



# Common Higher Ground Workshop

Collaborative Decision-Making in the Real World

Collected Resources



KEYSTONE  
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## Introduction

Thanks for your interest in collaborative decision-making and facilitation! The following resources have been compiled by Brad and me as we developed Keystone's Common Higher Ground and Adaptive Facilitation workshops. They do not represent a comprehensive list of what has been written on collaborative decision-making and facilitation, but for us they have been especially instructive and/or accessible. Please feel free to peruse the blurbs that describe the resources as well as the italicized reviews that we have left of their experience with them. We hope you find this a useful resource, and please feel free to reach out to talk more about this list and our public and custom trainings.



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## Collected Resources

Avruch, Kevin and Black, Peter. *Conflict Resolution: Cross-Cultural Perspectives*. Praeger, 1991.

Axelrod, Robert. *The Evolution of Cooperation*. New York: Basic Books, 1984.

This influential book explores the tension between individual interests and group interest. Rooted in game theory and operations research used to develop optimal strategies for military and other uses during WWII and the Cold War, *Evolution* describes conditions that support a cooperative approach (e.g., the parties will meet again in the future), and outlines a reciprocal approach to successful cooperation.

Barna, Laray M. "Stumbling Blocks in International Communication." In L.A. Samovar and R.E. Porter, *International Communication: A Reader*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1994. (pp. 337-346)

Bertcher, Harvey J. *Group Participation: Techniques for Leaders and Members* (Sage Publications, 1994)

Brown, Brené. *Dare to Lead: Brave Work, Tough Conversations, Whole Hearts* (Penguin Random House UK, 2018)

Brown's emphasis on seemingly "soft" virtues like vulnerability, courage, clarity, and reliability is based on years of research across sectors and interviews with over 300 C-suite leaders. She pushes leaders (of groups, teams, organizations) to recognize the role of fear, shame, and loneliness in driving negative behavior and culture.

Brown, Jennifer Gerarda. "Creativity: Creativity and Problem-Solving." *Marquette Law Review* v. 87 n. 4 (Special Issue 2004). Published online: <https://scholarship.law.marquette.edu/mulr/vol87/iss4/>

This article on creativity is brief and has a number of effective tactics for getting groups out of dead-end thinking. The link goes to the full journal volume because the paper on creativity is just one out of many interesting articles in it.

Cialdini, Robert B. *Influence: Science and Practice*. Boston: Pearson Education, 2009.

*Influence* is a very readable, research-based book on persuasion. Its six principles of influence (reciprocation, commitment and consistency, social proof, liking, authority, and scarcity) rest on an understanding of human cognitive biases, the ways that we make sense of an overly complex world with generalizations and other mental shortcuts. The book is as useful for identifying ways that dishonest people try to take advantage of others as it is for identifying ways that honest parties can spread the word more effectively.

Cohen, Raymond. *Negotiating Across Cultures: International Communication in an Interdependent World*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1997.

Covey, Stephen M.R. *The Speed of Trust: the One Thing that Changes Everything*. New York: Free Press, 2008.

Covey's book reads like a checklist or how-to manual for earning trust. In five sections it expands from establishing personal credibility to trusting relationships to organizational, interorganizational, and societal trust.

*While many of the precepts seem like straightforward, obvious advice, I have found it a useful touchstone to help me describe in concrete terms why some relationships succeed and others falter. - Jonathan G.*

Dawson, Roger. *Secrets of Power Negotiating*. 2nd. Franklin Lakes, NJ: Career Press, 2001.

In this book, Dawson explores the game-playing aspects of negotiation on a spectrum from above board bargaining gambits to dirty tricks.

*Having these tricks in mind and being able to name them has allowed me to judge what kind of a negotiation I am in – namely, honest or dishonest – and if I am at a disadvantage. Also, it's a fun read. – Jonathan G.*

Doyle, Michael, and Straus, David. *How to Make Meetings Work* (Berkeley Books, New York, 1993)

An oldie but goodie, this book provides an accessible, nuts-and-bolts approach to topics like how group memory works, when/why a facilitator is needed (distinct from a chair, boss, etc.), the importance of meeting location and layout, and tips and techniques on the way to effective facilitation. Tilts slightly toward a focus on working within a given organization or community.

Fisher, Roger and William Ury. *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In*. New York: Random House, 2012. 16 10 2018.

*Getting to Yes* almost single-handedly brought interest-based negotiation to popular attention when it was first published in 1981. It provides practical strategies and techniques for navigating specific challenges, and emphasizes both the importance of identifying underlying interests and the need to evaluate walk-away alternatives. Having gone through multiple editions, the book remains an effective 101 guide to the practice and one of the easiest reads on collaborative problem solving.

Gardner, Howard. *Changing Minds: the Art and Science of Changing Our Own and Other People's Minds*. Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, 2006.

One of the more influential treatments of what is involved in changing important beliefs. A prominent psychologist, Gardner explores the difficulty involved in changing minds in a variety of circumstances, and emphasizes the importance of leadership, communication, and patience.

*While this book remains a deserved classic, it's worth noting that it was written before the predominance of social media. The author assumes goodwill on the part of advocate and audience and an interest in open-minded discourse about facts. - Brad S.*

Gelfand, Michele J and Jeanne M. Brett, Editors. *The Handbook of Negotiation and Culture*. Stanford: Stanford Business Books, 2004.

A great deal of popular negotiation theory has traditionally been grounded in Western cultures, and shaped particularly by norms of Western business culture. This compilation reviews cross-cultural perspectives on negotiation, addressing topics like research-negotiator cognition, emotion and



communication, power and disputing, intergroup relationships, justice, technology, and social dilemmas.

Ghais, Suzanne. *Extreme Facilitation: Guiding Groups Through Controversy and Complexity* (Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 2005)

Focuses deliberately on challenging dynamics and settings, from unwieldy networks to adversarial relations to dysfunctional teams. Speaks especially to the facilitator who must develop a strong presence, think creatively about group process, or establish trust before meaningful progress can be attempted.

Kaner, Sam et al. *Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Jossey-Bass, 2014

This is the first book usually provided to those who express an interest in facilitation and for good reason. It contains all the basics for setting up and holding an effective group conversation. It is very concrete and instructive in tone. The format of the book itself is helpful, since the pages are designed to be easy to copy and distribute as handouts in meetings to get participants literally on the same page.

*I have really found no other comparable resource for getting people started facilitating. I still reference it when I want to recall some of the basic assumptions underlying the practice. – Jonathan G.*

Keystone Policy Center and Dow. "Collaborative Action Toolkit." 2020.

(<https://www.keystone.org/collaborativeactiontoolkit/>).

This resource is an Excel workbook and an explanatory slide deck that provide a framework to navigate the internal and external planning, collaborations, and communications required in considering external engagement for a complex issue or project. It was developed by Keystone in partnership with Dow, for use by Dow teams. The toolkit is organized into three sections—project alignment, stakeholder mapping, and external engagement—and provides numerous prompts and resources for each stage.

*The intent of this toolkit can be summarized as the "engineer's guide to collaboration." It is essentially a guided conversation to assist teams in building solid partnerships or even multi-stakeholder collaborative efforts. – Jonathan G.*

Kogon, Kory, Suzette Blakemore, and James Wood. *Project Management for the Unofficial Project Manager: A FranklinCovey Title*. Dallas, TX: BenBella Books, Inc, 2015.

Project management has become an established profession complete with branded processes and substantial jargon. This book strips this confusing content down to the basic concepts, conveyed in plain language. It walks the reader through the journey of setting up and implementing a complex project with a lot of moving parts.

Lewandowsky, S., Cook, J., Ecker, U. K. H., Albarracín, D., Amazeen, M. A., Kendeou, P., Lombardi, D., Newman, E. J., Pennycook, G., Porter, E. Rand, D. G., Rapp, D. N., Reifler, J., Roozenbeek, J., Schmid, P., Seifert, C. M., Sinatra, G. M., Swire-Thompson, B., van der Linden, S., Vraga, E. K., Wood, T. J., Zaragoza, M. S. (2020). *The Debunking Handbook 2020*. Available at <https://sks.to/db2020>. DOI:10.17910/b7.1182

This meticulously researched paper serves as a fairly concise guide to debunking myths. Although there is a great deal of psychological research on misinformation, this appears to be the first summary of available literature which offers practical guidance on the most effective ways of reducing the influence of misinformation. The Handbook is intended as a guide for communicators in all areas who encounter misinformation.

Mercier, Hugo and Dan Sperber. *The Enigma of Reason*. Boston: Harvard University Press, 2017.

A dense but worthwhile read, *Enigma* examines human reason as an evolutionary adaptation that helps us justify our beliefs, evaluate arguments, persuade others, cooperate, and live in groups. The authors, prominent cognitive scientists, helpfully summarize decades of research into how people understand what they know, consider new information, and change their beliefs.

Meyer, Erin. "Getting to Si, Ja, Oui, Hai, and Da," *Harvard Business Review*, December 2015.

The author draws on a background in (largely international) cross-cultural management to identify rules of thumb for negotiating with someone whose cultural style of communication differs from yours. Key considerations include degree of emotional expressiveness, degree of comfort with direct confrontation, and how trust is built (and lost).

Moore, Christopher W. *The Mediation Process: Practical Strategies for Resolving Conflict*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003.

This heavy tome is a desk reference for collaborative process that assumes the perspective of a disinterested third party. This book contains a lot of gems but is definitely not a cover-to-cover read. The sources of power listed in Collaborative Problem Solving Across Cultural Differences came from this resource (p. 377).

Parker, Priya. *The Art of Gathering: How We Meet and Why It Matters* (Riverhead Books 2018)

This recent book is directed to those who work in "public, political, and social movement-building" spaces, offering a human-centered approach to deciding why, where, and how to gather in the service of productive meetings and dynamic collaboration. Parker shares the stories of diverse people who successfully reimagined how to communicate and collaborate in very different settings – from an Arab-Israeli summer camp to a local courtroom.

Schwarz, Roger M. *The Skilled Facilitator: Practical Wisdom for Developing Effective Groups* (Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 1994)

A detailed guide to planning effective group collaboration, from how to build ground rules to sets of techniques and tactics that help fill a good facilitator's toolbox. An enduring classic, regularly updated.

*This is the book of mine most often borrowed by colleagues over the years. – Brad*

Sharot, Tali. *The Influential Mind: What the Brain Reveals About Our Power to Change Others*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2017.

The author draws on neuroscience, behavioral economics, and psychology in challenging popular assumptions about how to influence others – e.g., relying on facts and figures, insisting others are

wrong, attempting to exert control. *The Influential Mind* suggests an approach to changing beliefs and actions which recognizes how the human brain works, highlighting the role of emotion and curiosity and discouraging a straightforward reliance on data.

Shell, G. Richard. *Bargaining for Advantage: Negotiation Strategies for Reasonable People*. New York: Penguin Group, 2006.

*Bargaining for Advantage* is a good second-level resource for interest-based negotiation beyond *Getting to Yes*, with more stories, more methods, and more depth.

Cass R. Sunstein, "[The Law of Group Polarization](#)" (John M. Olin Program in Law and Economics Working Paper No. 91, 1999)

A systematic, evidence-based treatment of the phenomenon of group polarization in which like-minded individuals gravitate toward more radical or extreme versions of an initial belief as a result of sustained group interaction.

*Highly recommended, especially for those concerned that bridging gaps and identifying shared goals and values is becoming more challenging in political, academic, and other settings.* – Brad S.

Susskind, Lawrence and Jeffrey Cruikshank. *Breaking the Impasse: Consensual Approaches to Resolving Public Disputes*. Basic Books, 1987

*Breaking the Impasse* is a foundational and notably jargon-free guide to negotiating consensual solutions to public disputes, especially in cases of apparently deadlocked conflict. The approach is accessible to advocates, corporate executives, and government officials. The book identifies characteristics of the United States' representative democratic system which give rise to public disputes, and includes an extensive list of suggested further readings.

Susskind, Lawrence and Patrick Field. *Dealing with an Angry Public: The Mutual Gains Approach*. New York: Free Press, 1996.

The authors analyze scores of cases of private and public sector disputes, as well as environmental crises and public health controversies. They stress the importance of face-to-face negotiation, constructive engagement with critics, demonstrating the legitimacy of strategies, and assessing different types of anger. They also acknowledge the role of the media in shaping public perception and understanding.

Susskind, Lawrence, Sarah McKernan, and Jennifer Thomas-Larmer, eds. *The Consensus Building Handbook*. Sage Publications, 1999.

*The Consensus Building Handbook* can be seen as the encyclopedia of facilitation. It is a remarkably comprehensive resource with many professional contributors, and the content is accessible and straightforwardly instructive.

*This doorstep of a book is the one I turn to when I have a question that I can't find an answer to anywhere else. It is like having several mentors on a shelf. I have never read it cover-to-cover, but I have consulted a number of chapters over the years.* – Jonathan G.

Ury, William. *Getting Past No: Negotiating with Difficult People*. New York: Bantam Books, 1991.

The sequel with the best sequel title, *Getting Past No* addresses specifically those situations in which you need to negotiate with prickly, unpleasant people. It covers different tactics you might encounter and strategies for holding your own and staying productive. It also goes more in depth than *Getting to Yes* into the risk analysis of engaging further versus leaving the table.

*I often turn to this book for its straightforward framework for diagnosing and working through impasses. - Brad S.*

Ury, William. *The Third Side: Why We Fight and How We Can Stop*. New York: Penguin, 2000.

Throughout history, third parties have been drawn into conflicts to help arbitrate, mediate, or just to witness conversations that need to be resolved. In *The Third Side*, Ury explores the many roles, formal and informal, that third parties can and have played.