

Workshop 4: Governance and Stewardship

Session b: Decision-making in non-hierarchical structures

Learning Objectives/Desired Outcomes:

Participants will leave this workshop with...

- Increased consensus-building practice
- Collective decision-making around the right governance model for a given project
- Increased capacity to lead within non-hierarchical structures
- Understanding the critical aspects of good governance:
 - Leadership and accountability
 - Clear and refined roles
 - Decision-making

Materials

- Poster paper and markers

Preparation

- Read through the entire workshop
- Practice leading Blind Finger ahead of time so you feel confident with the exercise
- Choose a prompt for the “Spectrogram” exercise that fits the context of the group
- Prepare a blank poster titled, “Our Core Beliefs About Governance” (or whatever prompt you choose for the Spectrogram)
- Prepare a poster that explains the “5-finger” consensus building protocol
- Prepare two blank posters, one titled, “Leadership Practices that Support Non-Hierarchical Decision-making,” and “Leadership Practices Not Helpful”

Agenda

1. OPENING CIRCLE (Seeds) = personal connections

Opening Reflection Circle: Leadership experiences	Time: 20 min
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Start in a seated circle2. Share that today’s session is about leadership and governance in non-hierarchical structures3. Acknowledge the leadership experience everyone brings into	<p><u>Purpose:</u> Relationship-building Recognizing some of the leadership experience we bring</p>

<p>the room:</p> <p><i>We all have leadership experience whether in our families, at school, at work, or in the community. Let's start today by reflecting on one of our leadership experiences...</i></p> <p>4. Ask people to respond to the following prompt:</p> <p><i>Describe a situation in which you have taken leadership... What form did your leadership take?</i></p> <p>5. Honor all the experiences shared and bring home the point that we collectively have a huge wealth of leadership experience that we can draw on as we practice leading within non-hierarchical structures. Emphasize that the positive leadership experiences and the negative ones are equally valuable for learning. Look for opportunities to highlight I forms of leadership not often seen - developing others leadership, emotional leadership/caring for others, listening etc</p>	<p>into the room</p> <p><u>Facilitator's Notes:</u></p> <p>Make sure to share your own leadership experience</p> <p>Project an air of acceptance and respect for all people's stories and experiences</p> <p>Take mental note of the stories people share so you can draw on them as needed when supporting individuals to deepen their own leadership practice, building on the strengths and experiences they bring</p>
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2. FIREBUILDER (Preparing the soil) = relationship and trust building

<p>Blind Finger</p>	<p>Time: 20 min</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Invite everyone to form two lines facing each other in which everyone has one person across from him/her. It doesn't matter who is across from them-- they won't be partnered up. 2. Ask everyone to shake hands to make sure there is an equal number of people in each line. 3. Stand at one end of the two lines so everyone can see you and say: <p><i>We are going to play a simple game that starts with everyone putting your fingers up like you are going to ring a doorbell. Kind of E.T. phone home. Great. Now, in a moment everyone on this side (choose one of the lines) will close their eyes – for a couple of minutes they will not have the gift of sight. It will be up to someone from this side (point to the other line) to guide them around the room. Now this is very important – let me know show you how you will guide your partner.</i></p> <p>4. Model this with someone:</p> <p><i>You will make contact with just the tip of the index fingers. This is a silent game, so all communication will happen between the tips of the finger. Now I know this is a smart group—some of you might get creative and decide to link fingers and just drag your partner around. NO—this is more subtle – you will only guide your partner through the connection of the very tips of the fingers. Are there any questions?</i></p>	<p><u>Purpose:</u></p> <p>To build trusting relationships To notice personal tendencies around trust, listening, leadership, and following</p> <p><u>Facilitator Notes:</u></p> <p>Take clarifying questions, giving lots of positive feedback for questions and using them as an opportunity to emphasize the rules of the game:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Silence • Only guide with the very tip of the finger • Follower keep your eyes closed (of course no one is stopping you from peaking) • Leaders take very good care of your

<p>5. Ask the line that's going to lead:</p> <p><i>Does everyone in this line agree to be compassionate leaders? That means taking really good care of your partner.</i></p> <p>6. To the other line:</p> <p><i>Everyone on this side, go ahead and close your eyes and take a deep breath. Remember if you get nervous you can always come back to the power of the breath.</i></p> <p>7. To get the game started:</p> <p><i>Great, now leaders you can make contact with anyone in the other line EXCEPT for the person right across from you.</i></p> <p>8. Once everyone is connected:</p> <p><i>Okay you may begin. Take your partner for a nice safe journey around the space. And remember SILENCE is an important part of this game. Have fun!</i></p> <p>9. Watch as people are moving around the space. Make sure everyone is safe.</p> <p>10. Coach the leaders by saying things like:</p> <p><i>Beautiful. Pay close attention to their body language. Notice if your partner needs to go slow, or if they are ready to move a little faster. Remember to keep the silence (only if they talk—laughing is okay).</i></p> <p>11. Allow them to move around the space for 1-2 minutes and then say: <i>Okay wherever you are, keeping your eyes closed, go ahead and freeze just like that. If your eyes are open, go ahead and close them so we all have our eyes closed. Thank your partner in your mind. Now in a moment, everyone who started out following with their eyes closed is going to open their eyes and leave their partners standing their with their eyes closed and index fingers out. And go find someone to lead around, someone other than the person who led you around.</i></p> <p>12. Once everyone is connected to someone new, prompt them to begin again.</p> <p>13. Allow them to move around the space for 1-2 minutes and then say: <i>Okay wherever you are, keeping your eyes closed, go ahead and freeze just like that. If your eyes are open, go ahead and close them so we all have our eyes closed. Thank your partner in your mind. Now in a moment, staying connected you will guide each other around the room, sharing the leadership so that I can't tell who is leading and who is following. Again we will do this silently, but we will do this with our eyes open. Go ahead and open your eyes and begin, sharing the leadership.</i></p> <p>14. Provide coaching: <i>pay attention to what's needed to really share the leadership.</i></p> <p>15. Allow them to move around the space for about 1-2 minutes</p>	<p>partners</p>
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and then say: *Okay go ahead and guide each other back to the big circle.*

Reflection:

- *How was that?*
- *What did you notice?*
- *Who liked leading more than following? Why? Does anyone have an answer different than that?*
- *Who liked following with your eyes closed more than leading? Why? Does anyone have an answer different than that?*
- *How was it to share the leadership?*
- *What lessons about leadership can we pull out from this game? (Scribe these)*
- *Why is listening important to be an effective leader? What role does listening play in good leadership?*

3. BRIDGE EXERCISES (Planting the seeds) = connecting personal experiences to the big picture

<p>Spectrogram</p>	<p>Time: 20 min</p>
<p><u>Instructions:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gather the group around the posters from the last session that break-down the different governance models 2. Let the group know that in a moment we will discuss which of the these governance models best fits the needs of the Urban Campesinos projects, but before we do that let's do a process to help unpack some of our ideas about governance... 3. Stand up and physically draw an imaginary line down the center of the room and explain to participants: <p><i>This line represents a continuum or a spectrum of beliefs. Standing at this end [walk over to one end of the line] means you strongly believe people need a strong leader to manage projects and hold people accountable to the goals of the project. And standing at this end [walk over to the other end of the imaginary line], means you strongly believe that for projects to be successful, everyone must share the leadership equally.. You can choose anywhere along this line to stand to show where you stand in your own mind on this</i></p>	<p><u>Purpose:</u></p> <p>To unpack participants thoughts about governance in preparation for the following exercise to choose a governance model for the Urban Campesinos project</p> <p><u>Facilitator's Notes:</u></p> <p>This exercise requires the facilitator to help the group manage tensions and polarities. It's okay if the group is all over the place in their beliefs and/or if the group is split around more hierarchical vs. more horizontal leadership. The key is helping the group draw out the core functions and benefits of each governance</p>

issue/topic. Any questions?

4. Invite everyone to choose their positions. Let people know they can shift their position at anytime based on what someone says and to what extent they agree with that person.
5. Ask for a quick reflection on what people notice about the group's positioning. Maybe everyone is bunched up in one area. Maybe the group is evenly split. Maybe there is a big range. Whatever it is, invite someone from the group to share what they notice.
6. Solicit statements from people at the two extremes and from at the middle to explain why they chose that position. Remind people they can shift positions based on what they hear from others.
7. For the last 5 minutes, ask the group to share any key take-aways: *What are some of our core beliefs about governance?*
8. Scribe these

Feel free to choose a different spectrogram prompt that better fits the reality of the group:

Sample Prompts:

- Management
 - If you are a 200 person business you must have a general manager **vs.**
 - Collective leadership is essential no matter the size of the business
- Compensation
 - It's really not fair that some people get paid more than others **vs.**
 - It's important to compensate certain work at a higher rate
- Evaluation
 - The best way to evaluate people is for everyone sit in a circle and talk it out face to face **vs.**
 - The best way to evaluate people is for the person in charge to issue evaluations of his/her employees
- Leadership
 - Some people are born leaders **vs.**
 - Anyone has the capacity to lead
- Decision-making
 - All decisions should be made by all people impacted by those decisions **vs.**
 - Decision-making should be entrusted to certain

approach. For example, the function of hierarchy could be efficiency and enforced accountability. These functions can also be had in horizontal governance models if we are thoughtful about how we design them. For example, we might choose to have distinct decision-making roles (distributed power) in a shared leadership model as a way to increase efficiency. This spectrogram can help people tease these concerns out and develop a model that meets their range of concerns.

leaders elected by the group	
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<p>Connecting Governance Structures to Solidarity Economy Projects</p>	<p>Time: 20-30 min</p>
<p><u>Instructions:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gather the group around the posters from the last session that break-down the different governance models 2. Ask the group to discuss which of these governance models would be best for the Urban Campesinos project and why 3. Seek to build consensus around one governance model (could also be a hybrid, if someone proposes it) 4. Once you feel like there is a strong proposal on the table, take a 5-finger straw poll... Ask people to hold up the number of fingers that represents how strongly they support this governance model: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. 5 fingers = I advocate for this choice b. 4 fingers = I am fine with this choice c. 3 fingers = I won't block this choice, but I do have some reservations d. 2 fingers = I could support this choice, but I need significant changes e. 1 finger = I block this choice, cannot live with it and do not see a way to make it better 5. If there are folks with 3 or 2 fingers up, ask them to share what their reservations are and how they think the model could be enhanced to better fit 6. If anyone has one finger up, ask them to share why and to make a proposal for a better model 	<p><u>Purpose:</u></p> <p>To review content from last session and apply it to selection of a governance model for an actual project the group is working on</p> <p>To practice consensus building</p> <p><u>Facilitator Notes:</u></p> <p>This exercise is meant to set-up the next exercise and is totally dependent on what projects the participants are involved in. The instructions are designed for a group who is all involved in the same solidarity economy project: Urban Campesinos. If your group is not involved in any solidarity economy projects yet, you can choose some from the Solidarity Economy Cards. If they are involved in a variety of projects, then include them all and have people choose which governance structure would be right for each... For the next exercise, create multiple scenarios</p> <p>If the group is involved in a project that already has an effective governance structure, you may want to project into the future: <i>Looking at actual projects - where do you want to be in 5 years , how many people, staff, volunteers, interns. what are some decision you will need to make (large and small) and how will you make them?</i></p> <p>NOTE: consensus = everyone with 4 or 5 fingers up -- 3</p>

	<p>fingers is also okay as long as you try to improve the model to address the person's reservations.</p>
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4. BIG PICTURE LEARNING (Sun and Water) = New learning/big picture content

Role Play: Decision-making	Time: 1 hour
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Once there is consensus, brainstorm some decision-making challenges that have already happened, are currently happening, or could happen in the future 2. Decide on one challenge to work through. 3. Break the group up into small groups 4. Have them decide who will play what roles in the selected governance structure 5. Let them know they have 25 minutes to answer the following guiding questions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What are the key questions or considerations? b. What do we need to prepare ourselves to take this decision? c. What steps are needed to make this decision that reflect our values? d. What do we need in order to make it successful? e. What unique name will be assign to our decision making process? 6. Make sure each group has a scribe to document the group's answers to the questions 7. After 30 minutes, each small group reports back on how they navigate the scenario. After each group has presented, the entire group takes a moment to digest the different approaches and then comments on the following guiding questions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What do you like? b. What concerns do you have? c. What's missing? 	<p><u>Purpose:</u></p> <p>To practice playing leadership roles within a non-hierarchical governance structure</p> <p><u>Facilitator Notes:</u></p> <p>You may also choose to do this whole group, depending on how many participants there are</p>

5. CREATING CONTENT (Harvest): Analysis and/or action steps

<p>List of Leadership Practices that Support Non-Hierarchical Governance</p>	<p>Time: 15</p>
<p><u>Instructions:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask people to meet in pairs and to discuss what they observed about their own leadership during the decision-making process 2. The next step is to create the list.. You could do this in a number of different ways.. Here are two: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Come back to the whole group and ask people to reflect on what their partner shared and to extrapolate one leadership quality that supported positive decision-making under this governance structure. (Optional: Once you have a list of helpful qualities. Ask the group to share leadership qualities or styles that are not as helpful in non-hierarchical structures)... OR b. Put two poster papers on the wall, one titled “Leadership Qualities that support Non-hierarchical Governance” and “Practices that make Non-hierarchical Decision-making Difficult.” Invite pairs to walk up together and add their thoughts to each poster based on the conversation they just had 3. Ask the group to reflect on the list and share what they notice, what stands out to them... 	<p><u>Purpose:</u></p> <p>To c-create a list of leadership qualities that support non-hierarchical governance</p> <p><u>Facilitator Notes:</u></p> <p>Nice to bring people back to their original “Blind Finger” pairs</p> <p>Feel free to adapt the language to be as relevant as possible to your participants</p>

6. CLOSING CIRCLE (Saving Seeds) = Reflection

<p>Action Circle</p>	<p>Time: 5-10 min</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Form a standing circle 2. Thank everyone for their thoughtful participation. Celebrate the successes of the session 3. Ask everyone to share one leadership quality they are choosing to embody over the next week. Whoever is ready to share can start and then move to the left. 	<p><u>Purpose:</u></p> <p>To translate learning into action</p> <p><u>Facilitator Notes:</u></p> <p>Keep energy upbeat, focused and hopeful</p>

