

EOS® Leadership Team Issues Solving Deep Dive

Based on a session by Tania Bengtsson
“8 Masterful Facilitation Practices to Elevate IDS”
with additions by Nico Human

Assumptions:

The Leadership Team:

- Has mastered the Level 10 meeting, and is following its format.
- Has mastered the basics of the “Issues Solving Track” and is applying those.

1. Facilitator Role:

- a. Ask, “Who is going to be our facilitator?” not, “Who runs the L10s?”
- b. Act like the orchestra conductor, and also has to participate.
- c. IDEA: Assign meeting roles: Question czar, TO DOist, tangent alerter
- d. Good idea to take turns facilitating. Learn and teach the skill.

2. It’s not a normal conversation. It’s a discipline.

- a. We’re solving issues! When done well IDS is all about Identifying & solving.
- b. We don’t need the story, history, or symptoms to tee it up. This is where most people start and it’s largely a waste of time. Big I, little d, Big S.
- c. We need to get our teams to fall in love with the I!!
- d. IDS, when done well, is all about masterful discipline, technique, and facilitation
- e. It flies in the face of how most of us were educated. We were graded on having the right answer. Having the right answer is good. Having a great question is genius!

3. Three Characteristics of Great Questions:

- a. Not a ‘yes’ or ‘no’
- b. Don’t know the answer yet
- c. Helps us get closer to the core root or answer
- d. Notes:
 - i. Ted Lasso – ‘[Get curious, not judgemental](#)’
 - ii. Use a framework: Ask “Who?” “What?” “When?” “Where?” “Why?” “How?”
 - iii. Ask “Why?” five times!
 - iv. Let questions steer our discussion.

4. Master the Skill of Listening. There are three levels of listening:

- a. Level 1: Focus on self and my reaction to what is being said.
- b. Level 2: Focus on others/to solve/wait to speak
- a. Level 3: Global focus/context/what is not being said, , body language, tone of voice, the energy in the room. This is the hardest level and we can’t stay here forever. It takes a lot of energy & focus!

Note: The difference between feeling heard and feeling loved is very close.

Great facilitation relies on level 3 listening AND responding to the energy in the room!

5. Facilitator must exude mental toughness and resilience. Warrior mindset: Discipline and focus. Ability to be in control of the room, to interrupt, to steer and to make sure progress is made whilst maintaining civility and respectful behaviour. Humour can help if used correctly!

6. Be Prepared!
 - a. Review Scorecard, Rocks and IDS before meeting starts
 - b. Be prepared with your update for SC & Rocks
 - c. Have time blocked on your calendar for TO DOs asap after meeting to get them done
 - d. Put time on your calendar to work on rocks too!
 - e. Commit to auditing and training great Facilitation, L10 meeting execution & IDSing

7. There are 5 Steps to Great IDSing:
 - a. STEP 1: Masterful setup. From Dan Wallace:
 1. WHO owns it? Whose issue is it?
 2. WHO are you talking to?
 3. What is the NEED?
 - a. I have info to share
 - b. I need help/advice
 - c. We need to make a Decision
 4. WHAT – State the root issue in one sentence
 - b. STEP 2: Big I. Spend most time on **identifying** the root of the issue. #1 reason my teams fail at IDS is their inability to get to root causes. They struggle with symptoms: “sales are off track” or “quality is down”, “communication is poor” where there are multiple causes. I use the “5 Why’s”, and the “getting what you want” tool to help them get to root causes.
 - c. STEP 3: Small D. Spend less time on brainstorming. All ideas are valid. Get them voiced.
 - d. STEP 4: Big S. Spend more time on finding the solution.
 - e. STEP 5: Ask the question, “Are you solved?” or “Are you solved for now?” (Note: Solve what the owner asked for. Don’t go bigger. Don’t try and solve all the world’s problems in one go!)

8. Time Mastery
 - a. When the leadership team follows all the discipline described above, your target time to solve an issue should be around five minutes.
 - b. If you find your problem solving takes longer, please consider:
 - i. Is the root clearly defined and stated?
 - ii. Are we perhaps looking at something that should be broken up in components (should we be using the “Getting What You Want” tool? Should we then ask which of the resulting components should be solved for the coming time period, and which should be added to the Issues List to be solved at a later date?
 - iii. Are we trying to solve issues that are not essential to be solved for the time slot we are looking at?

9. Magical Questions and Phrases:
 - a) Does this whole team need to be involved with or should we delegate it to be solved?
 - b) Have we gotten to the root cause?
 - c) What’s the issue we’re solving here? Can we get back to the root cause?
 - d) Is that a separate issue? Let’s add it to the issues list and keep going on our current issue.
 - e) _____(let silence do the heavy lifting!)
 - f) Are we off track? It sounds like we’re on a tangent.
 - g) Let’s drop it down...like hammer time!
 - h) Are these truly the most important issues to solve today?
 - i) Did we just jump into the discussion?
 - j) Are we ok with all these late todos? Should we IDS what’s going on here?
 - k) Use the room! I could be wrong..... or Is it just me.... Or I’m sensing...
 - l) Is there a theme here?

- m) What would the dumbest person in the room ask?
- n) What information do we need to solve this issue?
- o) Do we have the facts?
- p) OK team, let's pepper 'em with questions!
- q) The voices in the room
- r) Who's accountable?
- s) What are we trying to achieve here?
- t) If we solved this issue perfectly, what does it look like?
- u) What tool can we use to solve this issue
- v) Have we heard from everyone? Who haven't we heard from? ____ what are your thoughts?
- w) Uh-oh your plane is low on fuel, can you land in the next 30 seconds?
- x) Are we running enthusiastically in the wrong direction?
- y) Are we aggressively agreeing right now?
- z) Criticism is a lazy way of asking what you need.