

EDGES

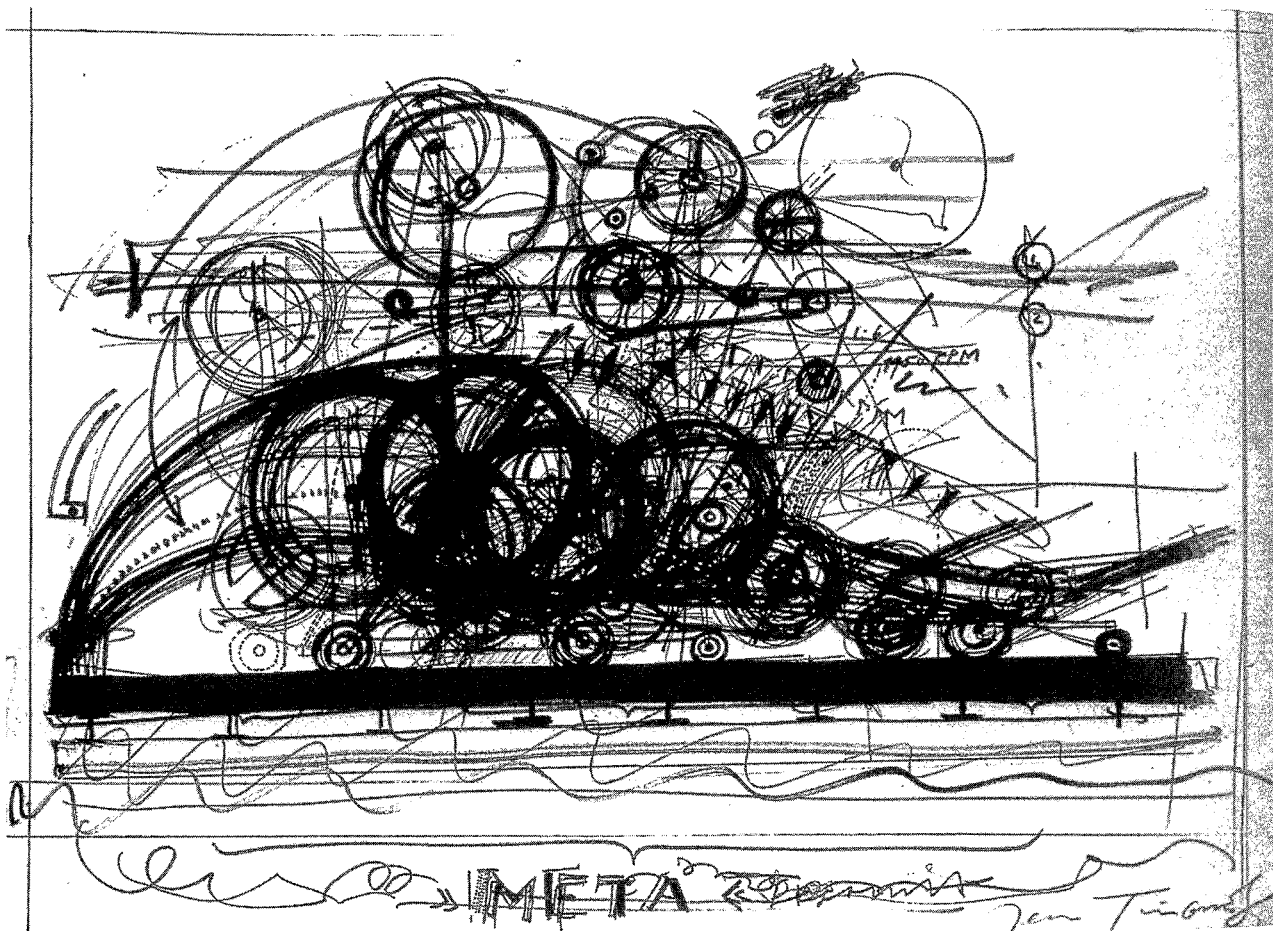
NEW PLANETARY PATTERNS

Smart Change

"Slash-and-burn" organizational change, advocated by some management gurus, is not the only, and often not the best,

route to take. Smart change considers the ever enigmatic human factor. In the following articles we look at some human factors in the psychology, strategy and direction of change.

Jean Tinguely, *Meta*, 1968. Crayons, chalk and ink on paste-board. 50x60 cm.



CHANGE

from Resistance to Resonance

ANNE and JOHN EPPS

"Nobody likes change but a wet baby!" Resistance to change, whether it be active or passive, marks virtually every significant change in the process of doing business—no matter whether that change is positive or negative. Either way, people resist. In a time when change has become the norm—far more commonplace than stability—this resistance factor is too important to ignore.

In fact, resistance is a positive step in the change process. It indicates the seriousness with which the resisters are coming to terms with an uncertain future. Several possible factors contribute to the resistance: people may be uncertain whether their services will be needed in the new operation; unsure that they can perform complicated new tasks; or fearful of losing performance increments while on a new learning curve. These are real, well-founded concerns and people would have to be apathetic to ignore them.

When changes occur, people go through four stages: denial, resistance, experimentation and adaptation. Different individuals will go through the stages at different times; some will get stuck in one phase or another. These stages may be rapid or prolonged, depending on how they are handled, but they inevitably accompany the change process. The role of the manager is not to avoid them or bulldoze through but to recognize the stages as they occur and manage or coach his/her people from one stage to the next.

STAGE 1 DENIAL

When people are in denial, communicate, communicate, communicate. Even when there is little new clarity, continue to announce the coming changes and their positive potential. Never mind that clarity cannot be attained: state what the conditions are and where the process is at the moment. This will provide people a sense of being "in on" the real situation and being a full member of the team.

STAGE 2 RESISTANCE

When people reach the stage of resistance, then listen, listen, listen. There will be complaints, fears, criticisms, and challenges, but little capacity to take directions—yet. People have to "get it off their chest" before being able to move on. No need to be defensive: it's the situation, not you, that is under attack. Listening with empathy will set the tone for the new era—and it may reveal some dangers and opportunities you had not foreseen.

STAGE 3 EXPERIMENTATION

When people are ready for experimentation, encourage, encourage, encourage. It's no problem that some things don't work yet: it's a time for novelty and innovation. Provide occasions to reflect and learn from new efforts: this is a time for re-writing the procedures and finding ways for the future.

STAGE 4 ADAPTATION

When they're ready for adaptation, focus on the future vision. Pictures of a desired and possible future will provide the cohesion necessary to hold the new form together. In so far as possible, involve people in developing the vision so that they can "own" it. No doubt, some sense of vision guided the change process: but after it's underway, new factors will arise which may modify the original projections. Get as many people as possible to shape a shared vision.

Resistance is not a negative influence unless it goes unattended. With proper guidance it becomes a useful step into the future. ♦

Dealing with Mindset—*first*

What happens when an organization making major changes—however well intentioned—tries to change the structures and processes first and the people last? Invariably there is a degree of resistance, usually substantial. Much energy is then wasted on overcoming this resistance to change. This resistance actually negates much of the value of the process changes that are sometimes vitally needed. Yet, the classical approach to change has us first implement system, structure, or process changes to deal with a problem, then expend tremendous energy and resources trying to overcome resistance to the changes, attempting to gain buy-in for them from the people.

There is an alternative, however, an approach to change that actually generates buy-in and commitment before or concurrent with implementing the change. The approach is to deal with the mindset issues first, or at least concurrent with system and process changes. Experience validates that with this approach to implementing change people begin to approach it with an attitude that includes an openness to change and the ability to see the opportunity in change—a change-friendly attitude. We see this subtle distinction, between causing the resistance and accessing people's natural desire to make a difference and to feel a part of what's going on, as a primary key to the renewal of any organization.

While changes in systems and processes are essential, leaders cannot hope to achieve success in implementing them without a broad base of support from their people. Refusing to address the core issues—the mindset and spirit of their people—dooms an organization and its people to constant fire-fighting, conflicts, and high levels of stress.

Enlightened leaders know this and continually search for ways to manage the attitudes, thus the energy and commitment, of their people. Indeed, they deal with these mindset issues consciously and continuously as a requirement for creating a change-friendly, renewing environment. They also do it not in a manipulative mode, but in a way that benefits all concerned. ♦

Excerpted from Enlightened Leadership by Ed Oakley & Doug Krug. Simon & Schuster, New York, 1991.

Putting Wheels under Good Ideas

Between the idea and the action falls the shadow.

T.S. Eliot

Indirect action is preferred to direct.

Sun Tzu

In the world of organizations, good ideas abound. Theories, suggestions, plans, convictions, intentions, decisions, strategies, recommendations, mandates and directives are forthcoming at the mere hint of a request. Well-intentioned, intelligent citizens sit in thinktanks, study and support groups and come up with dozens of good implementable ideas.

Why do so few of these ideas get implemented? Often it seems that the greater the idea's potential, the stronger the mind's resistance to it, not because people are lazy or lack creativity, but because they are so painfully clear about the difficulties involved in taking the first step. Just give a good idea to someone for action and you'll soon come up against 101 reasons why it is impossible or unwise or just plain unnecessary. Effective action requires a different kind of thinking. It involves five steps:

The first is *locating the leverage points*. It does not help to suppose that effective action can be accomplished if it depends on someone else's performance. It has to be an arena in which you and your team members have control. Within the sphere of your control, the action must also have con-

nection to an area of larger scale, the team's action project must focus on an area where there is obvious need for improvement, a situation that is found in a number of departments or areas around the organization, and is visible so that the project's success will have an impact beyond the confines of the team's domain or control.

The second step is to *create a demonstration of possibility* for the whole operation. Place an emphasis on providing support so that a rapid, visible, startling change occurs. Perhaps it is only that you as senior manager show up on the front line for an hour (if you're demonstrating commitment to teamwork or customer service); or perhaps you transform the working space of a particularly non-spectacular department. You will have to decide on the particular demonstration, but be sure that it has a symbolic quality so that people will look at it and see a possibility for change in their own area.

The third step is to *operate through short-term time frames*. Don't put the whole project on a two-year schedule and let it go. Prolonged efforts serve only to exhaust, not to motivate. Set some interim goals, some short-term successes and build in a celebration of accomplishments even when the whole project is far from completed. The most dramatic part of this step is to decide to announce your intentions before you begin.

The fourth step is to *develop the direct action plan*, i.e., the specific steps necessary

to reach the objective. It will not work to have one set of people decide and design the project while another set of people implement the action. Real ownership of the results happens when these two sets of people are the same.

The fifth step demands action that is more indirect. *Identify the critical point in the plan*, i.e., the point at which the project could be halted for lack of approval either from the top, or for lack of 'buy in' from potential implementers. Build in several indirect approaches to ensure success. Use third-party advocates who are highly regarded by the one(s) with power to refuse your request. Highlight and demonstrate the fun of supporting the project. Keep an enthusiastic, confident style. If one indirect tactic does not work as anticipated, use another, but be sure to avoid the all-or-nothing decision until you are certain of approval. Direct your praise for the project both to the one(s) who approved the project as well as to those who implemented the action. Remember the wisdom behind the saying: "You can do anything, if you don't mind who gets the credit."

Making things happen is not magic and many factors will intervene to make it difficult. But when the team starts small with highly visible manifestations of what is possible, the spin-off effects are dramatic. ♦

from The Image: An Action Research Journal on Personal and Organizational Transformation, ICA Bombay, November, 1994

The Art and Science of Participation

ICA's Summer School

On a warm sunny week in July 1994, thirteen graduates of facilitation training courses and four ICA guides feasted for six days to gobble up as much as they could on the philosophy, the methods, and the practice of facilitation.

Participants came to Toronto from as far as Yellowknife in the Northwest Territories and even from the US. They brought with them case studies of client situations to use in laboratories for designing facilitation events and in up-front tutorial practice.

The participants and staff became a learning community with common interests and commitments. The myth of The Man of La Mancha appeared out of nowhere on the very first day and quickly became the common story of the program with accompanying song, artform and video.

Each day started with a philosophy session, then shifted into an exposition and practice of a key method. The afternoons were devoted to upfront tutorials and design sessions. 'Ah-a's' abounded: "So, that's

why it's done that way...."; or, "So that's why they're called life methods"; "I really have a low level of intellectual rigour"; or, "These methods are more than techniques: they've got soul!" "Initially I was looking for techniques to apply in my work situation. Now I see that the applications are endless."

One participant summed up the impact of the week, "This week has been a deepening for me and a sacred experience. There really is an element of the sacred in the art of facilitation. The program has been wonderful and life-changing."

Many of us had the same sentiment and we were privileged to have shared the week with such a great group of people. ♦

—Brian Stanfield

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ORGANIZATIONAL

At a recent ICA conference at Lonavala, a hill station in India, people gathered from all over the world, brought together by their quest for fresh forms and operating patterns for the 90s. One group went searching for the creative and leading edges in organizations today. They found 21, which they grouped into five trends. Here they are.

First was a whole systems approach to organizational transformation. Contractual relations with suppliers are now becoming the norm. Along with that is a recaptured appreciation of systems in making changes—demonstrated particularly in the search for an organic approach to change rather than the cataclysmic interventions advocated by some business gurus. In fact, the “slash and burn” approach to management is rapidly losing credibility. The management of paradox has become the latest buzz phrase for those leaders most systemically aware.

A second trend noticed was the emerging concern for the human-centred enterprise. Hitherto it was understood that you used people to produce things; now, increasingly the organization is

viewed also as an agent for personal growth and development—it produces people as well as things. The last few years have witnessed an immense concern for staff commitment and attitudes—the intangible human factors that generate productivity. “Jobless organizations” are on the rise: people don’t have particular jobs, but work together in multiple roles as teams on a project. There

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are companies in which employees are self-determining entrepreneurs, perhaps set loose from the company to contract their services both to the company and to outsiders.

Thirdly, organizations are redefining their integrity relative to legitimacy and presence in the society where they operate. Companies are finding it important not only to react to legislation on such issues as environmental pollution and employment practices, but to take the lead in addressing major social issues related to their business. Organizations are measuring their value in terms of their contribution to society and defining their mission relative to social contradictions.

Often, this is allied with an increasing sensitivity to natural resource sustainability. Companies are no longer defining their purpose simply as increasing shareholder profit, but are finding a larger “noble purpose” to pursue.

TRENDS

West Nipissing Region Bends the Economic Trend

Fourthly there seems to be a new synthesis of worldviews, particularly between East and West, taking place in organizations. Previously, the Japanese style of consensus and *kaizan* (incremental improvement) was revered in the West, and more Western styles of confrontation and control admired and aped throughout the world. Now that is changing as people are struggling to identify what makes the Global Corporation. The ISO-9000 movement is becoming a standard that is the requirement for entry into the global game. Margaret Wheatley's *Leadership and the New Science* is providing metaphors from physics that describe organizational dynamics in terms of force fields rather than substantial structures, and this is moving both East and West into a new way of recognizing and understanding the dynamics of companies. Intangible factors are becoming recognized for the power they exert in corporations.

Finally, cohesive leadership patterns are emerging. Companies are considering the social role of leadership and beginning to use the language of facilitation rather than that of management or control. People are concerned with the social capital in an organization, concentrating on cohesion and connections rather than structures. Some even draw their organizational chart based on relationships, mapping the human system in the workplace.

As the Lonavala study group examined these five trends, they attempted to find one clear leverage point from which to provide helpful interventions. But in the course of the discussion, all five were constantly named, and this is probably right...in that touching any part of a whole system affects all the parts. ♦

"HOW DID YOU DO THIS THING?" This is the question that the Economic Development Office of the West Nipissing Economic Development Corporation (EDC) gets asked on the phone every day. Other EDCs are very curious about the whirlwind of community activity that has been triggered in Sturgeon Falls and a group of small communities that radiate northwest from Lake Nipissing in the Near North of Ontario.

These communities had fallen on hard times. Company closures and layoffs were pushing unemployment to crisis levels. Economic activity was at a low point, as was people's morale. Everybody realized that something dramatic had to happen.

Community organizers called in ICA Canada's Duncan Holmes to assist them in designing a consultation process called "Vision 2020". The group quickly planned a series of community meetings. Duncan trained the local facilitators who would lead the meetings and record the results. It was important that each community have its own meeting so as to maintain its own identity. It was also important to pull all the separate plans together into one plan to see what the whole West Nipissing region needed.

One step was to hold a meeting with the politicians of the region so they could take off their political hats and put on their citizen caps to get their input into the process. Over the two-week spread of the community meetings, 400 people gathered in their towns and neighbourhoods: Sturgeon Falls, Garden Village, Field, Lavigne, Cache Bay, River Valley. They met wherever they could find space: some met in cafes. Some meetings were larger with 50 to 70 people. Some smaller. For one meeting, nobody came. A high school Civic Studies class was the venue for another—students got their input in.

Participants, led by their ICA-trained facilitators, looked into the future to say what was needed in their own community; then they named the barriers that could prevent them from realizing their vision. They asked themselves what strategies would knock a hole in the barriers and allow more rapid movement toward their vision.

A large wall in the library became the focal point for drawing all the ideas together. Through the community newspaper, the harvest of information and decisions travelled almost straight back to the community. The buzzing of conversation got louder across the region. People were talking excitedly about the meetings in coffee shops and the hockey arena change rooms. (This was one of the criteria for success of the planning operation.)

On a bright Saturday in February, representatives from the communities gathered at the Sturgeon Falls Recreation Centre for the Action Planning Day. Each participant selected a strategy that came out of the previous work, and the newly formed strategy teams got down to the business of planning specific projects. The teams agreed on objectives, and then scheduled the tasks on a large wall calendar. The next step was to make action assignments for taskforces, and set meeting dates. The EDC sent out the collected results to participants together with a survey for input on action priorities. With the results of the survey in hand, the action taskforces knew where they were heading and went to work.

At year's end reflection, there were surprises for the sceptically minded. Organizers estimated that the community had already implemented about 50 per cent of the action plans, and that two to three times as much action was going on in the community as previously. An investment fund had raised much needed financing for new ventures. New business start-ups are the talk of the towns. The planned day-care centre had gone operational ahead of schedule. The new liveliness in the community was making it an attractive place for winter snowmobilers.

The organizers agreed that the planning process had reached enough people to create an image of major positive change in the community. The process had catalysed a burst of creativity and had launched action initiatives far beyond the stated plans—in fact, there was so much activity going on that the organizers themselves did not have time to monitor it all.

And there were intangible results: from the chair of the EDC: "We have returned ownership and motivity to individuals and groups so they can do their own economic development."

West Nipissing is a new place these days. The word on the street says, "Hey! We're moving—we can make things happen in our community." ♦ —Wayne Nelson

"This useful book is applicable to organizations of all sizes and types." Rosabeth Moss Kanter

author of *Change Masters*

and

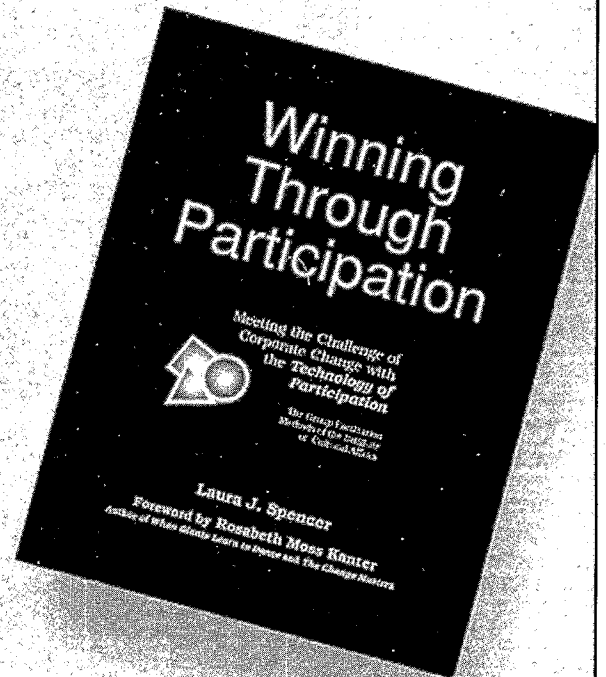
When Giants Learn to Dance

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February 18-19	May 16-17	October 14-15
February 21-22	June 20-21	October 17-18
March 21-22	July 13-14	November 21-22
April 18-19	August 22-23	December 5-6

"My social services agency needs to create an action plan in two days to respond to a new government policy. How can ICA help?"

PARTICIPATION

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ICA consultants can help any organization get maximum participation from its staff, volunteers and members by tailoring programs to its specific needs. The organization will gain the benefits of:

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The future of *Edges* magazine

Turning the corner from leading edge thinking to leading edge action

Readers of *Edges* magazine often comment that they know little about *Edges*' parent organization, The Canadian Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA Canada). We intentionally left ICA out of our editorial content because we wanted to be a forum for exploring leading edge thinking without cluttering up our readers' explorations with extraneous and leading references about a little known organization.

Things have changed...because ICA Canada is not a little known organization anymore. Our consulting practice has expanded dramatically because our track record is good. Our training courses fill up quickly because word about ICA Canada has gotten around...and, in fact, *Edges* has been responsible for some of this success. But we have also been told by hundreds of ICA clients and colleagues that by leaving ICA Canada out of *Edges* magazine, they are missing out on some of the most valuable research in the world.

I tend to agree with their point, but need to detail the down side of shifting to publishing ICA's own action research.

First, we will not have a lot of big-name writers in each issue, as we have in the past. ICA's action research is built on work with thousands of people in grassroots situations.

Second, we will not be able to attract much advertising in-

come, primarily because our readership will not represent a demographically marketable audience. We will have to rely on subscriptions.

Third, the magazine will be thinner, because the loss of advertising revenue will reduce our printing ability.

Fourth, *Edges* will no longer have a spot on newsstands.

On the up side:

- *Edges* will effect actual change, not just ideas about change.
- More of our readers will be able to submit publishable articles.
- Thousands of our trainees and clients will find practical advice.
- *Edges* will directly support ICA Canada's work of creating a culture of leadership and participation.

Brian Stanfield and I, and the rest of the ICA staff are excited by the new direction *Edges* is taking. I trust you will be, too. If not, please let us know so that we can rectify those individual instances.

I hope this transformation of *Edges* magazine will be a green light to society at large from edge thinking to leading-edge action.

—Bill Staples

*For those who are involved
in creating a learning organization...*

towards the learning organizations: a guide

by
Ginny Belden
Marcia Hyatt
Deb Ackley

- A synthesis of current theories about the learning organization
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This book provides the framework for facilitating change with sensitivity, using a combination of new and familiar approaches.

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Available from ICA Canada. \$34.95 plus \$2.45 GST and \$3.50 shipping. Limited quantities.

ICA FACILITATORS' CONFERENCE

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RIDDLE: How many ICA facilitators does it take to change an organization?

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As an ICA facilitator you are in a select group of people who are effecting positive social change at the local level. Meet with other facilitators and:

- Share approaches that work
- Network with change agents
- Experiment with ICA methods

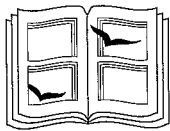
and much, much more.

Watch *Edges* for announcements about the first ICA Canada Facilitator's Conference or call (416) 691-2316, fax (416) 691-2491

Answer: It really only takes one!

SALES POSITION

ICA Canada is looking for a sales-oriented individual to sell training courses and contract programmes by telephone and mail. Commitment to, and some experience with, ICA participative methods a must. Send resume in confidence to ICA Canada, 577 Kingston Road, Toronto, Ont. M4E 1R3.



**GOVERNMENT WORKS:
Profiles of People Making a Difference
ed. James Troxel**

Miles River Press, Alexandria, Virginia, USA,
1995. 467 pages.

Good Reading

This book showcases 19 case studies which suggest an innovative approach to re-designing government, namely—use the people and it works.

Government Works reports on the recovery of civic responsibility, an increased participation in governing by citizens, and a new image of public servants that calls for them to be resource-linkage brokers. Collaborative techniques are a main focus.

The book is divided into four sections:

1. citizens taking initiative
2. empowering employees
3. entrepreneurship in government

4. facilitating collaboration

The pre-publication reviewers of *Government Works* have been very enthusiastic about the book.

Says US Senator Carol Moseley-Braun of Illinois, "With *Government Works*, Troxel has compiled irrefutable evidence of the value of commitment to community."

Babak Armajani, CEO, The Public Strategies Group, Inc., says, "If you are interested in reinventing citizenship, read it."

Government Works will be available from ICA Canada in early February.

Team Leadership Pilot Course

Why are one-quarter of North American organizations today using teams as their basis of operations today? What are teams? How do they work? How do you launch them? How do you maintain them? What does it take to lead them? What tools do they need to be effective?

These were some of the questions participants wrestled with in ICA Canada's pilot Team Leadership Course. The people around the table who came from business, health, university and local community organizations knew their workplaces desperately needed conversion to team-based workplaces, and they were eager for the savvy and the 'how-to's that the course provided.

Participants appreciated both the wraparound of context on trends, steps in team formation, team leadership, sustaining team morale, and were fascinated by the 'whistle-points' screen. But what they appreciated most were the practical tools they added to their methods kit bag.

One participant who was hoping to introduce teams overnight into a large organization thought better of it and saw clearly that some environmental conditioning would have to be done first, starting with a small pilot team operation which could serve as a demonstration to the organization. Another potential team-builder declared: "This course has corroborated hunches and intuitions I have had that I now have the courage to put structure on." Applications to university teaching teams, to building and sustaining group morale, and to initiating a team development project were also acknowledged.

And when it was over, the people around the table made every effort to take away double copies of all the method handouts and insisted they could not possibly leave without copies of all the talks in their briefcases. Even though the course was jam-packed with images and methods, there was mention of extending the course to three days, of follow-up refresher courses, and the need for a team-building manual. It seemed that participants had got what they came for.

ICA MEMBERSHIP

Annual ICA Memberships for 1994 expired in December. Membership renewal fees of \$50 a year are due in January 1995.

WHOLE SYSTEMS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COURSE will be held in Timmins on February 21-22, 1995, and in Kirkland Lake on February 23-24, 1995.

EDGES

NEW PLANETARY PATTERNS

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Statement of Purpose The mission of *Edges* is to help people manage change in their lives by communicating the effectiveness of current developments in education and learning. *Edges* magazine is primarily devoted to contemporary trends and approaches in consumer education and personal learning.

A wave of change sweeping through societies has shaken the foundations of civilization. Every facet of existence is being challenged to evolve into new planetary patterns of knowing, doing and being. The Institute of Cultural Affairs weaves new relations between individuals, organizations and communities. At the core of ICA's work is spirit, sustained by the myths and techniques of many cultures, helping to shape social transformation. ICA's research, education, organizational change and international linking programs work together to elicit new planetary patterns.

The opinions in *Edges* articles do not necessarily represent the policies or views of ICA Canada.

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