

## **PDW proposal for AOM 2008**

- engage in discussion around idea of “sideways organizing”
- organize PDW in a “sideways” way

### **Title of PDW:**

Many suggestions including “Conceptualizing sideways organizing and side-stance orientation” or “How to study and manage sideways”

### **Overview of framework for session:**

1. Introduce idea of sideways organizing with concrete examples
2. Have a dialog around key issues related to sideways organizing
3. Key questions for discussion around topic of sideways organizing
4. Transition to next section by showing the sideways organizing component of the PDW
5. Engage with participants around empirics of sideways organizing

## **1. Introduce idea of sideways organizing**

### **Examples of sideways organizing:**

- “side-stance” sports (skateboarding, surfing, snowboarding)
- X-games, archery (Zen and the Art of Archery)
- Judo
- Jazz
- painting using a new or different perspective
- synchronized swimming exercise from POS conference
- Martha’s inclusiveness in government example (use task to create community rather than other way around)

### **Characteristics of sideways organizing:**

- moving towards goal & process-oriented
- emergent and in motion
- mindful and body-ful (embodied)
- cultivate awareness of space (quarterback turning to throw example – needs to trust defensive line to protect him; skateboarding “wave to the parade” vs. “jams”)
- rich awareness of others (reflected in practices related to sideways organizing)
- experimental (need to “love falling”)
- continuous learning
- balance
- re/claiming the environment as human
- variation in individual skill: some people are naturals, others can learn
- playfulness (Gregory Bateson “workfulness” vs. “playfulness” example) leading to enjoyment, reflection
- noticing the typically unnoticed

## 2. Dialog around key issues related to sideways organizing

Conversations/debates to highlight key points we grappled with. Several possibilities include:

### a. *Role of goals and tasks*

Ryan: goal-orientation (instrumentality)

Martha: process as goal (Zen)

### b. *Sideways organizing vs. horizontal organizing*

Mike: sideways organizing

Marlys: horizontal organizing

### c. *Is sideways organizing real or a trend?*

Monica: real

Arran: trend

## 3. Identify key questions for discussion around topic of sideways organizing

- How is sideways organizing different from . . . (the "So what?" question)
- Characteristics of side-stancers? i.e., openness to risk, need to trust, holistic awareness
- What would a side-stance be at work? In organizations?
- What's the potential down-side to sideways organizing?
  - Unique downside: sideways organizing may be fragile or vulnerable in a way that hierarchies are not (one 'bad apple' issue), tipping point?
  - Sustainability of sideways organizing?
  - Inefficiency?
  - Dependent on a certain culture or sub-culture (think youth culture and skateboarding)?

## 4. TRANSITION: Enactment of sideways organizing in PDW itself

- Orientation in space (presentations are usually square to audience. Some other format?)
  - Why NB? Shift in physical space/orientation (90 degrees) can result in a profound shift psychologically
- Exercise: practice of side stance → reflection, questions

## 5. Engage with participants around empirics of sideways organizing

Planned to use small group break-outs to discuss some or all of these questions:

### a. *Using existing organizational practices to reveal "stance" – sideways or otherwise*

- When not to use sideways stance?

- Limitations of sideways stance?

### b. *How would "sideways" orientation change your current research?*

### c. *Take a particular research method e.g., participant observation, interviews, etc:*

- What would it mean to re-orient sideways?

*d. Take a particular research stream or topic e.g., leadership, identity, resilience, emotion, etc.*

- What would it mean to examine this topic with a sideways orientation?

***Reflection and critique by audience and panel – in what ways did our PDW conform (or not) to sideways organizing?***

***Other thoughts:***

***PDW goes to the movies: Sideways (<http://www.foxsearchlight.com/sideways/>)***