

## Interaction

To understand how these four meeting-behavior types would interact, let's see how they would deal with a simple social issue: What to do on a Saturday:

MOVER (AL): "Hey, let's go to the ball game."

OPPOSER (HARRY): "The ball game? Hah! Everyone knows it's gonna rain Saturday, and besides the parking is impossible. '

FOLLOWER (PHIL): "Gee, I don't know . . . the ball game . . . Hey, that's a good idea!"

BYSTANDER (JOE): "Yeah. Baseball. The ail-American game."

What could you as a leader or fellow meeting goer—objectively able to see and hear all four approaches—do to find a solution?

First—you could build on the mover's idea and incorporate the opposer's negative concerns by saying:

"The ball game is a great idea, Al" (*giving the mover credit for his idea*), "but let's just be sure about the weather" (*drawing in opposer Harry's idea, too*). "Joe, why don't you find out about it right now?" (*assigning a task to the noncommittal bystander without putting him on the spot about his choice*).

"You know, Harry mentioned the parking. Probably will be tough. How can we solve that?" (*taking another negative and turning it into a constructive point*).

You could then wait for suggestions from the group, like going early, parking, and having lunch, or turn it back to Al, the mover, to come up with another solution.

What about Phil the follower? How can you involve him? Maybe, after the affirmative vote, by saying, "Phil, you're a good organizer. Why don't you pull this whole thing together and coordinate? "

*The bottom line:* Since people follow these basic propensities whenever they interact in a group, recognize and help deflect the head-on collisions. That makes meetings and participants productive.

Now let's turn to three basic communication skills we *all* need at meetings, and then focus on individual personal skills for leaders and for participants.