRAINING PROGRAMS



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STORIES FROM GROUND ZERO

"If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go long, go together.

- Proverb

THE BAKERY

A 150-year-old regional manufacturer of breads, pastries, cookies, and snacks was at a moment of inflection: increased global competition, aging industrial plant, and rising supply and delivery costs. Owners and executives met for a series of difficult discussions leading to long-term company reorganization and a refocusing of fewer products and increased markets.



THE MINE



Papua New Guinea faced a true sustainability dilemma. 50,000 people had been affected by river contamination from a gold and copper mine. At the time the mine produced 20% of the country's gross domestic product but it had disrupted traditional food security systems webs by putting 90,000 tons of daily rock waste and tailings into the local river. After 18 months of challenging meetings, delegates from the nine affected river regions concluded a Memorandum of Agreement that provided impacted

THE UNIVERSITY

A state university committed to both pure and applied research received a 5-year \$20-million National Science Foundation Grant to undertake new, interdisciplinary, and stakeholder driven research on fresh water security. To help launch the effort, achieve common purpose, and prevent splintering, stakeholders were interviewed to understand their uses for new empirical knowledge. A collateral effort brought more than 20 researchers from different disciplines together develop dispute prevention protocols that would avoid future conflicts over grants, authorship, and publications.



The following topics are customized for the needs of specific groups. Depending on sponsorship, audience, and goals, some can be done as short presentations, others as tailored half-day workshops, and a few as full one to two day training programs. I also partner with other fine teachers and trainers when they can add specific additional desired value. Please contact me if you would like to discuss any of these.

Scrutiny, Strategy, and Alignment

Every executive must lead his or her enterprise through organizational change. Sometimes an effort calls for tuning up an older, reliable strategy with updated objectives and benchmarks. In other cases, the call for change arises from an existential threat and requires a profound soul search. The meta-purpose of all strategy is to establish a desired position at a future point in time, avoid aimless wandering, and minimize useless and unproductive conflict. Recommended for group and teams leaders who want to diagnose problems, organize priorities, and design and implement appropriate and aligned strategies for the future.

Eye of the Storm Leadership

Leadership is demanding and not for everyone. The person who takes on the challenge of changing the status quo can expect to be loved, reviled, respected, and hated, sometimes all on the same day. But the acid test of every leader is whether anyone is following. This workshop, based on the book *Eye of the Storm Leadership: 150 Ideas, Stories, Quotes and Exercises on the Politics of Managing Human Conflict* (Adler, RIS, 2008) offers an array of tools for inspiring vision, creating strategy, reconciling differences, solving problems, mending fences, negotiating considerations, building consensus, calming frictions, brokering agreements, and finding common ground. Recommended for anyone who must lead a group, team, department, or organization.

Negotiation "Jazz."

There is a new wave of negotiation thinking that has moved beyond the basic principle of focusing on interests rather than positions as espoused in *Getting To Yes*. Newer approaches help leaders use diagnostic skills to address the challenges their organizations face, and stay both competitive and cooperative in principled ways. This workshop will explore and adapt ideas from the improvisational world of jazz for people who face essential tugs and pulls in their work. Recommended for persons who want to improve their personal and professional problem solving skills.

The Multiparty Policy Problem

This workshop focuses on politically contentious planning and regulatory conflicts that often have communities, government agencies, and businesses at loggerheads and too often result in political gridlock or litigation. The focus of this workshop is on organizing, designing, and managing complex problem solving processes, engaging in constructive interchange, and producing policy "impacts." Recommended for individuals who work in government, business, and community affairs and must interact with others to prevent, manage, or resolve disagreements.

The Fact Intensive Controversy

Most of us were taught that a "fact" is something proven through scientific, legal, or rules-of-logic reasoning. Once established, facts are supposed to be incontrovertible until something new is shown to be valid. In some ways, nothing is a fact until we agree it's a fact or a credible authority says so. This workshop will offer approaches to working with different assertions of 'the truth' for purpose of negotiation and problem solving. Recommended for legal, technical, and scientific experts, or people who rely on them, and who must engage counterparts on difficult problems.

The Seven Deadly Sins of Facilitation

Many people—insurance agents, health professionals, and business brokers, to name just a few—use the word "facilitation" to describe their work. For those who assist groups needing difficult discussions, or help with issue clarification and pathway finding, there are some fundamental violations to avoid. This workshop will explore good, better, and worse practices for independent practitioners or internal staff members who function as facilitators. Recommended for people who serve as organizational facilitators or are retained to manage other meetings.

Cohesion Building and "The Great Group"

Moments of growth and change are usually triggered by external competitive forces in the marketplace; shifts in the economy; or internal pressures that arise from the quest for financial success and excellence. Cohesion building requires bringing people together; keeping them together; and helping them produce tangible results. The process involves appropriate strategies, practical tools, and clear-headed methods that aggregate the highest wisdom of a group. Recommended for people who lead teams, manage departments, or must steer groups through turbulent times.

Mediation Master Class

This workshop is for highly experienced mediators and facilitators who are in the business of assisting others in reaching agreements. It is for practitioners who have worked on many cases over many years and now want to expand the frontiers of their thinking and their work. The workshop builds on Don Schon's notion of "reflective practice" and explores the challenge of bringing science, craft, and art together. It requires advance preparation. Recommended for people with five or more years of experience or twenty or more cases.



Peter S. Adler is a planner and conflict management expert with a long track record of helping public, private, and civil sector organizations achieve alignment and solve tough problems. He is affiliated with **The ACCORD3.o Network** (www.accord3.com) and **GUILD Consulting** (www.guild.consulting) and is sought after for his expertise in resolving complex and consequential issues.

Prior executive experience includes serving as President and CEO of The Keystone Center (www.keystone.org), Executive Director of the Hawai'i Justice Foundation, and founding Director of the Hawai'i Supreme Court's Center for Alternative Dispute Resolution. He has helped groups have productive discussions about business strategies, environmental problems, and public health controversies. In addition to "Stories from Ground Zero" some of his other major projects include a negotiated "Joint Fact Finding" agreement on the pesticides used by GMO corn seed producers, a new strategic plan for a major television station, and the acceleration of cooperation strategies for the ozone treaty under the UN Montreal Protocol.

Adler is the author of four books and numerous academic and feature articles. He offers tailored workshops and training courses that range, depending on the topic, the sponsor's intent, and the specific audience, from two-hours to two-days.



What Others Say

"An action-packed, highly interactive course taught by a seasoned negotiator and mediator. Highlights were interesting readings covering a wide variety of approaches and topics, simulations to fine-tune your own skills, stimulating discussion sessions, and speakers who shared different perspectives and real-life experiences. Engaging, thought provoking, and informative. Definitely worthwhile!" - Kirsten Rose, Foreign Language expert

"Mind blowing! No matter your background, Peter's class is an immensely valuable experience providing students hands on practice and engaging tools and strategies to create 'elegant solutions' through purposeful engagement with competitive and collaborative styles. He infuses self-exploration and understanding, and a healthy respect for the complexity and nuance presented by each unique situation. An opportunity not to be missed!" – Katie Bennett, lawyer and mediator

"This is a fabulous chance to learn all about negotiation from one of the best! Peter is a skilled teacher with deep knowledge and years of experience. You will gain a lot from this course in a short time. The course is full of excellent learning. Thoroughly useful and worth the investment." - Ashley Maynard, Professor and Chair, Dept. of Psychology, University of Hawaii at Manoa