

Leadership is the Ability to Have Courageous Conversations



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A Dialogic Approach to Leadership

**LEADERSHIP IS THE ABILITY TO
HAVE COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS**

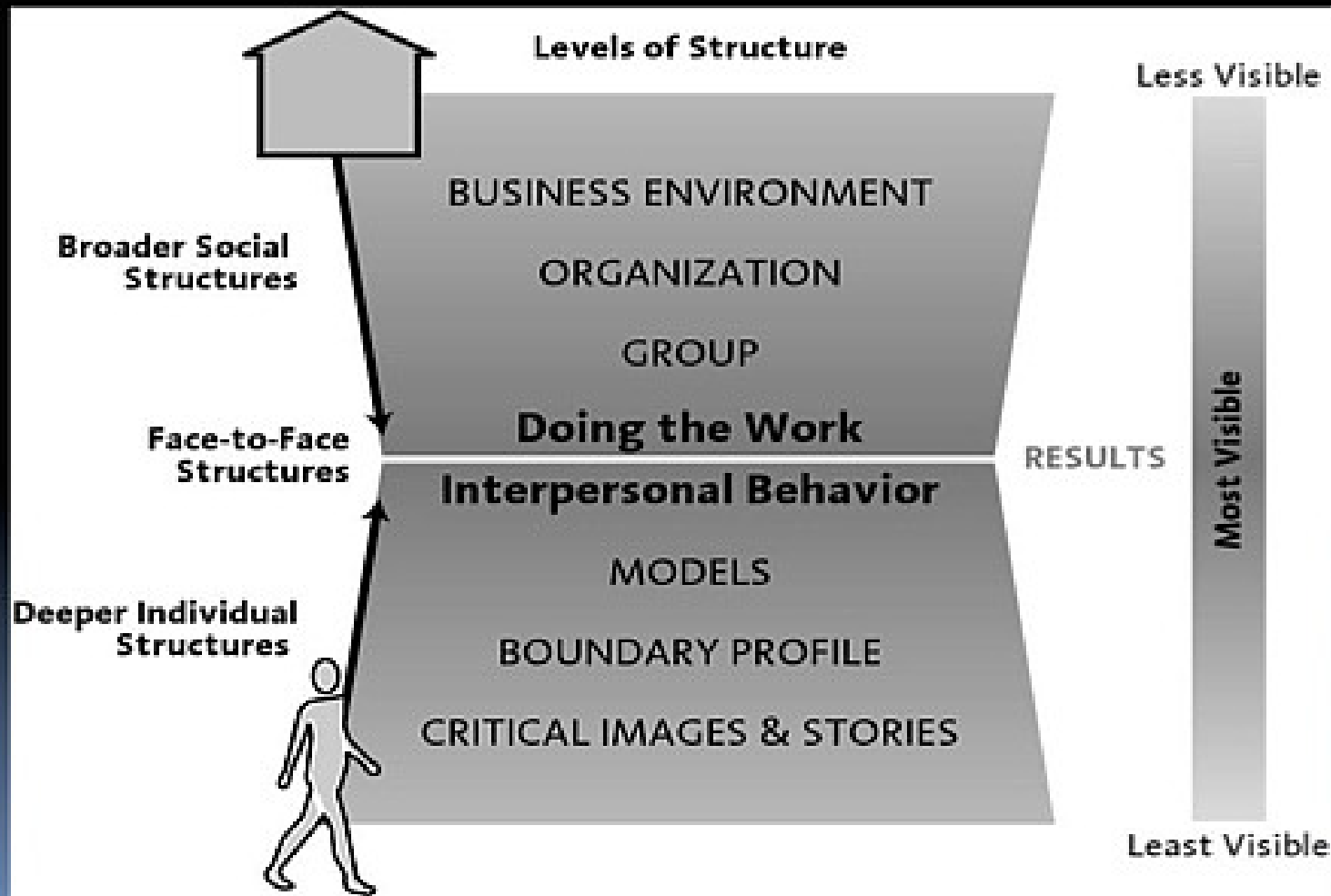
CATHERINE THOMSON

Session Objectives

In this session you will be introduced to:

- **The Theory of Structural Dynamics and its place in face to face communication with individuals, groups and leaders**
- **We will focus on one element of the model this evening "Action Modes"**
- **Look at the "Action Modes" element of the model in relation to conversations you may have as practitioner, leader/manager or member of a team**

Structural Sources of Verbal Interaction



David Kantor

From Monologue to Dialogue



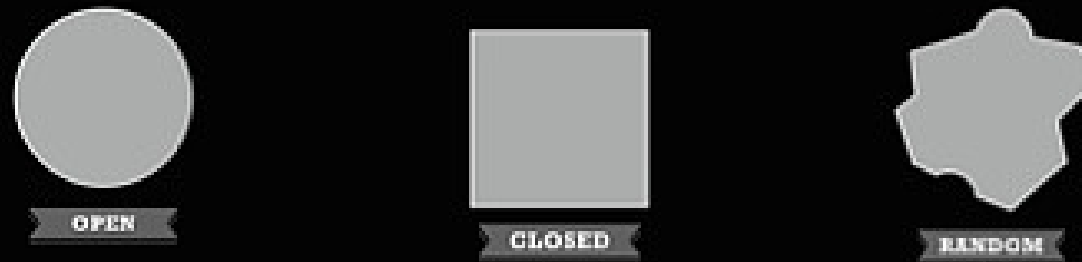
Adapted from W Isaacs

Baseline Behavioural Propensities

Action Modes



Operating System



Communication Domain



David Kantor

Four Fundamental Actions



Start the action

Finish the action

Correct the action

Connect the actions

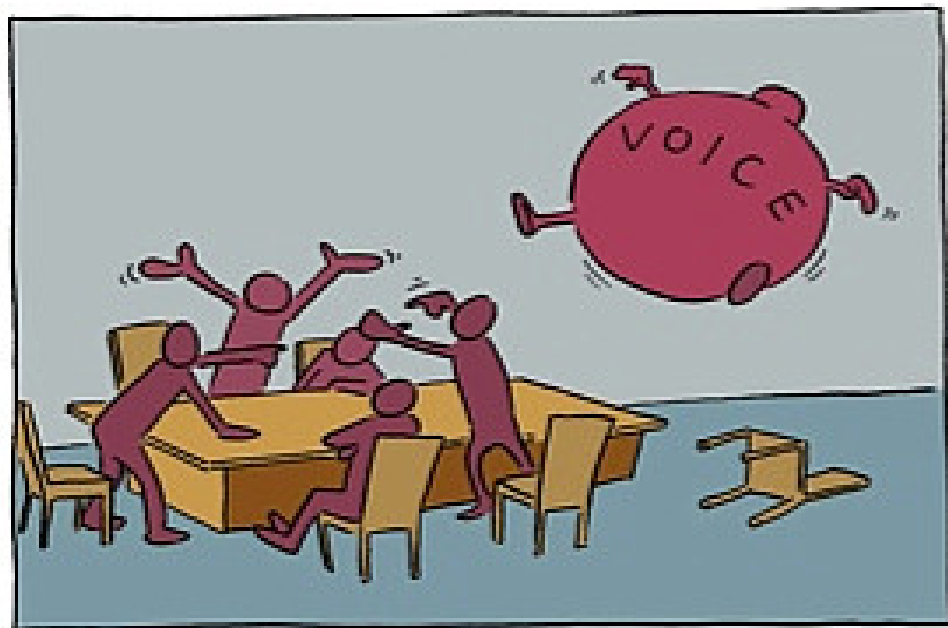
A Move initiates or Suggests direction

A Follow validates and completes an action

An Oppose challenges and corrects the action

A Bystand provides a perspective on the overall interaction and attempts to reconcile competing actions

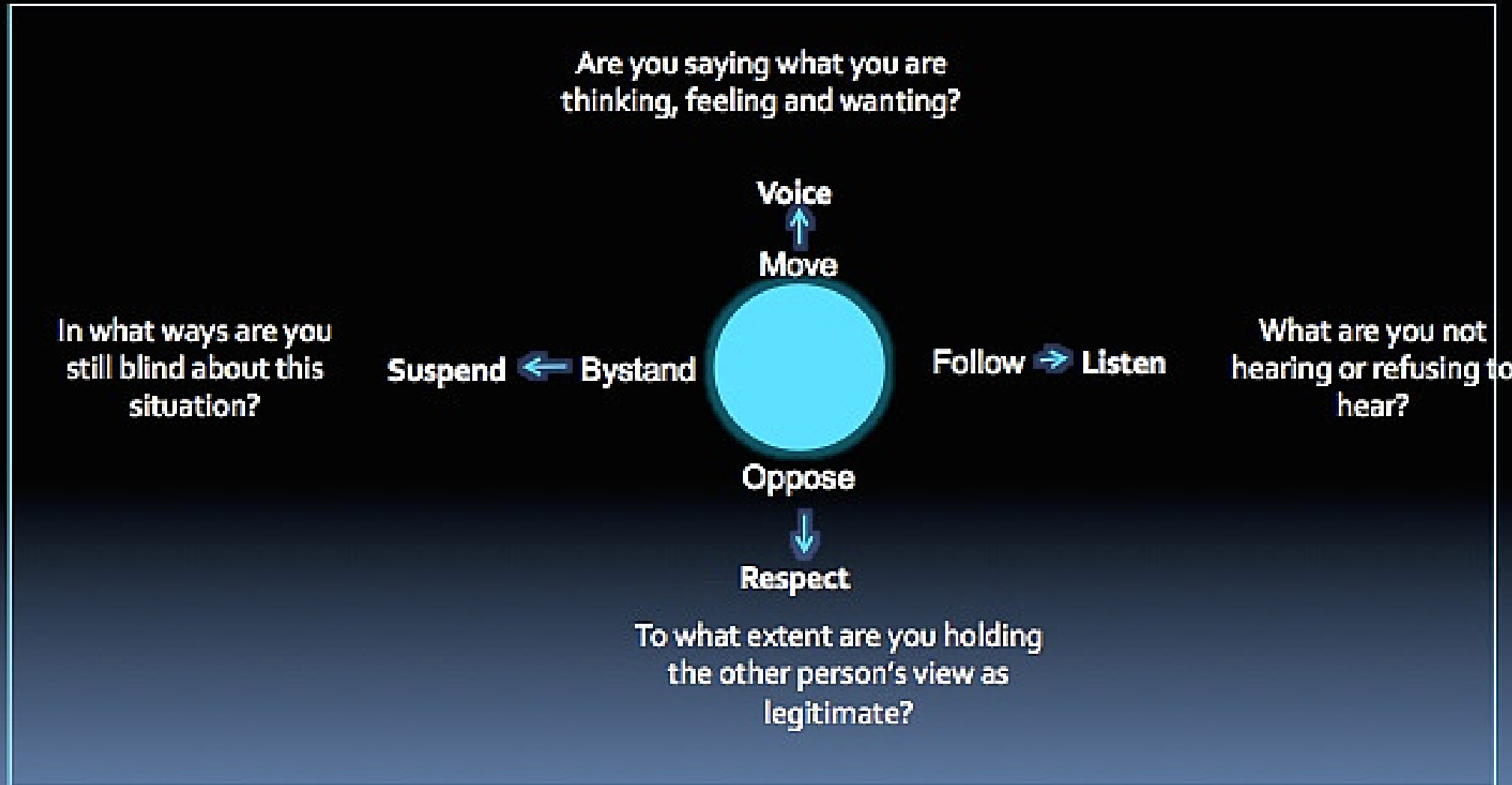
David Kantor



"I wanted to get your opinions before I go ahead and do what I want to do."

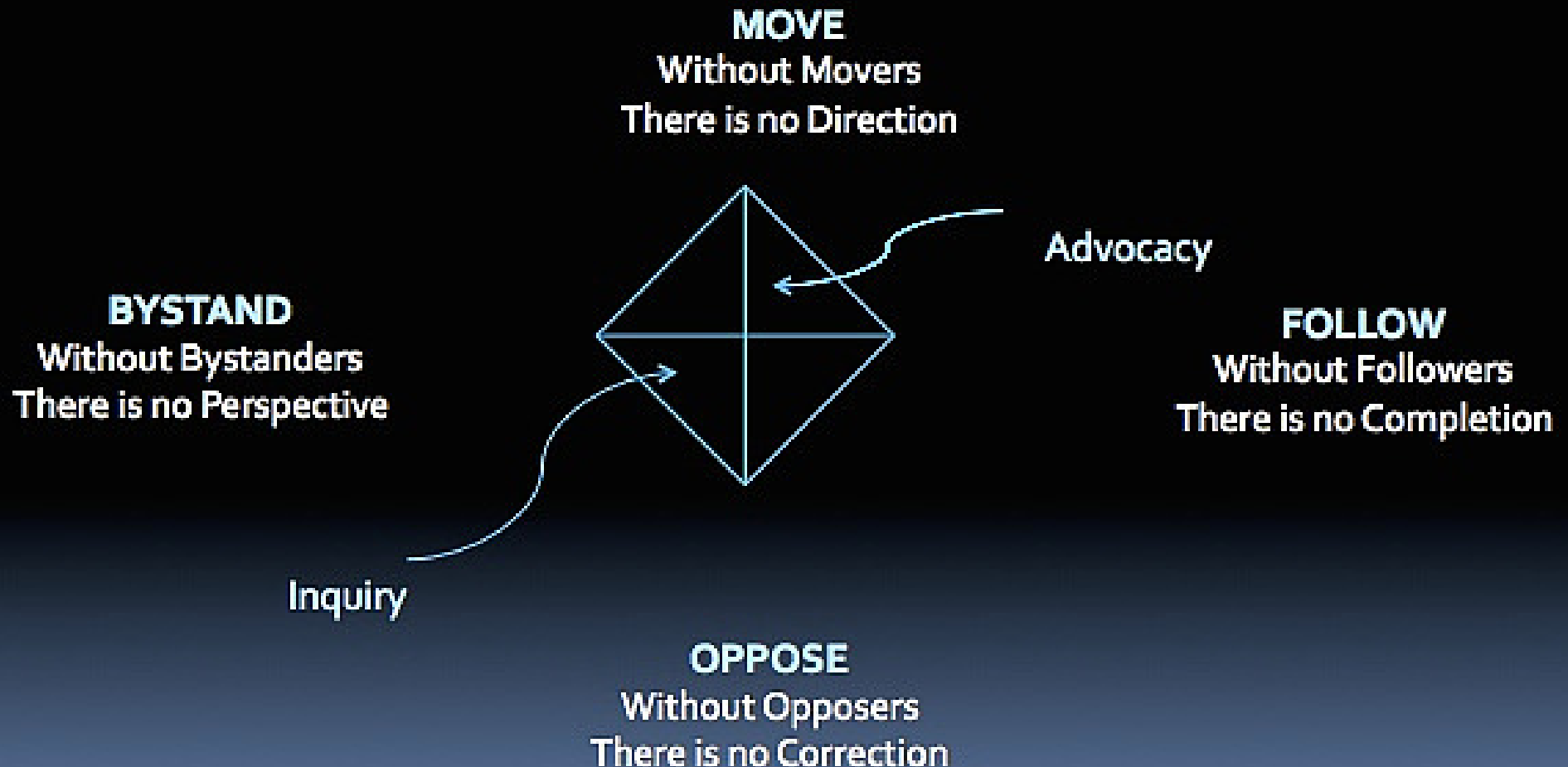


Dialogue Practices



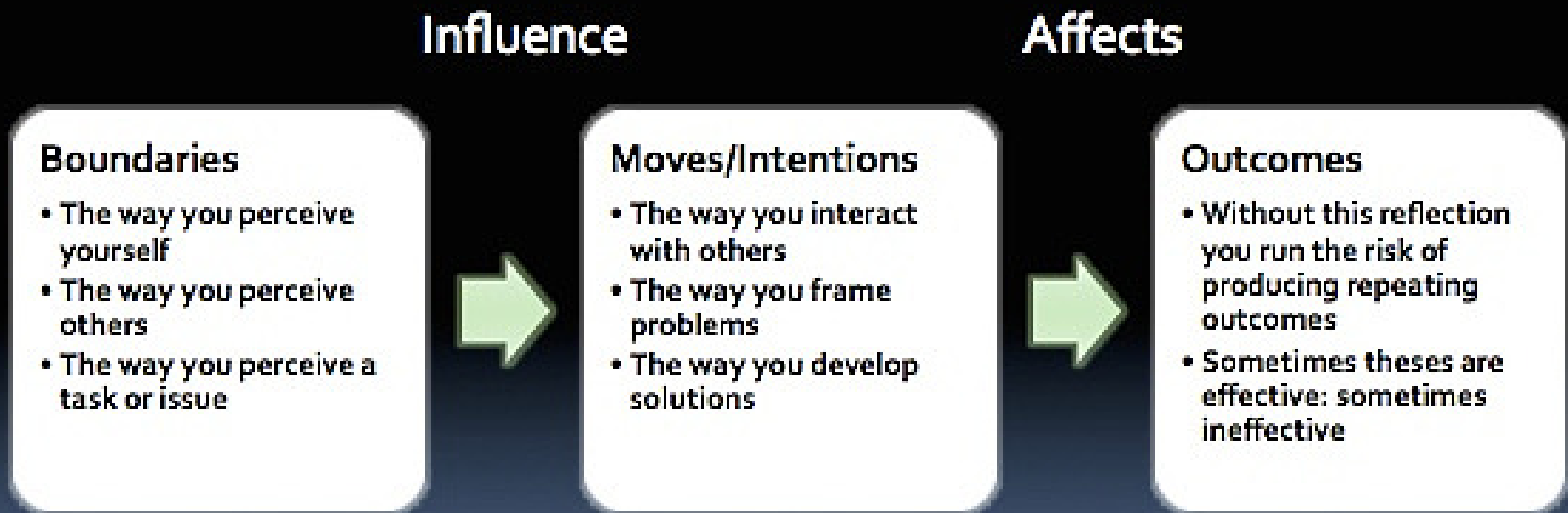
David Kantor

Action Modes

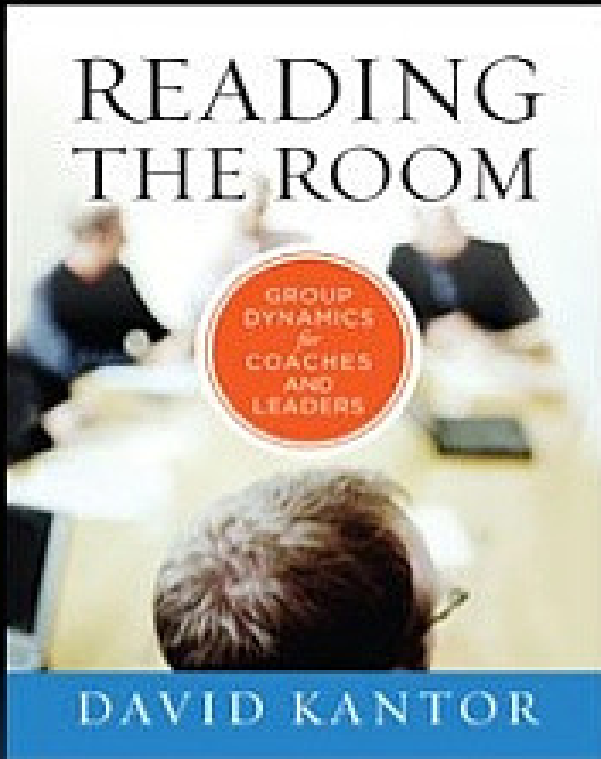


David Kantor

Why look at Boundary Profiles?



Reinforcing Loop



Click Here
for more details
about the book

4-Player Model Mini-Assessment App

[View Details Here](#)

Diagnostic for Reflecting on a Conversation

Authentic Voice

What did I really want to say in this meeting - what was I thinking feeling and wanting?

What kept me from saying what I really wanted to say but didn't?

What risks were there for me and others in bringing out what really needed to be said?

What was the risk(s) for me and others in not bringing out what really needed to be said?

Diagnostic for Reflecting on a Conversation

Listening

How well did I listen?

How did I recognise the signs/signals that other people give out that went beyond the words they are saying? How did I respond to what I was seeing?

What was my typical response to what I heard (immediately oppose, immediately follow, say something completely different and change the direction of the conversation or comment on the process rather than on the content)? What is my usual response pattern when I am in conversation?

What had I already made up my mind about beforehand which prevented me from really listening?

Do I have a pattern of interrupting before someone had finished speaking – did I do this in the conversation and what were the implications of interrupting from the perspective of the other person?

Diagnostic for Reflecting on a Conversation

Respecting

What judgements did I hold about other people in this meeting and how did this affect the way I really listen to what they have to say?

What judgements am I still holding in relation to what I know other people raised in the meeting?

What is my typical response to hearing something I don't agree with? (state my case or ask questions to find out more). What was the pattern expressed in this conversation?

Was there someone's point of view that was never voiced or taken seriously in this conversation? If so, why did it happen and did I play a part in this and what is the impact on the conversation and the person? (Consider that the person who is not heard could be you!)

Diagnostic for Reflecting on a Conversation

Bystand - Suspending Judgement

What beliefs do I have about myself and others in relation this project/situation/meeting?

How did my beliefs influence my contribution and outcomes of this meeting?

In what ways was I blind in relation to my own behaviour?

What was at risk of letting go my beliefs/sense of being right/winning over someone else?

Reading List

Click on the title for book details

[Reading the Room - David Kantor](#)

In this innovative book, renowned psychologist David Kantor applies his research and theory of structural dynamics to the workplace to show how individual leaders and coaches can develop their own skills in understanding group dynamics and apply this understanding to improve organizational communication and performance. Reading the Room provides guidelines for understanding the differences between communication in low stakes and high stakes situations, a framework for improving leadership behaviour in crisis, and action strategies to enhance leadership development through organizational approaches and accelerated team performance.

[Dialogue and the Art of Conversation - William Isaacs](#)

For anyone wishing to improve their living of dialogue this book is very helpful. It gradually leads the reader into a deeper understanding of four main aspects of dialogue - listening, respecting, suspending and voicing and gives helpful exercises - particularly good are the questions that are most helpful for self-reflection.

Reading List

Click on the title for book details

[On Dialogue - David Bohm](#)

Never before has there been a greater need for deeper listening and more open communication to cope with the complex problems facing our organizations, businesses and societies. Renowned scientist David Bohm believed there was a better way for humanity to discover meaning and to achieve harmony. He identified creative dialogue, a sharing of assumptions and understanding, as a means by which the individual and society as a whole, can learn more about themselves and others, and achieve a renewed sense of purpose.

[Humble Enquiry: The Gentle Art of Asking Instead of Telling - Edgar H Schein](#)

The message of the book is simple but extremely powerful. We all think we know how to ask the right questions but this book gently challenges to analyse your own approach and helps you to realise where you can improve.

Websites & Contact

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