

JAN 2020

ON A PERSONAL NOTE

Dear colleague,

The new year is a chance for a fresh start. A time to discard old habits. Or commit to new ones. It's easy to leverage the momentum of a new calendar year – the collective energy of new beginnings.

Towards the end of an old year and beginning of a new one, I often look forward to being rid of the past year; particularly one with significant challenges. Hardwired to look for problems, we sometimes forget to take in the big picture. This natural and primal mechanism is vital for the survival of our species – to anticipate problems so we can take steps to overcome them before they arise.

But this year is special. A new decade begins.

If we looked at the last decade, a fuller more complete picture takes shape. Many of us have made great strides in developing our careers, growing families, building our businesses or changing course for the better. It's difficult to see the tiny steps taken in the trenches. Only once we've climbed out can we see what we've built, one shovel at a time.

Over the holidays I happened upon an old notebook.... In it I had written 5 values and goals that were worth pursuing. This is something I made a habit of doing annually. At the time it was simply a tool to articulate values that were most meaningful. It formed the basis of decision making on all fronts – financial, social and personal. To my surprise much of the goals noted had been accomplished. There is still work to be done. But the values, with few exceptions, were steadfast. Illuminating. I've heard it said that we often overestimate what we

can accomplish in a year and underestimate what we can accomplish in a decade. My old notebook proved this to be true.

The past few years I have fallen out of the habit of jotting down values and establishing harmonized goals and actions. Seeing these values alive in measurable actions achieved, I felt a huge sense of gratitude for what I and those around me (including you) have accomplished. Our only real measurement of accomplishment is what we value at our core and what we do to live these values. This is our most authentic contribution.

I've included this worksheet. At the least I hope it helps you reconnect with what truly drives you. More importantly, I hope it proves to be a good tool to make your next decision based on your core values. (Feel free to email me for a digital copy at michelle@khoradesign.ca).

Wishing you a fulfilled and happy decade!



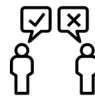
Much of our best work begins with a multi stakeholder engagement process. Each is designed specifically to address our clients' needs and their stakeholders' interests. A successful result skillfully forges conflicting desires into a harmonious and useful outcome.

Here are 7 guiding principles that can help facilitate almost any stakeholder engagement process:



Uncertainty is the only constant in life – be open to adaptation.

Stakeholder workshops are planned and design in a way that often presupposes change as predictable. While a framework for implementing change is smart, being open and adaptable allows for us to respond intelligently to shifting mindsets and opportunities. Diversity is an asset in any multi stakeholder process. Diversity can be unpredictable, but it can generate more opportunities than it hinders. Understand that systemic change is part of the process.



Conflict is inevitable – use it as a tool.

Essential to a harmonious outcome is dealing with conflict as it arises. A skillfully lead multi-stakeholder process can even leverage conflict to advance change. As individuals, our perspectives are inherently different. When we hold on to this difference, forward process is limited. Bringing conflicts to the surface can allow the entire group to see the depth and breadth of the issue at hand. Skillful negotiation of divergent interests is essential.



Enable effective and open dialogue.

It is wise to appreciate that emotions play a role in any multi-stakeholder process. Having the willingness to communicate in an open and compassionate way lends itself to high quality dialogue, thoughtful solutions, and a clear enforceable path forward.



Model collaborative leadership.

Collaborative leadership can leverage varying styles and personalities for the benefit of a successful outcome. It allows participants to work effectively together, share responsibility and become invested in solving complex and multifaceted issues. This may include relinquishing your own leadership as the facilitator to drive the best solutions. Holding on to formal hierarchy is often the surest way for a multi stakeholder process to fail.



Identify the underlying 'culture' – formal and informal.

Key to moving any stakeholder engagement forward is clearly understanding preexisting rules of engagement; those formal and informal traditions that can stop a stakeholder engagement process in its tracks. If we uncover and articulate these values and behaviors early, they can be leveraged for what they are worth. Being aware of the biases at play can move an organization to challenge them throughout the process. This allows the group to see clearly potential blind spots that are so deeply buried, they often go unnoticed.



Strive to consciously level power dynamics.

Misplaced power can be a corrosive force particularly in a multi stakeholder process. Power disparities need to be addressed early for an effective and productive process. Shifting power dynamics can greatly improve a successful outcome. It lays the groundwork for creating a safe space for inclusive problem solving, resulting in empowered participation.



Foster active participation. Creativity is active.

Most of us learn best by doing. This is no different in a multi stakeholder process. Furthermore, a process whereby the intent is not to learn from the activity and/ or each other is useless. Participatory tools can foster a sense of fun, emotional engagement and creative problem solving.

Core Values List

Below are some common values that might help trigger some ideas. It is not recommended to choose more than 5 at a time to focus on. It also helps to take the time to identify WHY these values are important to you. This exercise can reveal an underlying overarching principal by which you choose to make most of your decisions.

Authenticity	Fun	Openness
Adventure	Grace	Peace
Autonomy	Growth	Recognition
Balance	Happiness	Respect
Beauty	Honesty	Responsibility
Compassion	Humor	Security
Challenge	Influence	Self-Respect
Community	Inner Harmony	Spirituality
Competency	Kindness	Stability
Creativity	Learning	Success
Curiosity	Love	Wealth
Fame	Loyalty	Wisdom
Friendships	Meaningful Work	