Robert P Crosby is trained by the founders of Organization Development (OD). His first “Training-group” (T-group) was in 1953 followed by “Train-the-Trainers” with Lippitt, Benne, and Bradford, and NTL’s first OD intern program with Goodwin Watson and W. Warner Burke. In 1966 he became an NTL associate. In 1973 he started the first Masters in Applied Behavioral Science and began adapting the “T-group” for organizations. His OD change strategy integrating the “T-group” is described in “Cultural Change in Organizations.” He works with his sons in “Crosby & Associates.”

**T-group as Cutting Edge: Today? Really?**
By Robert P Crosby

Yes, really!

In 2011, President Obama visited a Fortune 500 manufacturing plant to celebrate its productivity! A major contributing factor was that in the previous eight years, 1,300 of its 2,000 employees had experienced an evolved T-group. This evolution is a cutting edge model adapted for business.

**The History of T-Groups**

The T-group birthed OD! Out of its emphasis on group processes grew an expanded interest in organizational and systemic development. Other strands contributed, but the spark that took OD from a concept to a vital energizing movement was the T-group! The first T-group is a paradigm shift for most participants creating a fundamental change in one's perception of relationships and group dynamics.

Readers familiar with NTL (the National Training Laboratories) will be acquainted with the T-group which was invented in 1946-1947. Led by Kurt Lewin, the founder of Social Psychology, this unique training grew out of his discussion with Ken Benne, Leland Bradford and Ronald Lippitt. Originally called the Basic Skills Training Group, it was soon nicknamed T (for training) group, and became well known nationally through coverage in the popular media of the 1950's. Life Magazine, perhaps the best known journal at that time, featured it in one issue. They called it, "Sensitivity Training," which in the early years had been a phrase used in reference to participants becoming sensitive to groups processes and dynamics. However, Life highlighted a growing popular trend to identify this new training as a "pop-psychological" new-age "hip" activity. That kind of marketing led to the popularity and proliferation of T-group training led by leaders both untrained and unaware of the original T-group intention. Variations with names including “Sensitivity” and, in the 1960's, “Encounter,” were used. I attended two Esalen Institute Encounter groups in the 1970's that bore little resemblance to my extensive experiences in the previous decade with the founders and others such as Goodwin Watson. Esalen, located in California, was highly respected at the time.

Describing the T-group or any deep, profound event in life to those who have not experienced it has always been a challenge but here are some critical distinctions of its
learning process. The T-group offers the cognitive domain (theories/concepts) as in traditional education. However, it also engages the affective (emotions/values) and motoric (skills) domains in ways that are strikingly uncommon in a typical classroom. The T-group leader does not lead in a discussion of the topics in which the participants are engaged. Rather, the leader helps individuals and groups be aware about that which most are usually unaware such as: how are decisions being made (e.g., about what to talk about), how are members dealing with disagreements and authority issues, how aware and open are members about emotionality in the group interaction, and what norms/rules are members operating from about how to behave, most of which are both unspoken and outside of usual awareness. While what we say has importance, in the T-group how we interact is highlighted! Strikingly, participants are encouraged to be aware in the "here and now." Most humans are much more aware of the past or anxious about the future, yet all that we have is the “fleeting” now.

Here is a "nutshell" of the electric moment, the "aha" insight in 1946 that brightened the eyes of those four founders mentioned above, Lewin, Benne, Bradford, and Lippitt. A workshop was held in Connecticut aimed at improving interracial practices in the state government. The primary method was discussion. Kurt Lewin of MIT's Research Center for Group Dynamics, the key leader, had a research observer attached to each of three groups. They were concerned about the effects on attendees, and the transfer to back-home situations.

The staff met each evening to review the research, paying attention NOT to the content of the conversations, but rather to how the participants were interacting with each other! A researcher might report, ".....and he and Mrs. X became involved in a heated exchange. Others (took) sides. Others seemed frightened and tried to make peace." (Bradford, Gibb, Benne, 1964) Early in the workshop, a group of participants wandered in and overheard the staff review of the day's events. "They were fascinated by what they heard. Analyzing how a group formed and evolved was much more fun than simply being in one." (Bennis, 2010) Lewin enthusiastically not only welcomed the participants, but also invited the rest of the attendees to the nightly debriefs. Each evening more and more came. Often upon hearing the review, they became dynamically engaged and sometimes defensive about the information. "Lewin and the others realized that a group that scrutinized its own process as it formed and changed was something new and valuable." (Bennis, 2010)

"To the training staff it seemed that a potentially powerful medium and process of reeducation had been, somewhat inadvertently, hit upon." (Bradford, Gibb, Benne, 1964) During a group conversation they decided that the following year they would report these interaction dynamics in the midst of the discussions! Most participants are unaware of such dynamics except at some level of discomfort when tension surfaces. In this way participants would learn how to focus on the processes that are constantly taking place between them and the other people in the conversation as well as the content. Thus was birthed the T-group which still creates an "electric moment" of openness for most new participants.
Openness, defined to mean my ability and willingness to share what I'm aware of in the “here and now” (I'm sad, glad, mad, afraid), is an awareness and skill missing for most. The T-group can increase that awareness, but usually not without some frustrating moments as this ambiguous learning unfolds. Unskilled trainers turned openness into personal confession which everyone already knows how to do! While openness is about what's happening between us now, personal confession is the sharing of private stories from outside the group such as past history (e.g., I've been married four times). That lack of clarity is but one example of how the original intent can become lost. While the sharing of secretly held past stories may be important in a certain therapeutic setting that was not the original intent of the T-group.

Learning to be present, here and now in all of life is exhilarating and enriching. Two thirds of the business participants in our T-group trainings report, in an anonymous questionnaire, that this event is the most applicable training to both work and life outside of work that they have experienced in their life.

Even currently T-groups, reports David Bradford of Stanford, have "...a central role at the Stanford Graduate School of Business. It is seen as one of the 'must' electives. We teach eleven sections of the course and about 85% of the students take it. Alumni regularly name it as one of the most important courses they took as an MBA." Annually, Stanford also offers a high quality 6-day residential T-group as part of the GSB Executive Program. David Bradford of Stanford is the son of Leland Bradford, who with Kenneth Benne and Ronald Lippitt led the first T-group's in 1947 after Lewin's untimely death. The work they initiated is constantly evolving and also continues both through NTL and in the religious domain.

Churches have been deeply involved in T-groups since the early 1950's. During the 60's, I headed the Laboratory and T-group program of the Methodist Church. Currently the EQ & HR (Emotional Intelligence & Human Relations) Center, formed six years ago by trainers from various churches, offers training to Faith-based groups. Directed by the seasoned Lutheran Pastor Roy Oswald, it offers quality training in the T-group tradition.

The mid-50's Life Magazine article mentioned above featured the Episcopalian's T-group movement. The Episcopalians developed ways to bring some of the dynamics of these groups, though not the T-group itself, to the local parish. I founded a for-profit secular Institute in 1969 with the T-group at its core. (Leadership Institute of Spokane/Seattle) Its first board chairman, Episcopal Bishop Jack Wyatt, was an experienced T-group trainer!

Next I will offer examples of how we have been taking the T-group, which Carl Rogers reportedly described as, “The most significant social invention of the 20th century,” into the belly of the workplace. We have now done this with thousands, but since this is rarely done by others it presents a possible edge of depth for OD practitioners.

Making the Case for T-Groups Today - A Manufacturing Plant Adaptation
The following outlines the innovative way we used T-groups as a critical component of the strategy to transform the plant recognized by Obama in 2011. The intervention started in 2004 with two major events. The first was a joint T-group with the union executive board and top management. I was referred to the plant manager to help them make operational a joint union-management decision at the top level of the corporation called "Partnership." With no further definition from headquarters, chaos reigned at the local level. The plant manager had extensive training in the unique T-group model in our Alcoa graduate program. For the union president we could provide references from other union leaders who had positive experiences with us and from steelworkers who attended the graduate program. The decision to begin with the joint T-group was preceded by private conversations with the union president and his board members, along with the plant manager and his direct reports. A one-week T-group then followed, as well as two three-day follow-through sessions, three and six weeks later.

The results of a Conflict Management instrument (Teleometrics International) had shown a strong distaste on the part of nearly all participants to collaborate or compromise. To have a partnership succeed we needed the kind of in-depth training that T-group’s can offer, which enable persons to become more versatile in their approach to conflict. Besides new concepts about conflict styles, T-group training offers existential exploration about one’s affective domain of values and emotions as they are manifested in this unique interactive event! As significantly, in the T-group, participants experiment with new ways of behaving in moments of tension. These are not role plays but real encounters in tense moments in this "safe" group setting. Participants not only become more aware of the positive value in styles they had previously found distasteful, but actually develop new skills to do, when deemed wise, that which had not been available to them before!

The second major event was a cost-improvement project aimed at both reducing costs and increasing production so as to net $15 million. For three days over 100 gathered in a large meeting room where they joined any one of eight theme groups (maintenance, production, human factors (not HR, though some HR personnel joined this group as well as others), quality, purchasing, engineering, etc. It is significant to note that, by design, more than 50% of the participants were steelworkers! We do not do this kind of planning process unless frontline employees are present. We believe they are collectively quite knowledgeable about the day-to-day possibilities for improvement and that their ownership/judgment of the plans developed will greatly determine the success of the endeavor. Involvement in creating the solutions, of course, increases ownership.

The top leaders who had participated in the joint T-group brought to the event a more positive attitude towards collaboration that influenced the workers. Equally as important were new, sharper skills in communication with paraphrasing, specificity, and the ability to raise issues in a non-blaming way resulting in more effective dialogue and conflict resolution. Above all, no time was wasted arguing whether or not this joint activity should be attempted! It was now clear that achieving the goal would benefit all.
By the third morning, each theme group, guided by a very structured process, had a timeline for the nine-month plan. These were merged into a 20-foot master chart (later put on Microsoft Visio to post throughout the Plant), and kept updated by the Project Manager. It is significant that, of the over 100 action items, about half had a steelworker with single-point accountability. They were eager to shepherd actions important to them.

This is but a brief outline of what became not only a highly successful project, but also a great launching pad for the OD strategy and further T-groups throughout the plant. These were considered core to the overall strategy.

**Differences Between "Stranger' Groups and "Intact" Groups**

Almost all T-groups have been composed of people meeting each other for the first time. Thus they were called "stranger" groups or laboratories ("laboratory training" was an early common term for the workshop that included T-groups). Even in corporations like Avis, which in the 60's offered many T-groups, stranger groups were the unquestioned practice.

A major challenge immediately recognized was the transfer of learning difficulties faced when participants would return to their workplace. With Richard Schmuck, who had received his doctorate with Ronald Lippitt at the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan, we wrote, "Laboratory training is based on the important premise that what is learned during the laboratory may be employed in real life situations...The term transfer describes the utilization in a second situation of what has been learned in a former situation. A denial of the importance of transfer would be tantamount to saying that what one learns in the laboratory is in order to do better in laboratories." Later we state, "The problem of transfer is complicated by cultural-island approaches to laboratory training. Participants are removed from their workaday worlds to help 'unfreeze' daily sets, expectations, and patterns and to take fresh looks at themselves, their colleagues, and their back-home situations. In contrast, transfer would be enhanced by learning new skills in virtually the same situations as the ones in which they must be applied." Schmuck wrote later that, "Lewin reminded his students that a focus on the intact group as the target of social-skill training necessarily differed from current visions of how to engineer community change." (Schmuck, 2008) Indeed! The ability to transfer learning also greatly increases when T-groups are done in-house with intact groups! That intact group distinction, though historically referenced, is very cutting edge in practice today.

This is not meant to disparage stranger groups. Indeed we do two such groups annually in our "adapted for industry" style. Yet to work effectively with intact groups, we have developed new strategies that maintain some significant continuity with the older forms, while also incorporating some key innovations.

**Continuities with Classic T-Groups**
A typical early statement by trainers historically and in our style is often something like: "We don't provide a topic and we don't guide the discussion of whatever you talk about. Rather, we attempt to help with the dynamics happening while you engage." I've heard novice trainers say you can't have a topic, which, of course, is impossible. In a business environment, topics often arise about tough issues they are facing! Our task is to assist them to be 1) here-and-now (there is always a "now" component in a conversation); 2) speak from the "I" when appropriate - I feel, I think, I want (you or we is also sometimes accurate); 3) Talk to any member directly rather than about them in the 3rd person; and 4) paraphrase when differences surface.

In addition, we note dynamics such as how decisions (for instance, about the 'topic' being discussed) are being made in the here-and-now in the group (usually by default). As in the classical T-group, we may also mention the current stage of this group’s development. Factors such as who is talking to whom, how differences are being managed, or what patterns are emerging are also noted. One common pattern is that each person speaks but no one paraphrases or builds on what the other has said. All of these are 'here-and-now' moments with 'there-and-then' implications because these behaviors often run rampant in the workplace. "I imagine this is also familiar at work," says the trainer. Heads nod affirmatively. "Solve this here, and you will more likely be able to solve it there." Our 'there and then' interventions take them briefly to their workplace and help them begin to see the relevance of this T-group moment.

**T-group Innovations: Our "Tough Stuff" Model**

Our "Tough Stuff" trademarked name is true to the essence of the original laboratory training, but adapted to highlight workplace relevance. Our unique T-group innovations are interwoven throughout each Tough Stuff event. Each location we help transform has Tough Stuff as a major component of their strategy. The initial event is five days with at least 10 separate T-group sessions during the course of the week. At the end of each "Tough Stuff" we have the participants rate it on an anonymous ten point scale, ten being high. They consistently rate it an 8-10 on its "applicability to work."

These are some of its unique cutting edge features:

1. Whenever possible, we prefer intact work groups. At the plant visited by Obama, the group makeup included (union) hourlies, their supervisor, their union shop steward, and key people with whom they interfaced (i.e., a technician, engineer, quality, etc.).

2. Each group had a meeting sharpening roles and specific measurable goals prior to the weeklong session.

3. Each group had a follow-through session 2-3 weeks later which included more time in T-group, or as we call it, Skill Group ("Basic Skills Training Group" was the early 1947 name before being shortened to "T-group"). The follow-through sessions also include added conflict-management training.
4. Our unique innovation (credit for this goes to former colleagues John Scherer and Ron Short) is the inside-outside structure.

a) The first form Skill Group takes is that of a “fish bowl” Here, five to eight people sit facing each other inside a group of five to eight observers. Each member of Group A is paired with a member of Group B, who observes and gives feedback to their “A” learning partner between sessions. The Trainers sit on the outside with the observers, but are free to make interventions from that position or briefly join the inner circle to make a comment.

b) The typical beginning sequence of sessions is:

   i. Group A is in session for ten minutes;
   ii. Group A’s learning partners give them feedback for five minutes;
   iii. Group A again is in session for ten minutes
   iv. Group A’s learning partners give them feedback for five minutes.
   v. Group B is in session for ten minutes;
   vi. Group B’s learning partners give them feedback for five minutes;
   vii. Group B returns for ten minutes;
   viii. Group B’s learning partners give them feedback for five minutes.

5. This rotation continues for the length of the training. The time in session may be altered by the trainer who may structure occasional sessions of the entire group. This enables members to have direct access to each other, including the trainer.

6. The skill groups are interspersed with theory sessions of one to one-and-a-half hours in length where skills and concepts about self-awareness, interpersonal communication, conflict management, group process, and systems theory are presented. The total amount of time spent in Skill Group varies from 12 to 15 hours during the first week which is comparable to the early T-groups.

7. The outside group is equally as important as the inside group. Their task lies at the very core of this work. They are to take extensive notes, observing one person whom they are facing. On the left-hand column, they are to describe behaviors (what did the person you are observing do or say). On the right side they are to hunch feelings (mad, sad, glad, and afraid). The skills taught to the participants in the outside group are critical. They are the very same needed by managers to effectively coach their employees to higher levels of performance or by employees when they bring issues to their boss in a way that is devoid of blaming and focused on specific concerns.

8. We have a strict definition of what openness means. At first, almost all attendees interpret 'openness' as gut-spilling or as telling secrets about oneself that are otherwise held private. The inability for novice trainers to distinguish between personal confession and openness has been a major factor leading to the
demise of Encounter and T-groups. Openness is the sharing of my feelings, wants, and thoughts NOW, not personal secrets or confessions. It is accurate data flow. It is a trust-building way of being. It is NOT always appropriate in life and work, but the T-group is an ideal arena in which to “try on” this basically new behavior for all attendees. Participants need to be more emotionally aware so that, with awareness, they can choose wisely. It's not “Do what you feel,” but “Feel what you feel and choose what you do”. At the beginning of the very first Skill Group session, the trainer must BE ON HIGH ALERT to nip confessions in the bud! Personal confession is appropriate in therapy. It is NOT openness.

9. However, personal confession can be touched lightly when guided by a skilled trainer. Influenced by Virginia Satir's visits in the 70's, faculty Ron Short's sabbatical with Salvador Minuchin in the late 70's, Edwin Friedman's frequent visits a decade later, and the addition to our faculty of Donald Williamson in the 90's, family of origin (FOO) work became deeply integrated into our T-(skill) groups. The art here is to help participants, in intense interpersonal moments, dip quickly into their FOO history without going into therapy and therefore leaving the here and now conflict. "You seem more intense now than I expected given what's happening between you and Mary", the trainer might say. "Does someone else come to mind?" If yes is the response, the trainer then attempts to help the focus return to the immediate conflict with emotionality related to this event and separated from the historic family unfinished business. We have (in extended programs) a counselor on staff who is available for further consultation about this incident. In the Skill Group we use a brief dip into FOO to enlighten the here and now moment. This evolved FOO integration connects, historically, with Kenneth Benne's observation that, "...the here-and-now includes a time dimension of the past and the future." (Bradford, Gibb, Benne, 1964)

Many participants begin by thinking that they are “straight shooters.” They interpret ‘openness’ to mean direct talk that is loaded with judgments about the other. This, too, demands a quick intervention by the trainer so that norms in the group do not get tilted toward destructive confrontation. In the “stranger” groups, this is not as devastating. In an intact group, however, “secret-telling” and “accusative” language both create chaos that can be long lasting. Immediate interventions can quickly turn the quality of the conversation into one where such distorted notions of “openness” become positive moments of emotion and behavior description.

As Hamlet succinctly put it, “Aye, there’s the rub!” Too few adults know how to describe behavior. Children grow up being socialized to judge and call other kids by pejorative names when provoked. They point fingers, blame, and see causal factors as being outside of their control. This is sometimes accurate in the sense of the wider society, but I'm writing here about daily interactions with others. Most carry their childhood socialization into adulthood. Emotional awareness has been reduced from the full range that a baby possesses (mad, glad, sad, afraid) to a range that the child's upbringing has influenced. Also, the ability to pull back from an accusation/judgment so as to describe accurately what one has seen or heard is a skill woefully lacking and rarely taught.
Judgments are in our own head and behavioral description is what is outside of us. That's why the skill of 'behavior description' is so essential if one is going to live a sane, differentiated life in a sane, differentiated company.

Further, behavior description affects the Anterior Cingulated (AC) area of the brain which is located between the Prefrontal Cortex and the Limbic area. (O'Connor, 2006) Especially, my capacity to separate my personal judgments from a behavior description of what I sense (see, hear, touch, smell) is a critical element balancing these two parts of the brain. As noted above, children believe that their judgments are facts. Adults remain stuck there unless they learn how to describe behavior, describe and own emotions, paraphrase, and do perception check as also significantly emphasized by Wallen. Without these skills, EQ is shallow. The T-group, competently led, nails these!

Greg Crosby, a fellow in the Group Psychotherapy Association and a Faculty in Interpersonal Neural Biology says "Limbic area functions are: emotional regulation of positive and negative emotions (which includes the Fight/Flight/Freeze response), attachment and memory. The AC is called the "gear shifter" since it can get rigid and argumentative when stressed. AC also has the capability of being flexible and sorting through difficult problems and distressing communication. This takes poise, patience and allows for a refreshing pause inside the brain to make sense out of the communication moment. Communication skills such as paraphrase, perception check, and behavior description are so helpful to brain function because they allow one to slow down the response time before reacting, thus avoiding a reactive response."

Dr. John Wallen, author of the "Interpersonal Gap," (Crosby, G., 2008) claimed that "behavior description" is the most difficult skill to learn. We agree. It is also absolutely critical if one is to give clean feedback unencumbered by the giver’s judgments/projections/opinions!

It is, therefore, an essential skill for managers.

Implications for OD Practice

The first major implication from what I have written above is that team and even some leadership development, not just T-group training, needs to be done with intact groups. This minimizes the problem of transfer of learning.

A second major implication is the importance of behavioral description as understood and taught in our unique T-group innovation. Even if the OD practitioner never does a T-group with a client (which would be unwise to do without training and apprenticeship), it is our belief that knowing and integrating our strict definition of both behavior description and openness into one’s habitual communication is essential! For instance, if I think that feedback is giving others my judgment of them rather than feedback as stating the specific behaviors that I've seen and heard, then I am fused and probably unaware of my emotionality in that moment. My judgments, besides NOT being facts, come from
deep within me and are a clue about what lenses I wear looking out from my eyes. They tell the story of me and how I uniquely, emotionally, view the world.

I know of no one who wrote with more clarity about this than John Wallen, (Chinmaya, A., Vargo, J.W.) for me a giant in the field of OD and interpersonal communications.

His precision about communication and his skill exercises permeate all of our books and our work. Like no one else, Wallen emphasized “behavior description.” Without that skill of specificity, feedback is reduced to judgments about the other and to endless blaming. His “Interpersonal Gap” is an interpersonal systems theory that turns communication “upside down,” in that it helps those who comprehend it to realize that:

1. The receiver of the communication, not the giver, holds most of the keys towards resolving any confusion arising in the conversation since it is the receiver who knows if s/he is confused or irritated by an interaction. The sender may or may not sense this. 
2. I create my own emotions based on my interpretations of your actions. You don’t “make me feel…” -- I do!
3. My unique interpretations of the other (responding to words, gestures, face, and tone), sometimes leads to my misunderstanding the other. I don’t know the others “by their actions,” but by my interpretation, which is often (especially in tense moments) different from their intentions. Wallen claims that more than 50% of all conflicts come from this gap in understanding.
4. Until I profoundly comprehend this, I will live a lot of my life as a victim pointing my finger elsewhere as I search for answers to repeated communication dilemmas.

Hunching by the observers, related to the behavior listed in the left-hand column, is the door to empathy. Many participants at the beginning of the training list judgments on the left and more judgments on the right. Until they become more emotionally aware they cannot do either the left- or right-hand column with much accuracy.

The practicality of being more precise soon becomes evident to most participants. Without specificity, employees and bosses don’t get what they really want; so-called feedback becomes blaming; goals and roles are fuzzy, and huge waste of time and energy follows.

Integration with Task Work

It is our contention that for OD and T-group training to be effective it must be integrated with the real problems and challenges that are taking place within the location. "Goodwin Watson (1947) warned that the skill training had to accomplish more than 'the warm glow of participation' to achieve objective results by truly implementing a data-based project cooperatively." (Schmuck, 2008) The following is an example of how we help each client do so.
During a recent 7-week intensive training (spread out over nine months) with a manufacturing company our firm enhanced an innovation that we have been evolving during the last decade. Each participant had a project that was cross-functional and that was expected to contribute to the bottom-line. The CEO signed off on each one. Work on this was interwoven into the sessions, all of which included continued Skill Group sessions.

For a systemic analysis of each project/task, we use our adaptation of Conner's work. (Conner, 1992) Especially we insist that you can only sponsor your immediate direct reports. (Crosby, 1992 and 2011) Thus, if a supervisor isn't aligned with bosses above, the crew almost always follows their immediate supervisor's lead regardless of what higher-up managers are espousing.

We have each person chart their project or their cross-function task. We use Sponsor, Agent, Target, and Advocate as an analytic tool that helps each person build their strategy to achieve success in the socio-technical aspects of the change they're attempting. It is not unusual for these to net significant results.

In Mexico recently with a multinational firm, our Tough Stuff had 34 participants (in three groups) from eleven countries. It is a part of a strategy which the top manager (V.P. of Central and South America) has begun putting in place. We have worked with him for 13 years in other companies. He distributes a book (Crosby, 2011) which describes the training and his preferred OD strategy and announces it as a “blueprint” for how he wants his company to be. It is important to highlight that the T-Group is not a stand-alone intervention!

Thus, Tough Stuff, or any OD intervention, is done in the context of business goals. For instance, when we present decision-making, each attendee will identify decisions that aren't being made in a timely manner and which person needs to have single-point accountability for each decision. At midweek, the V.P. joins each of the three T-groups in a session that deals with their relationship to him. In it he models what is being taught in the Tough Stuff event. He has been in many of our trainings over the years and is highly skilled. This is sponsorship at its best!

Even in this 5-day training, we have attendees identify cross-functional, day-by-day issues or projects which cross department lines. Our goal is to have them identify conflicts that are delaying effective work. We believe that most so-called interpersonal conflicts are really systems issues stemming from misalignment of bosses higher in the chain-of-command rather than where the conflict appears to be happening.

In this Mexican training, the V.P. took an active part in the formation of six groups whose success he deemed of high importance. This is yet another example of how his sponsorship maximized the relevance of the training event and reduced transfer issues. On the 10-point, anonymous scale about "Applicability to Work", this international group rated it a median of 9. Some readers may wonder whether this adaptation of the T-
group to business still impacts the individual’s personal life. Rating the question, "Applicability to life outside work," the median was also a 9!

**Summary**

Our unique innovation to T-group is cutting edge because of how we integrate it with business goals and constantly help the participants make direct day to day implications to work. When done in this fashion significant transformations happen like those highlighted at the Davenport Plant visited by President Obama in 2011. In my career, those interventions that tend to be sustained have integrated T-group opportunities as described in our model, for both hourly and salaried employees, into the equation. The EQ maturation, systems understanding, awareness of the distinction between behaviorally descriptive feedback and judgmental pseudo-feedback has direct relevance for the success of the business. Also the movement from victim to proactive creator and their new ability to manage conflict more constructively bodes well for the health of individuals, and companies. These are deeply learned in a T-group. Work on real projects and/or cross-functional dilemmas done in the context of this in-depth experience increases the possibility that the learning will be sustained across the years.

**References:**

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