

- 4) **Headers** -- "chapter headings" that focus & stimulate thinking.
- 5) **Idea cards** fill the remainder of the planboard, becoming the paragraphs of the book.

- Facilitator prepares *topic, background & purpose* in advance. Can be as many background & purpose cards as needed & they are always visible to the work group during the meeting.
- The steps are direct, each one moves the process forward: **design → create → critique → complete → action plan**. "The heart of storyboarding is making sure the team leaves the session with a completed product they can put to work now. While good outcomes are never guaranteed, this simple but carefully defined process makes it easier to attain them."

(Copy from Kendall/Hunt Publishing, 1-800-228-0810; 176 pgs, \$26.95)

KETTERING EXPLORES WHY PUBLIC OPINION POLLS MISLEAD

A failing of the public opinion poll, notes Kettering Review ed Robert Kingston, "is that, because it gives permanence to a transitory thought, it tends to elevate opinion to fact & accords to ephemeral notions the dignity of truth.

"Opinion that is quickly gleaned may be scarcely opinion at all; public opinion as it is recorded in polls is frequently uninformed, almost always unsteady, even inchoate, mushy, & more an indication of what people might be willing to engage with than an evidence of what they have concluded. Certainly it should not be confused with considered judgment."

Public opinion, how it is formed, how it's used & abused is topic of Spring issue. Explores "how institutions & individual citizens might listen more carefully to what the public has to say & suggest some preconditions to the forming of a genuine public opinion," explains Edward Arnone, comms dir for Kettering Fdn (Dayton).

- It's thru dialogue that public opinion is honed.
- "Public opinion that is the fruit of deliberation -- completed, textured, resilient, & strong enough to shape our destiny -- is produced by 'citizens who share a common destiny, not the mere isolated, self-centered consumers of public life' that pollsters interrogate."

(Copy from Kettering Fdn, 200 Commons rd, Dayton, 45459-2799; 513/434-7300)

PROOF OF WHAT CONSTITUTES CRITICAL MASS ON ISSUES TODAY

Non-profit, non-partisan Cmte for the Study of the American Electorate offers dramatic proof. Fall '94 elections that installed conservative GOP Congress was **not** a massive mandate from the people: only 39% of voting age population (VAP) went to the polls; **19% of VAP voted Republican**. Result, major changes underway based on what 1 in 5 did. Critical mass can be small, & is totally behavioral -- not who thinks what, but who acts.

TRUST IS THE ISSUE, EVERYWHERE -- & PRECIOUS FEW HAVE IT; CONSUMERS HAVE LOW LEVEL OF TRUST IN BOTH GOV'T & BUSINESS

Healthcare, education, gov't, business -- analyze the underlying relationship problem & it is universal: lack of trust. For instance, even when society attempts to "make organizations honest," 47% believe gov't regulators are too close to those they're supposed to regulate. Indeed, only 16% find gov't responsive to consumer concerns. It's more than just paranoia. Note these extremely mixed findings from a survey by Issue Track/USA:

Consumer Attitudes	% Agreeing
Yes There's too much conflicting info about product safety & health	82
But Most diet & health problems have to do with poor choices people make, rather than products on the shelves	80
Yes Major corp'ns would rather make money than worry about the health & safety of their customers	58
But Product safety for the most part is improving	56
Yes The media usually blow product safety & health issues out of proportion	54
But People overreact to such media reports	53
Yes Companies often hide product safety & health issues from consumers	47
But When there is a problem with a product, companies usually make it right for consumers	46
Yes Consumer groups usually go overboard in their tactics	44
But Consumer groups are effective in protecting consumers	35
Not Most co's are concerned about protecting the environment	21

Compare above attitudes with respondents' experiences with a product/service they purchased:

- did not perform as well as expected -- 83%
- soon malfunctioned -- 79%
- did not work or perform at all -- 56%
- caused harm or injury -- 6%
- none of the above -- only 6%!



Conclusion: Negative attitudes relate more to experience with products that did not live up to *expectation* than to harm from a dangerous or defective product. For many, distrust begins here.

FINDINGS SHED NEW LIGHT ON HOW PEOPLE PERCEIVE RISK

How it works, as explained by Barry Feinberg, IssueTrack/USA's developer:

1. **Consumers are aware of hazards** associated with the products & services they use every day.
2. **Their fears grow** as they are bombarded by negative reports in the media.
3. **Conflicting information elevates consumer angst** & their inability to process & evaluate this information heightens concern.
4. Then when consumers turn to gov't to sort out conflicting information & provide definitive assessments, **gov't falls short of expectations.**

835 adults were interviewed across US; error is +/-3%. (More from Feinberg, 650 Ave of the Americas, NYC 10011; 212/627-9700)

IssueTrack/USA interviews 5,000 people yearly. Consumers are called daily & asked their perceptions of alleged or possible safety or health risks associated with a range of products & services in 11 areas. Currently, 24 issues are being tracked of over	100 that have been identified. It's an "issue & client neutral service for the entire public affairs community, providing information for anyone on any side of any issue, where clearly voiced consumer perceptions are essential."
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ISSUE # 2: EMPLOYEES' LACK OF TRUST IN THEIR ORGANIZATIONS

47% say it's a problem, in a survey on trust by Development Dimensions International. But 37% think it's not. Nonmgmt employees are more likely than mgmt to view lack of trust as a problem (56%). The higher the employee's position, the higher the level of perceived trust in the org'n. "You'll see quite a gap in perception: senior mgrs perceive that a higher level of trust exists than lower levels. Surprise. Surprise," notes Tracy Maslek, pr coord. Findings:

- Of the 4 groups rated (peers, other teams, leaders, sr mgmt) respondents are most likely to trust their leaders; least trusted are sr mgmt.
- Respondents rated themselves as most likely to take action to build trust (5.70 on a 7-point scale) -- self-delusion or behavior indicator?
- **Top 5 trust-building behaviors** for managers are:
 - 1) Communicates with me openly & honestly, without distorting info.
 - 2) Shows confidence in my abilities by treating me as a skilled, competent associate.
 - 3) Listens to & values what I say, even tho he/she may not agree.
 - 4) Keeps promises & commitments.
 - 5) Cooperates with me & looks for ways that we can help each other.

- Differences appeared in the ranking of trust-building behaviors depending on whom respondents chose to rate:
 - 1) Leaders: Most important are a) *make sure their words are consistent with their actions* & b) *show confidence in their direct reports.*
 - 2) Direct Reports: Most important are a) *share their thoughts & feelings,* b) *keep their promises* & c) *cooperate with their leaders.*
- **Top 5 trust-reducing behaviors** are:
 - 1) Acts more concerned about his/her own welfare than anything else.
 - 2) Sends mixed messages so I never know where he/she stands.
 - 3) Avoids taking responsibility for action.
 - 4) Jumps to conclusions without checking the facts first.
 - 5) Makes excuses or blames others when things don't work out.
- **Where practitioners should focus their efforts:** *Perception of sr mgmt is the most relevant interpersonal relationship* for predicting general perceptions of trust in the org'n. It is a significant predictor for all levels. At lower levels, it tends to be the only predictor.

Of Related Interest: *The Psychological Contract Of Trust: Trust Development in the 90s Workplace* by Robert Rogers (published by DDI). This monograph takes a look at how organizations can create trust within -- 1) overall organization; 2) senior management; 3) frontline leaders; 4) among team members.

1,108 mgmt & nonmgmt workers were surveyed. (More from DDI, 1225 Washington Pike, Bridgeville, Pa 15017-2838; 412/257-7450)

IDEA STORYBOARDING: TOOL FOR EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

Participatively taps the best thinking of the entire group (employees, volunteers, any group) to identify goals. Visually illustrates where you've been & where you're going. "Storyboarding stimulates people to focus, to think, to be creative, & to be more productive. It also ensures better outcomes, since storyboard sessions end with a plan the group develops, puts on paper & commits to," explains the preface of *Make Your Meetings Count!*, a workbook by Durward Humes, Gary Thompson & David Noyes.

HOW IT WORKS

- Piece of paper, index card or stick-on note which states a single idea is the basic building block.
- **Framework** is needed where ideas can be massaged & moved around, putting like ideas together. "It's much easier to see relationships & massage ideas if they are in natural clusters."
- **Planboard** is the primary work tool -- an "idea tree." It includes:
 - 1) **Topic** -- the subject, what the group wants to achieve.
 - 2) **Background** -- puts the situation in clear perspective.
 - 3) **Purpose** -- carefully define what you want to accomplish.