



"You can't solve a problem with the same thinking that created it."

~Einstein

## Book Corner

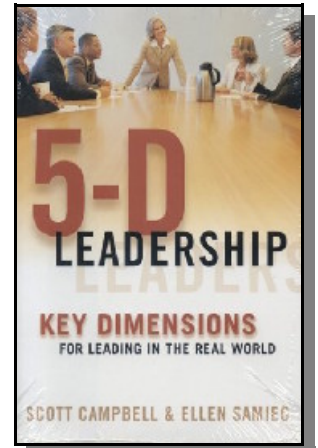
### 5-D Leadership by Scott Campbell and Ellen Samiec

This excellent book on leadership demonstrates the value of each of five key leadership styles:

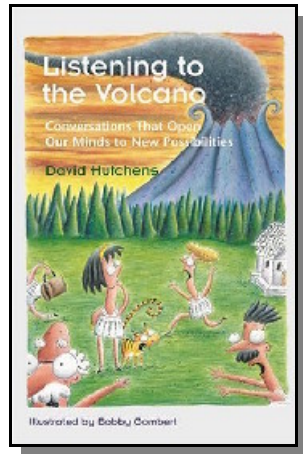
- Commanding
- Enrolling
- Coaching
- Relating
- Visioning

We are reminded by Scott and Ellen of the importance of flexing styles based on the situation or context.

This book reinforced my beliefs about leadership and put leadership in a model that makes sense and is useful. The book contains excellent tools for assessment and practical techniques for the use of the 5 Dimensions.



### Listening to the Volcano by David Hutchens



David's fifth book in his organizational systems series is as much fun as each of the others. The fable about a village and a local volcano help us see the value of conversation and meaningful dialogue. David follows the fable with an excellent chapter to help us apply the lessons.

While both productive conversation and pure dialogue require trust and openness, David makes a clear distinction between the two. "Productive conversation is designed to create shared meaning around a specific topic for the ultimate purpose of making high-leverage decisions." "Pure dialogue is an open-ended divergent process centered on the discovery or exploration of meaning. The goal is to generate new, shared insights."

As we work in organizations, this book can be a useful tool to help people see communication in a new light.

## Ask The Right Question

*Question:* I sense that many people are telling me, in part at least, what they think I want to hear. What can I do to hear what they really think?

**Collaborations Response:** We note with pleasure that you asked, "What can I do...?" The recognition that *you* are the one who must do something differently in order to get a different response from the people around you speaks volumes.

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## Ask The Right Question

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Many, many times we ask ourselves questions, the essence of which are: “What’s wrong with them? Why won’t they tell me what they think? How can I make them...?” These questions directly imply that *others* need to change.

Your question implies that you recognize *that it is you* who needs to change in order to get a different response from people. One of the greatest challenges most of us face is to quit thinking that if only others would change everything would be better, different, etc.

Additionally, in our last issue we suggested that problems, issues, etc. generally come in three categories: 1) those clearly beyond our control, 2) those WE clearly own, and 3) those we might be able to influence. (The full article is available at [www.davecarey.com](http://www.davecarey.com) and [www.susangerke.com](http://www.susangerke.com).)

Changing someone else’s willingness to be candid and open in their communications is at best in category 3. Changing our part of the interaction is clearly in category 2.

We need to focus on how we could manage, lead, and communicate more effectively. “*What could I do or say differently that would produce a different and more effective result?*” While that focus may not be 100% valid, it is certainly valid the vast majority of the time.

Some concrete suggestions: ask more than you tell, and ask first. Often we jump directly to tell people what we think needs to be done, what we think of their performance, how we would do it, etc. A better place to start is to ask, “What do you think we ought to do now? How could we tackle this? How did you feel about what you did?”

In the case of discussing their performance, Dr. Phil’s question, “So how is that working for you?” is an excellent question. You may be surprised to learn that they have some very good reasons for what they are doing. Or you may be shocked to find out how misguided they are. In any case it is

very helpful to see their performance through their eyes.

“Is there anything you would change if you were doing it again?” Here you can create the opportunity for them to process their experience and to learn from it.

“How are customers reacting?” In business, this is where the rubber meets the road. Yet most of us don’t take the time to try to assess how our customers experience us. You could also ask for specific comments from specific customers.

“Are you aware of any negative reactions?” If your people tend to only report good news, it is important to find out what is really going on. When asking this question it is equally important, if not more so, that you not discount the response if you don’t happen to like it. It is also critical that you “not shoot the messenger.”

“How do you feel about \_\_\_\_\_?” Business people like to live in the land of thoughts, ideas and numbers. Feelings can be scary and intimidating. However, you might get a much more accurate measure of what is really going on if you take the time to ask about feelings.

### Problems, roadblocks and solutions

All of us like to be able to answer questions. We like to be able to solve problems. When our people come to us with problems, issues, and roadblocks, we can often come up with a solution or answer. It makes us feel good, needed, and important. Unfortunately your people aren’t learning to solve these problems themselves.

A better approach would be to ask your people to also bring their recommendations when they have questions or are confronted with problems and roadblocks. Ask, “What do you think we ought to do now?” You can then listen to their thought processes and problem solving approaches. It is an excellent opportunity for you to coach them in their thinking and broaden their perspective and understanding.

ON THE WEB ~ Visit [www.susangerke.com](http://www.susangerke.com) and [www.davecarey.com](http://www.davecarey.com)

Both websites carry all past issues of *Collaborations*. With *Adobe Acrobat Reader 4.0* you can view or download and print the issues.

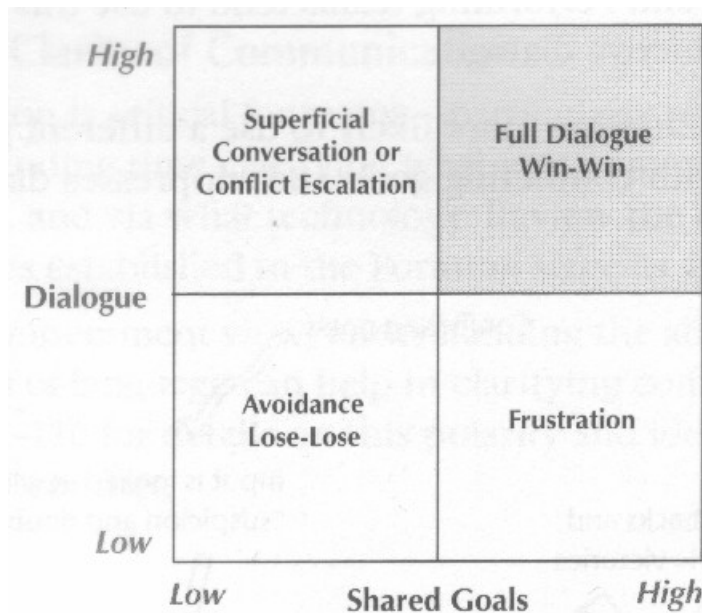
## Engaging in Dialogue to Manage Conflict

In our book *The I in Team*, Linda Berens and I (Susan) used the Tuckman model of team development as a key framework to guide the acceleration of the performance of teams. Tuckman's four stages of development (forming, storming, norming and performing) provide a useful way to look at both individuals and the team as a whole. We used the stages combined with personality temperament patterns to explore individual needs as well as approaches for the team to move forward through the stages.

It's probably not surprising that the longest chapter of the four on stages in the storming chapter. Teams have a wide variety of potential conflict to identify and manage. Team temperament related conflicts include:

- mismatch of talents and roles
- collision of approaches to the problem at hand
- differences in core values
- conflict around time orientation
- different approaches to evaluating solutions
- different styles of learning
- conflict around focus on task vs. relationship
- polarities around language, roles and interests

Whatever the source of the conflict, a key solution is to talk through the difference. The model we created to look at what's needed to have the appropriate dialogue follows:



The key as you can see from the diagram is to work in the upper right box where you have a shared goal and you engage in full dialogue. Hopefully you've experienced working in that way -- it generally is a very productive interaction.

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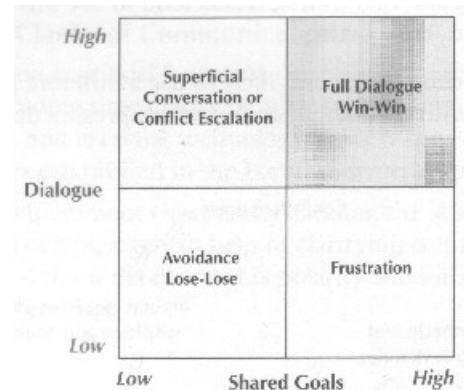


## Engaging in Dialogue to Manage Conflict

(Continued from page 3)

We have probably all experienced the other 3 boxes. **To move from the two boxes on the left, you need to shift the conversation to explore and find a shared goal.** You might ask, "What will be the value to the customer if we can resolve this difference?" or "How will the organization benefit if we can resolve this?" or "What need might we have in common?" or any number of questions that get at commonality.

**The frustration box is the box of real opportunity.** Since shared goals are already in place, it just takes engaging in dialogue to determine how to resolve the difference. As we describe in our book, sometimes our natural temperament language makes that a little difficult. If one of us speaks more abstractly than the other who speaks more concretely, we may need to translate for each other to gain understanding. David Hutchen's book *Listening to the Volcano* also provides helpful insights about dialogue.



### We'd Like to Hear From You

If you'd like to contribute to Collaborations or if you have a question or topic for us, we'd love to hear from you. Send an e-mail to [sgerke@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sgerke@sbcglobal.net) with your ideas or questions. We will respond based on topics of most interest.