

Process, Tools & Environment

Introduction

Bill Blackburn and Pat Gibson are here from Athenaeum International in Boulder. They design environments for a collaborative facilitation process designed by MG Taylor. Today, we are going to look at what we can do to make the L3D environment in this room a model for collaborative environments in the future.

We all know the path that organizational transformation has taken: first business process reengineering, and then an emphasis on use of the technology in efforts such as Package Enabled Reengineering. We believe that there is a third element in effective organizations--the environment. Our area of specialization is in building environments in which creative, collaborative processes can happen.

Just as creative processes cannot take place without the environments part of this triad, the processes and tools are important. So, we will begin our presentation by telling you a little about the processes and tools for which our environments have been designed. Then we will move on to the principles of collaborative environments themselves and your environment here specifically.

It is the integration of the process, tools, and environment that is key. You have to have all three and you have to have them work together. That is why L3D's project is so exciting to us. It seems that yours is a technology project that cries out for an environment and collaborative processes with which to work. Integration is the key.

Process: Scan, Focus, Act

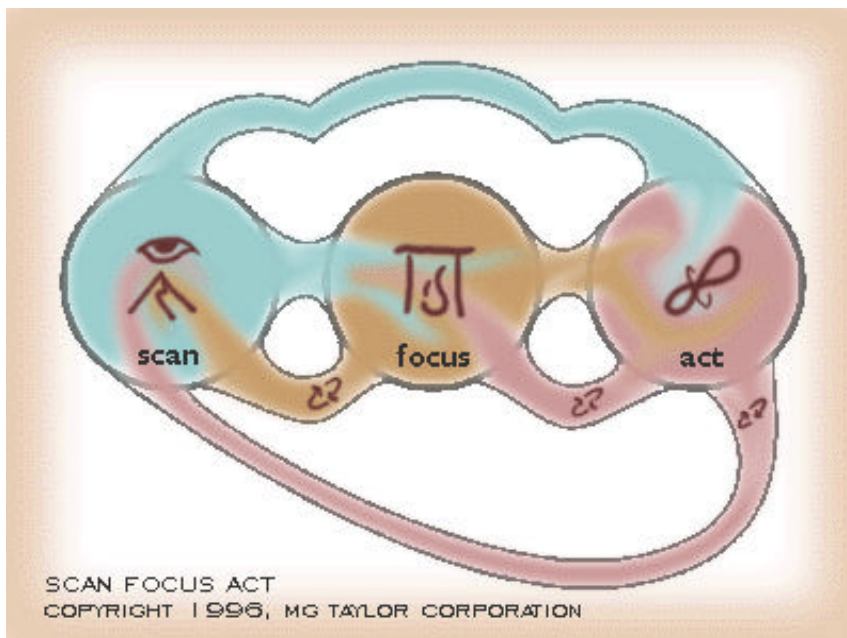
MG Taylor has developed a unique facilitation process based on a model of Scan, Focus, and Act. This is a familiar model in the business world where the first step is a brainstorming session--the Scan. In our events, as you can see, the environment with its plants, games, toys, and Montessori school look helps this scan.

When were you the most creative in your lifetime? Now. In the lab. When I was a child. Childhood is a very creative time, and we try to bring people back in some ways to their childhood with books, toys and learning new material. We give corporate executives permission to not know, to not be an expert. This is the first step. It opens the door in their thinking to how today's complex, adaptive systems work--how we can use complexity in our creative work instead of fighting it.

Today, we want you to not know what an environment should be like. Don't accept all of the things we think has to happen in an environment because of lack of space, time and money. Scan way out there and create an ideal environment.

In Focus, we look at the barriers we face in creating our ideal environment and how we might overcome them.

Finally in Act, we actually take on some of those barriers and create one iteration of our ideal. We hope each of you goes out of here today with a specific action that will make your environment better.



Tools: Technology & Models

L3D is expert at a fascinating array of technology tools. which are key to development of knowledge management in the future. We use another sort of tool-- models--simplified representations of reality. These tools help us communicate about the complex phenomena which are the root of the creative process.



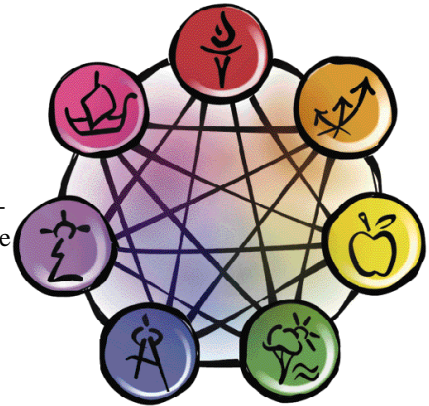
Our Creative Process Model

The 7 Step Creative Process Model helps us understand the weaknesses in creativity in today's workplace. Executives and many academics tend to stay in the first three areas of the process--identifying the problem, creating a vision, and establishing intent to build a solution. Then, the actual engineering, building and testing of the envisioned solution is handed off. Something gets lost here in the translation. How can the Engineers be expected to faithfully produce the result of someone else's vision?

Why does this happen? One of the reasons is that the fourth step in this process--Insight--is a little uncomfortable for us all. It is where we have to give up some cherished ideas, where we have to recognize that some of our ideas are good--but not for now. So, we are asking you to stick it out through that part of the process. Deal with the creative discomfort and hang in there to engineer and build an environment that will facilitate your collaboration and creativity.

The 7 Domains Model

We believe that if you facilitate--manage--the 7 Domains of the workplace, the people will manage themselves and creativity and collaboration will be natural. What we believe is missing in the usual workplace is a concentration on these domains and the interactions between them. What are these "domains"?



Body of Knowledge. Manage what you know. Make storing and sharing information easy. Books and displays do that, as do your software projects. Part of the magic in a well-facilitated event is the appearance of the right type of information, on the right level, at the right time.

Work Process Facilitation. One of our ways of Work Process Facilitation is the Scan, Focus, Act Model which gives structure and order to your processes. The models of creativity are what we use facilitate here.

Education. It is surprising how excited corporate executives, who think they are in the business of "doing" not learning, get when they have the opportunity to learn new facts or processes. Of course, you are in the business of learning all of the time. Even when you are in the business of learning, you have to keep that fresh and exciting.

Environment and Tooling. This is where we will be concentrating on how the environment can work with the other domains and how you can use the other domains to create your environment.

Technology. That is your area!

Project Management. This is use of time and resources. It provides structure and constraints to a project. We cannot ignore it. In the end, you want a room here, not just a vision, and you will have to do it within a given time and budget.

Venture Management. This is where you manage the domains together, and where you find the support in terms of resources in your world, and where you begin your outreach process.