

Emerging Best Practices in Stakeholder Processes

March 22, 2016



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THE OPERA
REMINDS ME OF
A PUBLIC
HEARING



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IT WAS IN A LANGUAGE I
DIDN'T UNDERSTAND, AND
IT ENDED IN TRAGEDY.



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Think of a time when you had a fantastic experience in working with the public.

What made it so good?



1. **Ambivalence** - A Lack of Commitment
2. **Complacency** - The Checklist Approach
3. **Procrastination** – Stakeholder Engagement Starts Too Late
4. **Detachment** – Stakeholder Engagement Is Not Integrated Into Decision-Making



5. **Omission** - Not All Stakeholder Voices are Heard
6. **Ambiguity** - The Public Is Not Adequately Informed
7. **Disregard** - The Public Receives Inadequate Feedback

What is meaningful public participation?

Any *process* that seeks to understand broad public values and *uses* input from the *full range* of stakeholder perspectives in a *planned* effort to improve decision-making.

Before You Begin: Are you Engaging or Convincing?

Buy-In = Public Relations

Real Input = Public Participation

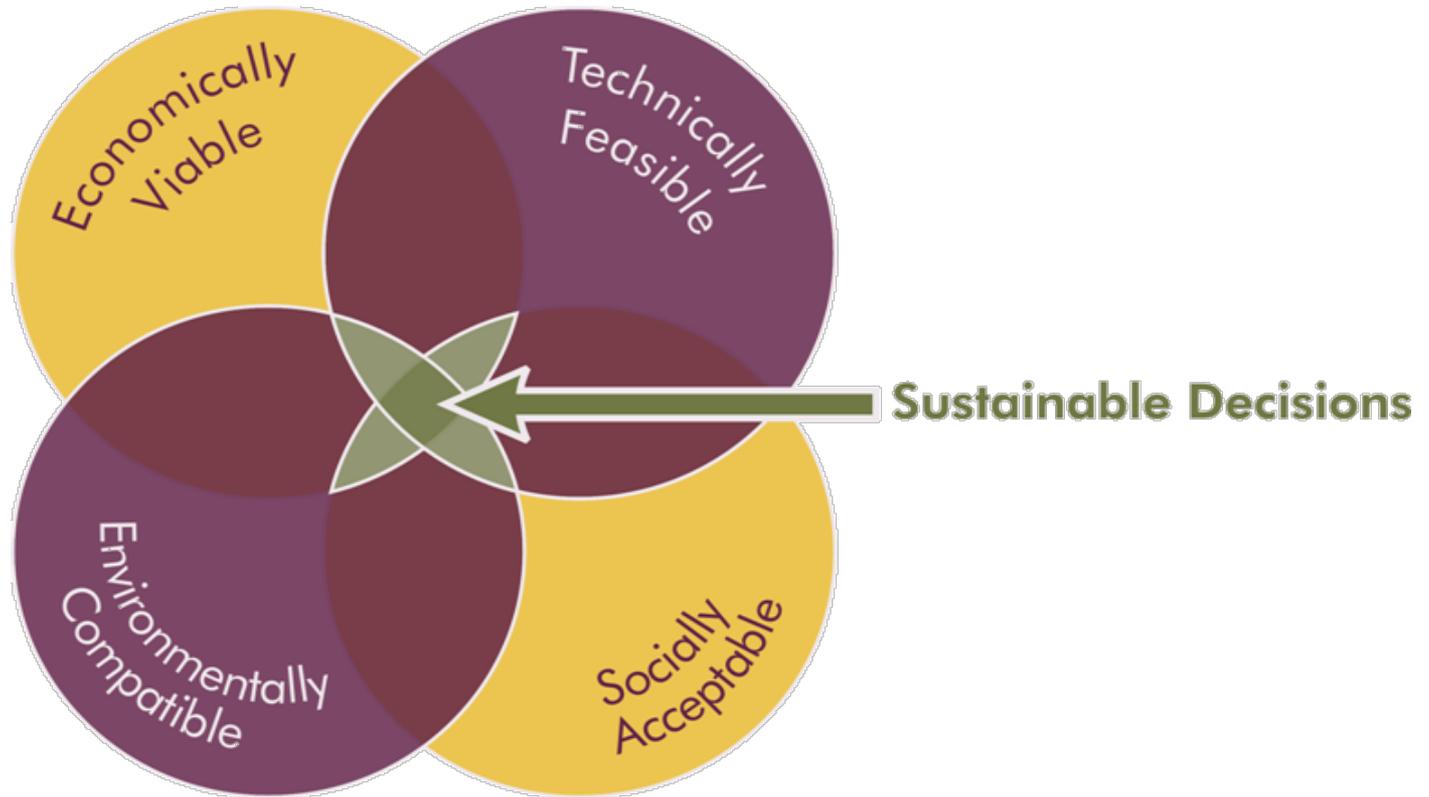
What are the benefits of Public Participation?

- Better decisions
- Improved understanding
- Increased trust



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Powerful Decisions Last

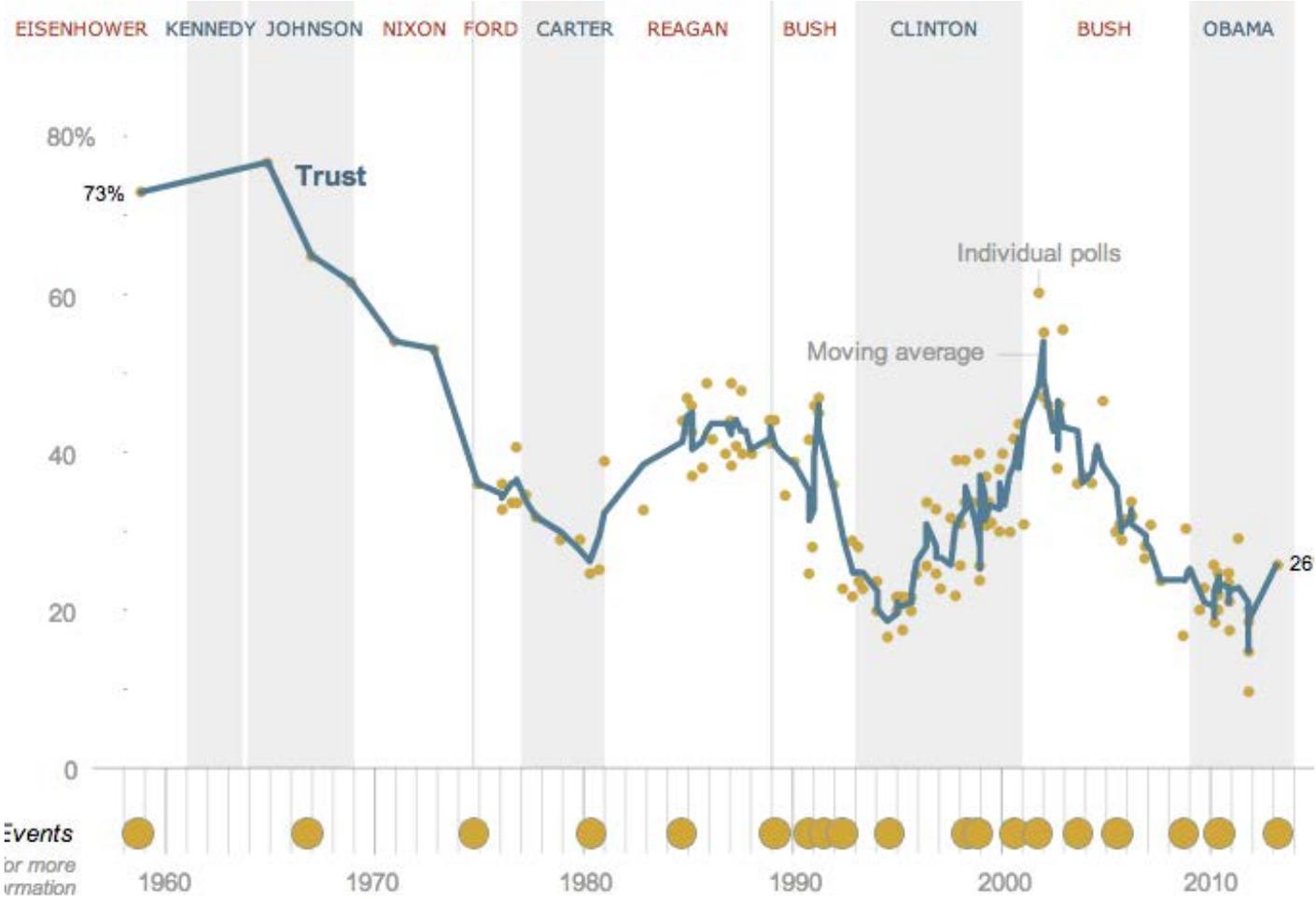


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To Facilitate Understanding

- ✓ Problem definition
- ✓ Information
- ✓ Decision process and criteria
- ✓ Rationale for decision

And because the public doesn't trust us



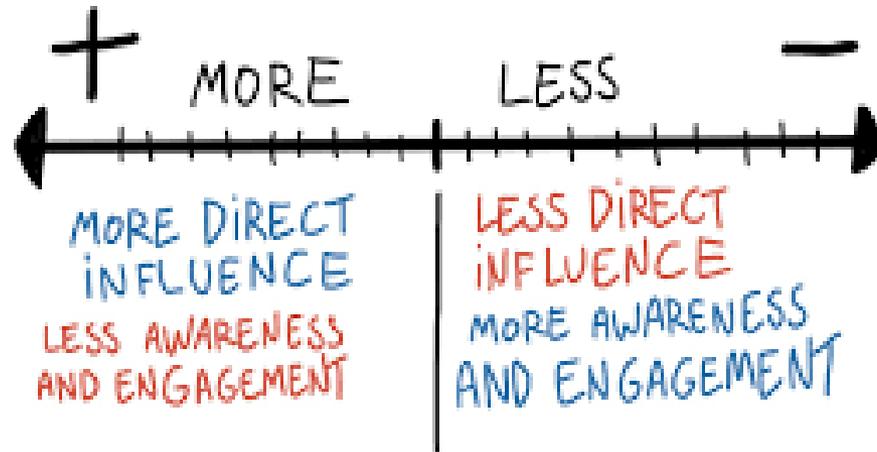
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What are you most afraid of?

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?
v=ln9oSjjltOs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ln9oSjjltOs)

Losing

CONTROL



of decisions

Uncertain outcomes



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Losing control = **uncertainty** in the
outcome

Uncertainty = taking **risks**

Taking risks = operating '**outside the box**'

*Operating outside the box =
making better decisions*

The technical answer isn't always the best answer

Everyone needs to understand and feel some ownership in the decision



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Use best

public

participation

practices

to manage uncertainty

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6 Elements of Meaningful Public Participation

1. Agree on the **Problem**
2. Demonstrate **Commitment and Credibility**
3. Include Full **Range** of Stakeholder **Voices**



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6 Elements of Meaningful Public Participation

4. Understand Stakeholder **Values**

5. Define Public's **Opportunity for Influence**

6. Create a Strong **Process**



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1. Agree on the Problem



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2. Commitment and Credibility

- How credible are you with your communities?
- What leads to this level of credibility?



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*What you do speaks so loudly that I
cannot hear what you say.*

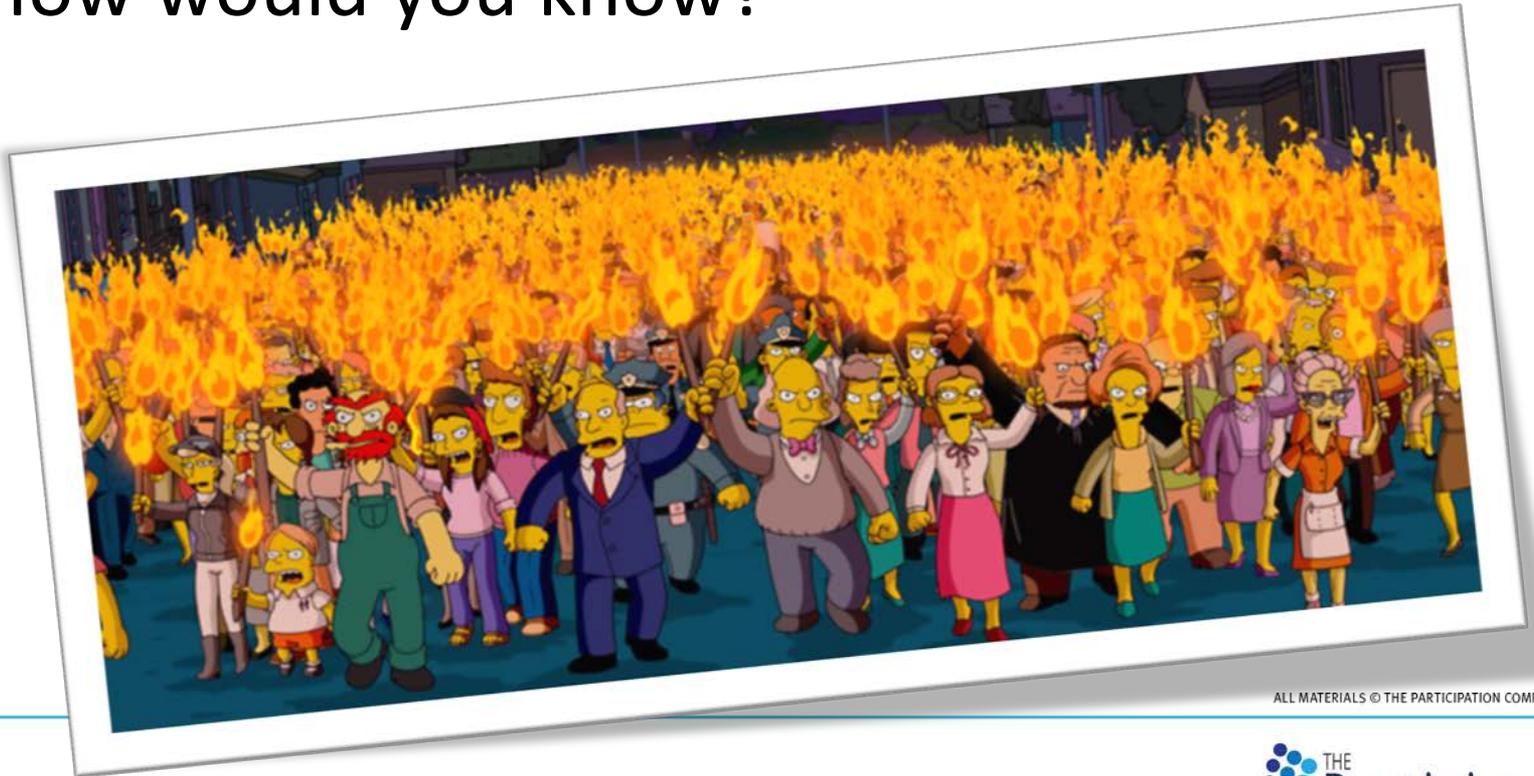
--Ralph Waldo Emerson

Assess Your Commitment

- How interested are you in engaging the public?
- What commitments are in place? At the top? In key project management positions? Within the project?

3. The Full Range of Stakeholder Voices

- Are the right stakeholders involved in your projects?
- How would you know?



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Who Is The Public?

- **Stakeholders** - any individual or group that has, or perceives they have, a stake in the outcome of the decision
- **General Public** - not associated with decision-making power or special interests
- **Professional Stakeholders** - full-time, sometimes paid, advocates of the decision for specific issues
- **Sponsor** - the organization that is seeking public input

4. Understand Stakeholder Values

Do we understand what the community cares about?



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Values are the Basis for Finding Common Ground

- People often start at their positions
- Let's start at values and build solutions from there, hopefully together



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5. Opportunity for Influence

Do you establish clear and distinct goals for public participation for each project?

Goals



1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

The more *opportunity* for the public to *influence* the decision, the higher *level* public participation you are doing.

Definition of P2 Goals

- ***Inform*** – to tell
- ***Consult*** – to seek advice
- ***Involve*** – to engage or include
- ***Collaborate*** – to work together
- ***Empower*** – to give power, to authorize

IAP2's Public Participation Spectrum



Increasing Level of Public Impact

Inform

Consult

Involve

Collaborate

Empower

Public participation goal

To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.

To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.

To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.

To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.

To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.

Promise to the public

We will keep you informed.

We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.

We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.

We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.

We will implement what you decide.

Example techniques

- Fact sheets
- Web sites
- Open houses

- Public comment
- Focus groups
- Surveys
- Public meetings

- Workshops
- Deliberative polling

- Citizen advisory Committees
- Consensus-building
- Participatory decision-making

- Citizen juries
- Ballots
- Delegated decision

6. Strong Process

- Are we planning ahead?
- Are we clear on where stakeholder input is needed?



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MICHAEL LONG

TRUCK & CRANE HIRE

REDMOND - BC





Start Early!

ALL I'M SAYING IS,
MAYBE WE SHOULD
TRY TO MAKE MORE
OF AN EFFORT TO
UNDERSTAND THEIR
POINT OF VIEW
AND PERHAPS FIND
SOME COMMON
GROUND...



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Public participation is not an event

- Don't rely on a single activity
- Don't do parachute participation
- Don't use polls

Important Things That Take Time

1. Building trust
2. Building credibility
3. Creating shared purpose
4. Creating shared knowledge
5. Creating common ground



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Approaches (by the utility) that work

- Acknowledge the public's concerns
- Be truthful and acknowledge uncertainty
- Be accessible and listen more
- Treat all stakeholders with respect
- Engage stakeholders directly
- Engage credible third-parties
- Admit mistakes, apologize, and take responsibility
- Communicate continuously

Approaches (by stakeholders) that work

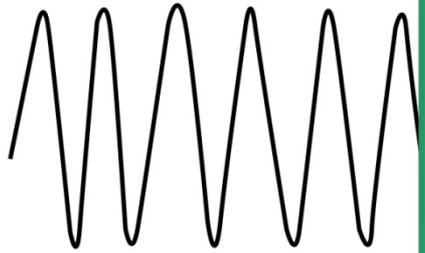
- Acknowledge and respect various points of view; be open to modifying yours
- Accept that the utility may be uncomfortable, but they are trying
- Participate throughout the process

We Need to Fix How We Talk to Each Other

Two monologues do not make a dialogue.

--Jeff Daly

Dialogue



Debate/Argument

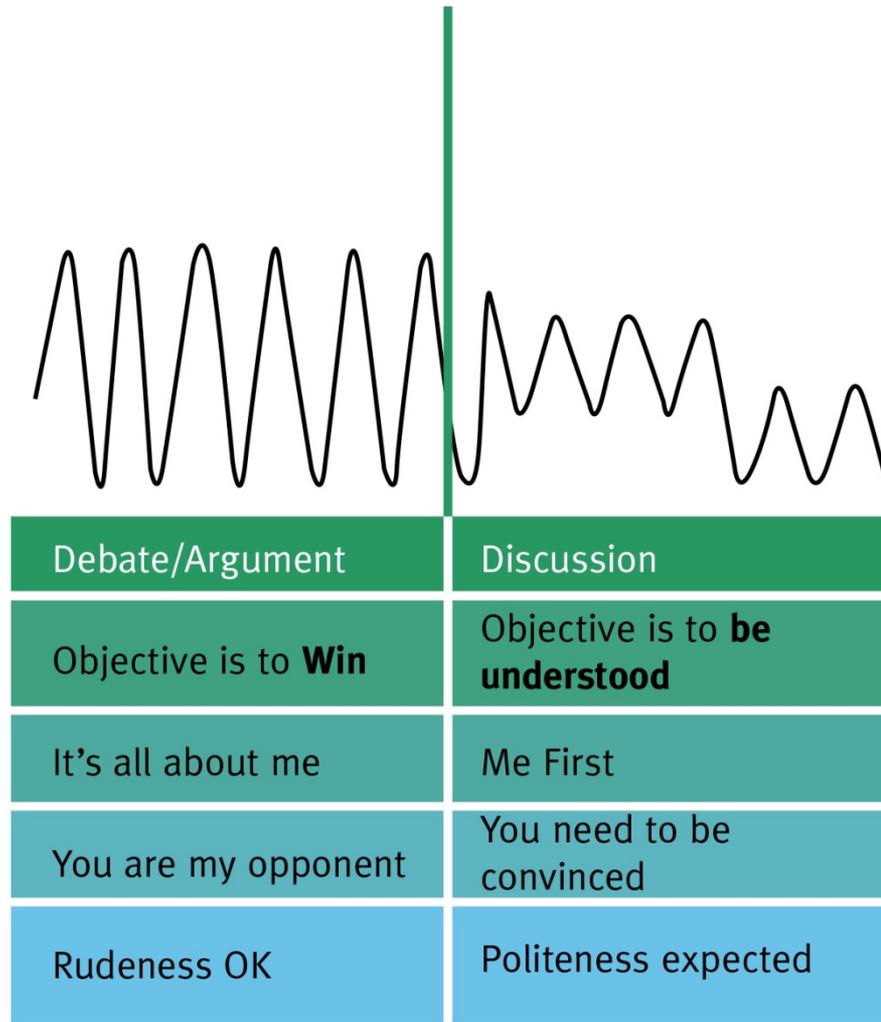
Objective is to **Win**

It's all about me

You are my opponent

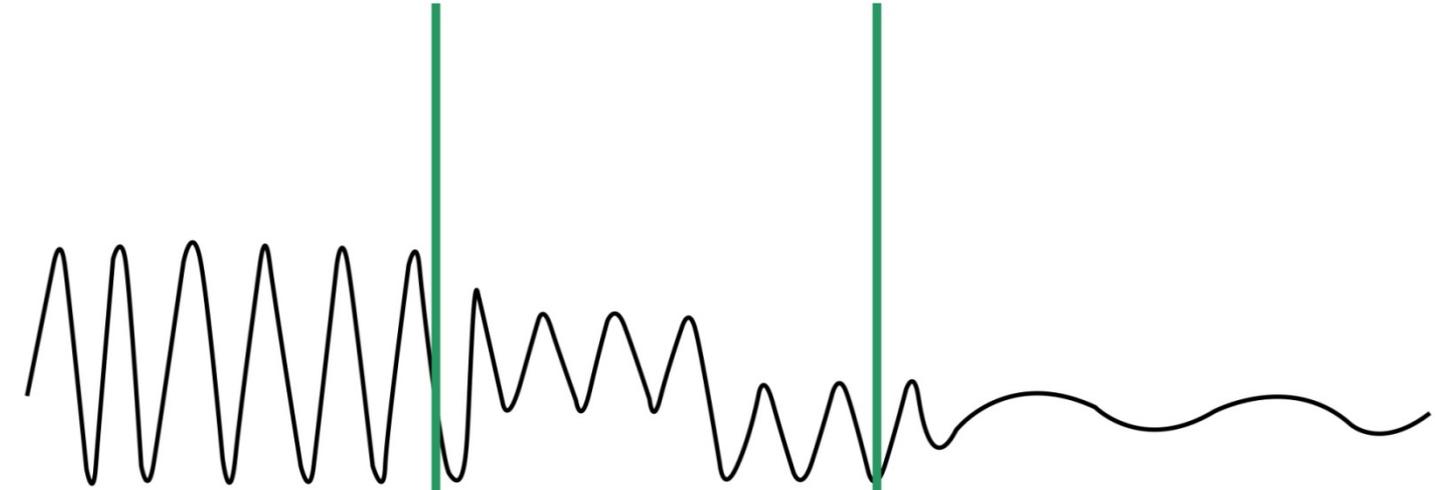
Rudeness OK

Dialogue



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Dialogue



Debate/Argument	Discussion	Dialogue
Objective is to Win	Objective is to be understood	Objective is to find common understanding
It's all about me	Me First	You First
You are my opponent	You need to be convinced	You are my colleague
Rudeness OK	Politeness expected	Truly interested

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Let's



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10 Ways to Shift Your Focus

- | | | | |
|----|-----------------------|--|-------------------|
| 1. | Positions |  | Values |
| 2. | Usual Suspects |  | All Voices |
| 3. | Argument |  | Dialogue |
| 4. | Buy-In |  | Real Input |
| 5. | Events |  | Processes |

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10 Ways to Shift Your Focus

- 6. **Late Start** → **Early, continuous**
- 7. **Opinions** → **Conclusions**
- 8. **Demands** → **Shared response**
- 9. **One Size** → **Custom process**
- 10. **Arms-length** → **Relationships**