

# **Dialogue: Foundations, Practice and Application**

***Kauffman Fellows Program***

*July 2012*

*Change***works**|LAB

# Why Organizations use Dialogue

- **Better information, faster**
- **Make better decisions**
- **Discover new options**
- **Get the best out of group thinking**
- **Releases part of the brain that sources innovation**
- **Reduces conflict**

# Agenda

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- **Foundations**
- **Practice**
- **Case Study**

# What is Dialogue?

The practice of dialogue is a ***disciplined approach to conversation*** that produces higher-quality ***collective*** thinking and results.

Dialogue means “to connect with meaning” and is contrasted with discussion which means to “break apart”. Debate is a common form of discussion.

A large orange circle with the word 'DIALOGUE' in white capital letters.

## DIALOGUE

- ***Involves two or more people***
- ***Has a methodology, structure and process***
- ***Is not just “communication”***

# Dialogue depends on Deep Listening

*Dialogue is a process of genuine interaction through which human beings listen to each other deeply enough to be changed by what they learn.*



# Dialogue vs. Debate

## DIALOGUE

- Emphasis on listening
- Inquire into possibilities
- Seek critical questions
- Unfold deeper understanding
- Everyone gets airtime
- Free flow of ideas
- Challenge assumptions – Opposite opinions help clarify your views

## DEBATE

- Emphasis on speaking
- Advocate for a position
- Seek right answers
- Drive for closure
- Competition for airtime
- Controlled flow of ideas
- Defend assumptions – Opposite opinions threaten your views



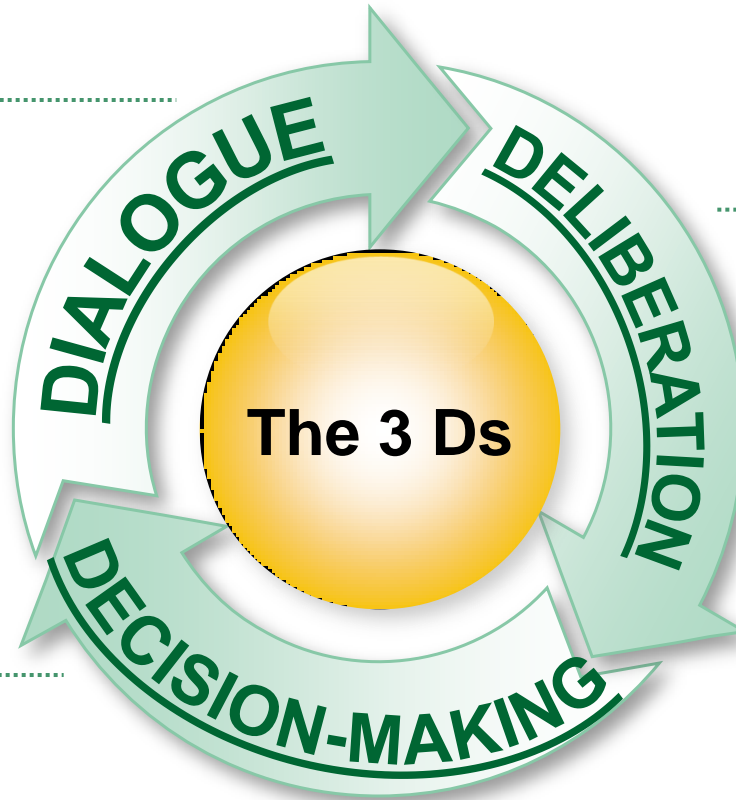
# The 3 Ds

## DIALOGUE

- Bringing together many voices, stories, perspectives
- Shared inquiry, exploration, discovery

## DECISION-MAKING

- Authority decides
- Negotiation
- Consensus
- Vote



## DELIBERATION

- Serious examination of possible solutions
- Careful weighing of tradeoffs
- Reasoned and informed judgment

Source: Daniel Yankelovich, *The Magic of Dialogue Transforming Conflict into Cooperation*

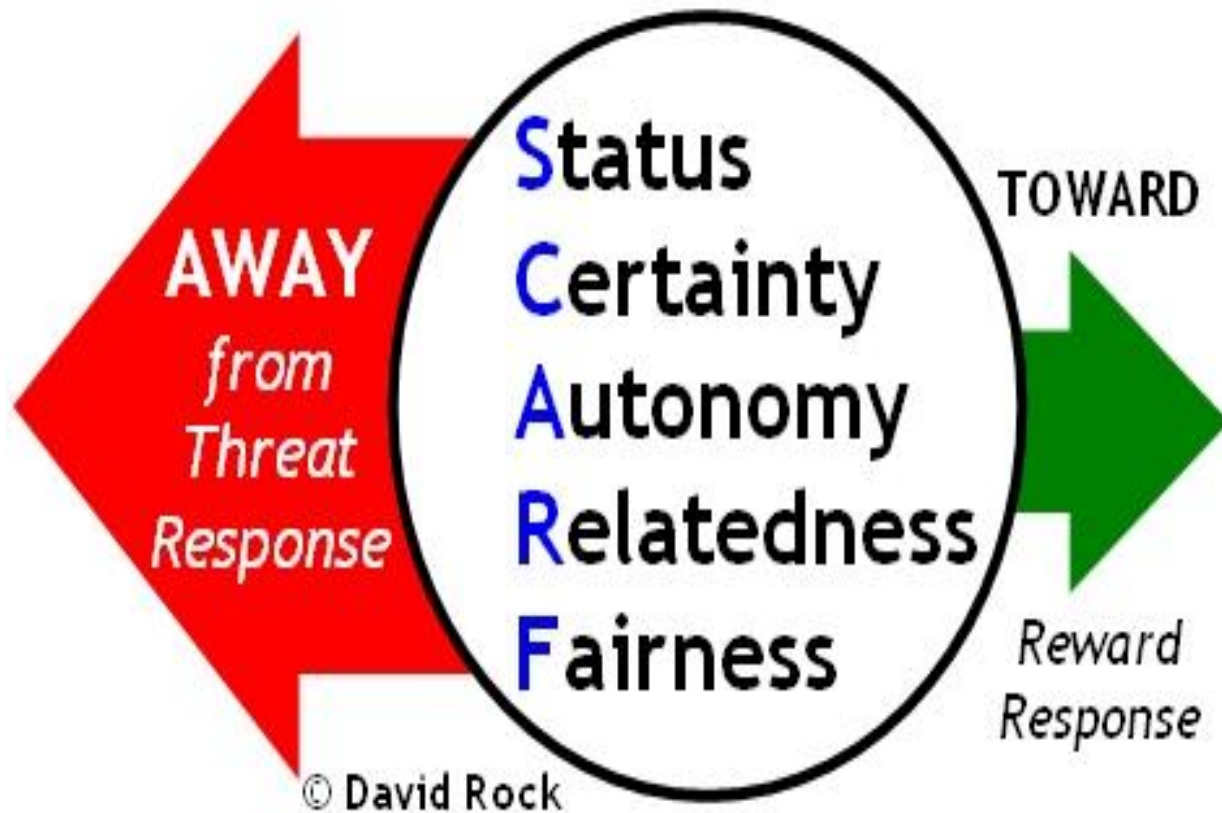
# Your Brain is Not on your Side





# Brain Basics: Avoiding the “Threat Response”

## SCARF Model of Social Threats and Rewards



# Practice

- **Emphasis on listening**
- **Inquire into possibilities**
- **Seek critical questions**
- **Unfold deeper understanding**
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Opposite opinions help clarify your views**

# Practice 1: Listening without Interruption

- In Pairs for 3 minutes each
- Partner 1: Answers question, ***“As you think about the changes (technology/society/planet) you see in the future, what do you think will have the greatest impact on your family?”***
- Partner 2: Listens without interruption (keep listening silently for 3 minutes even if person stops talking.)
- Switch
- Individual debrief: What did you notice about talking and listening? Which one was easiest? Why?
- Group debrief

# Why don't we do this more often?

**Holding Back**

**Prematurely Moving to Action**

**Listening Without Hearing**

**Starting at Different Points**

**Scoring Debating Points**

**AND**

**I just don't want to talk about it**

*Excerpted from The  
Magic of Dialogue by  
Daniel Yankelovich*

# Practice

- **Emphasis on listening**
- **Inquire into possibilities**
- **Seek critical questions**
- **Unfold deeper understanding**
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# Foundation is Listening



**1. Connect**

**2. Rephrase**

**3.  
Acknowledge  
Feelings**

**4. Inquire**

# 4 Ways to enhance Active Listening

## 1. *Connect*

- Use non-verbal cues - nod
- “OK”
- “I got that...”
- Use open body language

## 2. *Rephrase*

- “Just to play back...”
- “What I hear you saying is...”

## 3. *Acknowledge Feelings*

- “I hear you saying that felt like...”
- “I imagine that must have felt like....”

## 4. *Inquire: Ask Open Questions (How, What)*

- “Can you say more about...?”
- “How did you feel when...?”
- “What did you learn from...?”

## Practice 2:

- In Pairs 3 minutes each
- Partner 1: Answers question, “***What is the biggest challenge you currently face in your professional career?***”
- Partner 2: Uses each Active Listening technique
  1. Connect
  2. Rephrase
  3. Acknowledge
  4. Inquire
- Debrief
- Switch
- Debrief
- Group Debrief



# Dialogic Leadership

*Have Four Distinct Qualities:*

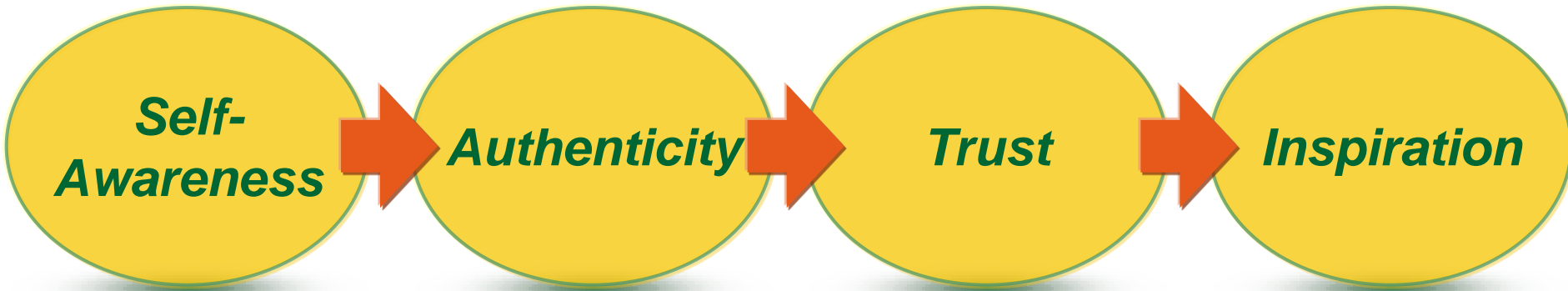
- 1** Evoke people's genuine voices
- 2** Can listen deeply
- 3** Hold space and respect as legitimate other people's views
- 4** Broaden awareness and perspective

Source: MIT, SoL, 1999

# Case Study: Juniper Networks, 2000- 2009

- Founders, Scott Kriens, CEO and Pradeep Sindhu, CTO, still engaged and leading the mission, “**Connecting everything and empowering everyone**”
  - Is experiencing exponential growth – just 5 years old, aggressive in making acquisitions with thousands of employees globally
  - Intentional about a culture of innovation and empowered, decentralized engineering with a vision of thousands of engineers collaborating on a single code base – JUNOS
- Scott’ s vision is to create an organization of ***authentic “Dialogic” Leaders who achieve results that would seem impossible in other contexts***

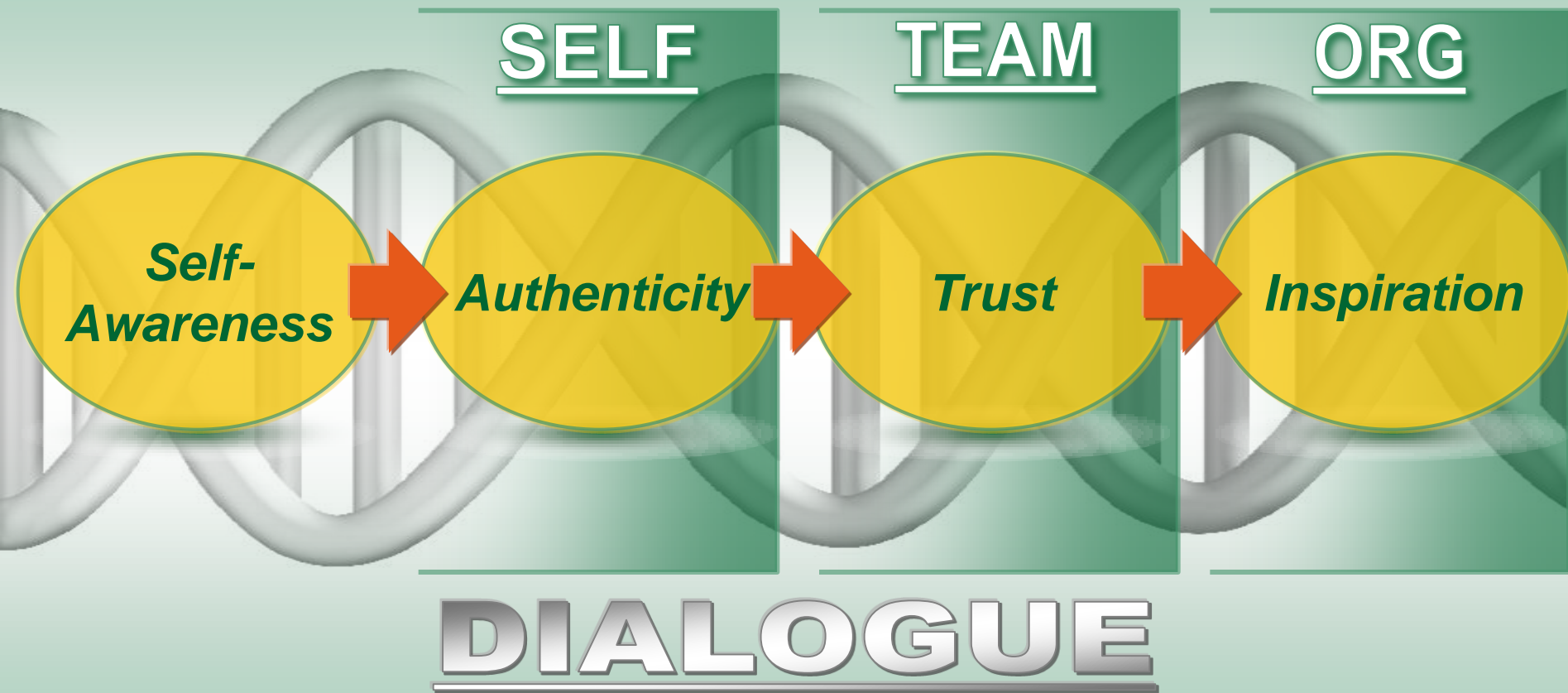
# Leadership Presence and Dialogue



# Leadership Presence and Dialogue



# Leadership Presence and Dialogue



*“Real, undying loyalty in work can never be legislated or coerced; it is based on a courageous vulnerability that invites others by our example to a frontier conversation whose outcome is yet in doubt.”*

— David Whyte

# Juniper Leadership and Dialogue Program

- **Executive leadership program**
- **All employee development**
- **Dialogue Blackbelts**
- **Used Dialogue as a business process**
  - Development jams
  - Cross-organization collaboration
  - Leadership style



# Juniper Networks, 2009

## PEOPLE

- Increased level of trust by all measures
- Enhanced culture of relationship and connectivity
- Higher than average retention of employees in acquired companies
- Below average attrition rates and employee turnover

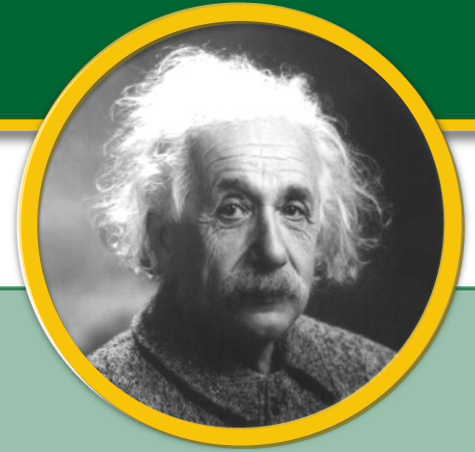
## RESULTS

- Ability to continue achievements in innovation during explosive growth
- Ability to weather through organizational growth and changes (McKinsey)

## LEADERSHIP

- Leaders develop paradigm around “walking the talk”
- Culture of “Leaders Who Listen”

# Leaders Who Listen



***“If I had an hour to solve a problem and my life depended on the solution, I would spend the first 55 minutes determining the proper question to ask, for once I know the proper question, I could solve the problem in less than 5 minutes.”***

**— Albert Einstein**

***Leaders who listen...  
Ask the right questions and listen deeply***



# Brain Science Practice

**7 repetitions for  
muscle memory**

**3,000 repetitions  
to change the  
neuro-networks  
in the brain**

*MIT: Magnetic Resonance  
Mathematical Model – Neuro-networks  
of the Neo Cortex, 2008*

