

OpenAgile Foundations

The Four Capacities (from The Learning Circle)

Each of the four capacities in the Learning Circle are prerequisites for taking the next step. At the same time, as we exercise these capacities through the use of the Learning Circle, we develop these capacities within ourselves, in our teams and in our organizations. Our inner conditions and capabilities have an effect on our environment which in turn then has an effect on us. By going through the Learning Circle, we use and develop these four capacities:

- 1. Detachment.** The capacity for Detachment supports the Reflection step. Detachment is openness. Detachment means that we set aside our ego and objectively look at the evidence including facts, events and feelings.
- 2. Search.** The capacity for Search supports the Learning step. Search includes consultation, wisdom, discernment, judgement, and search for solutions.
- 3. Love.** The capacity for Love supports the Planning step. Love of learning creates openness to Guidance. Love engenders vision, passion, and a sense of purpose.
- 4. Courage.** The capacity for Courage supports the Action step. Courage encompasses conscious choice, volition, willingness, and desire to act even in the face of uncertainty.

In the beginning, we may not be strong in these capacities. However, with practice in the Learning Circle, we have the opportunity to grow and become comfortable with the Four Capacities. As they say “practice makes perfect.”

Guidance

Central to the effectiveness of the Learning Circle is the concept of Guidance. Guidance is the act of assisting an individual, team, or organization to reach a destination by accompanying, giving directions, or supplying advice. Guidance plays a pivotal role in developing our capacity and can be applied to all four steps and all four capacities. For individuals, teams, and organizations, Guidance is critical to be able to progress in the development of knowledge, skills or capacities. Guidance can come from within – a team member who has expertise can share it with the other team members. And Guidance can come from outside – we can bring experts into the organization, we can read books or web sites. Inspiration can also be thought of as a form of Guidance, for example a team member suddenly has a bright idea. Being open to receiving Guidance ensures that the Learning Circle is both organic and disciplined.

