

Facilitators Exchange

Your quarterly guide to Facilitators and Facilitation in USACE

Volume 11 • September 2015

Welcome to the 11th issue of the Facilitators' Exchange Newsletter. It is your guide to all things facilitation related within the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. You may find additional information at the Facilitators' Exchange webpage—<http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/employees/facilitator/facilitator.cfm>. The newsletter is intended to share information on facilitation webinars, case studies, process tools, facilitation resources, training opportunities, USACE facilitators and professional facilitation organizations. The Exchange is sponsored by Ms. Ada Benavides of the Civil Works Directorate.



Upcoming Webinar: 21 October 2015 at 1:00 pm Central

Our next exchange webinar will be on “Horicon Marsh Planning Assistance to States Conceptual Modeling”. The speakers will be Charles Theiling, Megan McGuire and Wendy Frohlich. Chuck is a Regional Technical Specialist in the Rock Island District. Megan McGuire is a Biologist and Acting Value Engineer Officer in the St. Paul District. Wendy Frohlich is a Biologist and Master Planner in the Rock Island District. See the Webinar Presenters section in this newsletter for more information on our speakers and how they are engaging technical stakeholders in conceptual modeling environmental problems in the Upper Midwest. This topic includes Horicon Marsh (Wisconsin) Water Level Management and Sangamon River (Illinois) Sediment Transport. The Call in/Web In, Access, and Security Codes are: 888-273-3658, 5165285, and 1234. Your co-hosts will be Courtney Chambers and Julie Marcy, ERDC-EL. If you have ideas for future webinar topics or speakers, please provide them to Julie.B.Marcy@usace.army.mil.



Fall fawn sneaking a garden drink



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Megan McGuire,
Wendy Frohlich and
Chuck Theiling



Facilitation Webinar Presenters: Megan McGuire, Wendy Frohlich and Chuck Theiling

Megan is a Biologist and Acting Value Engineer Officer with the St. Paul District. She seeks to build an ecological conceptual modeling team that can assist teams throughout the Corps in engaging agencies and stakeholders in collaborative modeling

Wendy is a Biologist and Master Planner in the Rock Island District. Her work includes providing planning guidance, ensuring environmental compliance, and assisting with public input for Master Plans.

Chuck is Regional Technical Specialist in the Rock Island District. His interests include aquatic habitat connectivity, watershed nutrient abatement, climate adaptation, green infrastructure, and ecosystem goods and services.

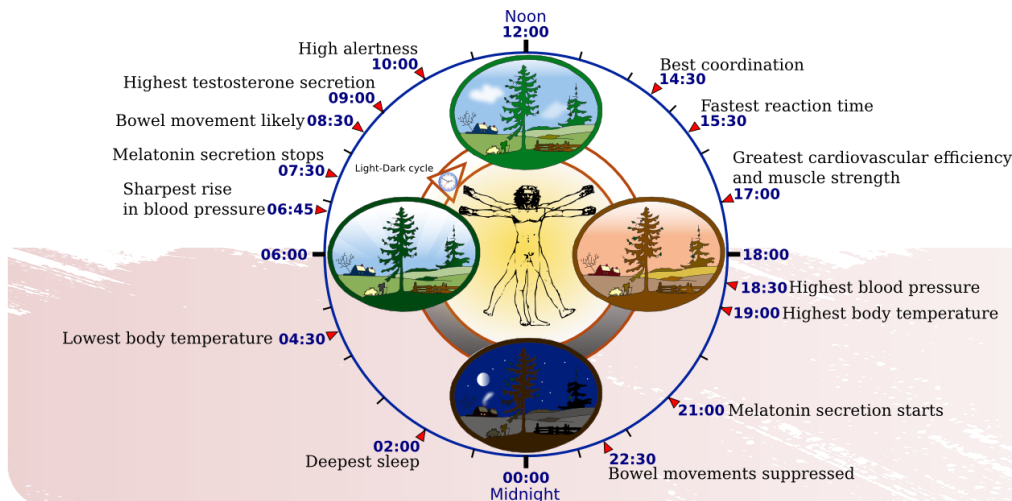
More information from Megan.....

Summary of Groups & Topics You've Facilitated:

Groups: Agency stakeholders and Corps staff for conceptual modeling, Corps teams working on early stage designs, value engineering teams working on VE, and community advisory committees. Topics: ecosystem restoration, project rehabilitation, flood risk reduction, and project management and scheduling.

What advice do you have for new facilitators?: Shadow more experienced facilitators. This is something I would like to continue to do throughout my career. I have learned really insightful techniques from other facilitators who have a great intuitive understanding of how to read groups and respond to group issues. Also, take a class in facilitation, especially from outside government. I learned an incredible amount from the CBSG (Conservation Breeding Specialist Group) Facilitation Course. Finally, it just takes a lot of practice!

What is an effective facilitation tool for you?: After reading that people tend to be influenced by others' ideas, I started asking people to brainstorm individually before bringing their ideas to the full group. If you jump into brainstorming as a group right away, you may lose some of the more unusual ideas as people continue to build off the initial ideas. Five minutes of quiet individual brainstorming encourages the most diversity of ideas. *Note from Julie—This is also referred to as Nominal Group Technique.*

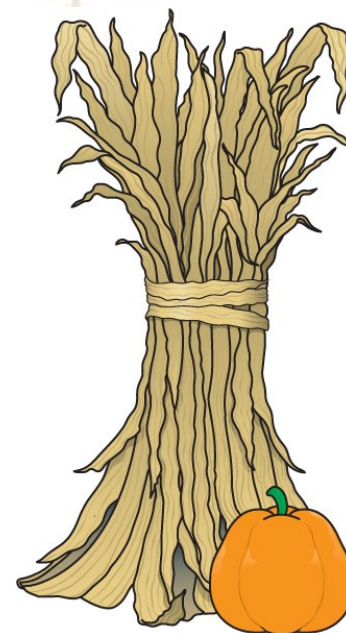


Do you know your biorhythms?

Process Prompt 1:

Guerilla Facilitation from Leadership Strategies to Save Meetings: Here is an excerpt of tips from LS that any participant can use/ask to correct common meeting challenges. C1—Meeting has no clear purpose. A: “I may have missed it....What is our overall purpose for this meeting?” C2—Discussion is getting off track. A: “These are excellent points....we need to get back to our main topic....can we record them on an issues list?...” C3—One person is dominating. A: “This is an important discussion....can we have everyone give their view on this idea?” C4—When decisions are not being documented. A: “It sounds like we made an important decision...can someone repeat it so it can be accurately recorded?” C5—Meeting ending without a review. A: “Could we take a minute to review the decisions we’ve made and the actions that need to occur once we leave?” See more at: <http://www.leadstrat.com/blog/top-5-tricks-to-fix-a-meeting-gone-wrong/>.

Process Prompt 2: Mind tools has some interesting suggestions for virtual meeting icebreakers. 1—Have each participant take a picture of an item on their desk and submit it to the host ahead of the meeting. When it is time for self introductions, they can explain the significance of it as the host shows it to the group. 2 — A similar activity may be done using submitted pictures of attendees’ shoes. Why did they select the shoe? Are they doing some type of activity that requires a specific type of shoe? 3—If you could travel back in time, where would you go and why? See more at: <https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/virtual-ice-breakers.htm>.



Relevant Resource:

Eight Essentials of Innovation:

This April 2015 article by Marc de Jong, Nathan Marston, and Erik Roth in the McKinsey Quarterly shares results from a multiyear study of more than 2500 executives in over 300 diverse companies in the US and abroad. The authors found 8 attributes common to a high performing companies in product, process or business-model innovation. Attributes include: Aspire, Choose, Discover, Evolve, Accelerate, Scale, Extend, and Mobilize. Some examples: “Aspire—Do you regard innovation-led growth as critical and do you have cascaded targets that reflect this?” “Scale—Do you launch innovations at the right scale in the relevant markets and segments?” Much more in-depth explanatory information may be found in the article. <http://www.mckinsey.com/insights/innovation/the-eight-essentials-of-innovation>.





Attendees at a Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP) meeting at Philadelphia District. The team did an impressive job of combining the talents of members from HQUSACE, NAD, NAP and NAB to address issues unique to HTRW projects.



Proficiency Pick:

Megan McGuire spoke highly of facilitation training she received from the Conservation Breeding Specialist Group (CBSG). CBSG is an international group focused on “saving threatened species by increasing the effectiveness of conservation efforts worldwide”. They use “collaborative processes that bring together people with diverse perspectives and knowledge to catalyze positive conservation change.” Their course in facilitation and communication skills is being offered April 11-14, 2016. For more information see: <http://www.cbsg.org/our-approach/training/2016-facilitation-and-communication-skills-training-course>.



Members of the USACE Invasive Species Leadership Team met with members of the Army Environmental Command and the Armed Forces Pest Management Board at Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio, TX.

Find A Facilitator

Are you an experienced Corps facilitator? If so, please add yourself to our facilitator database at: <http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/employees/facilitator/find.cfm>.

Please send your facilitation case studies, photos and newsletter/webinar ideas to Julie.B.Marcy@usace.army.mil.