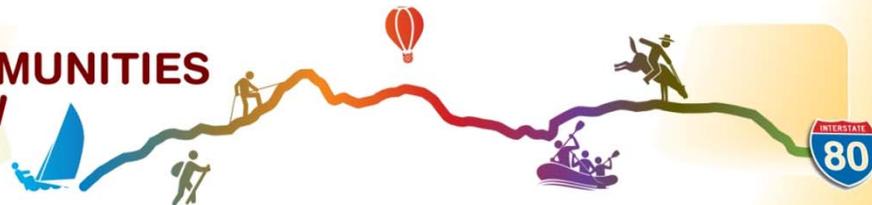


# Virtual Meetings: “A new reality?”

Perry D. Gross, PhD  
Atkins

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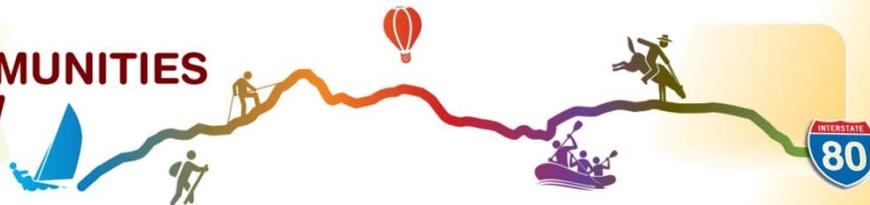


# Presentation Overview

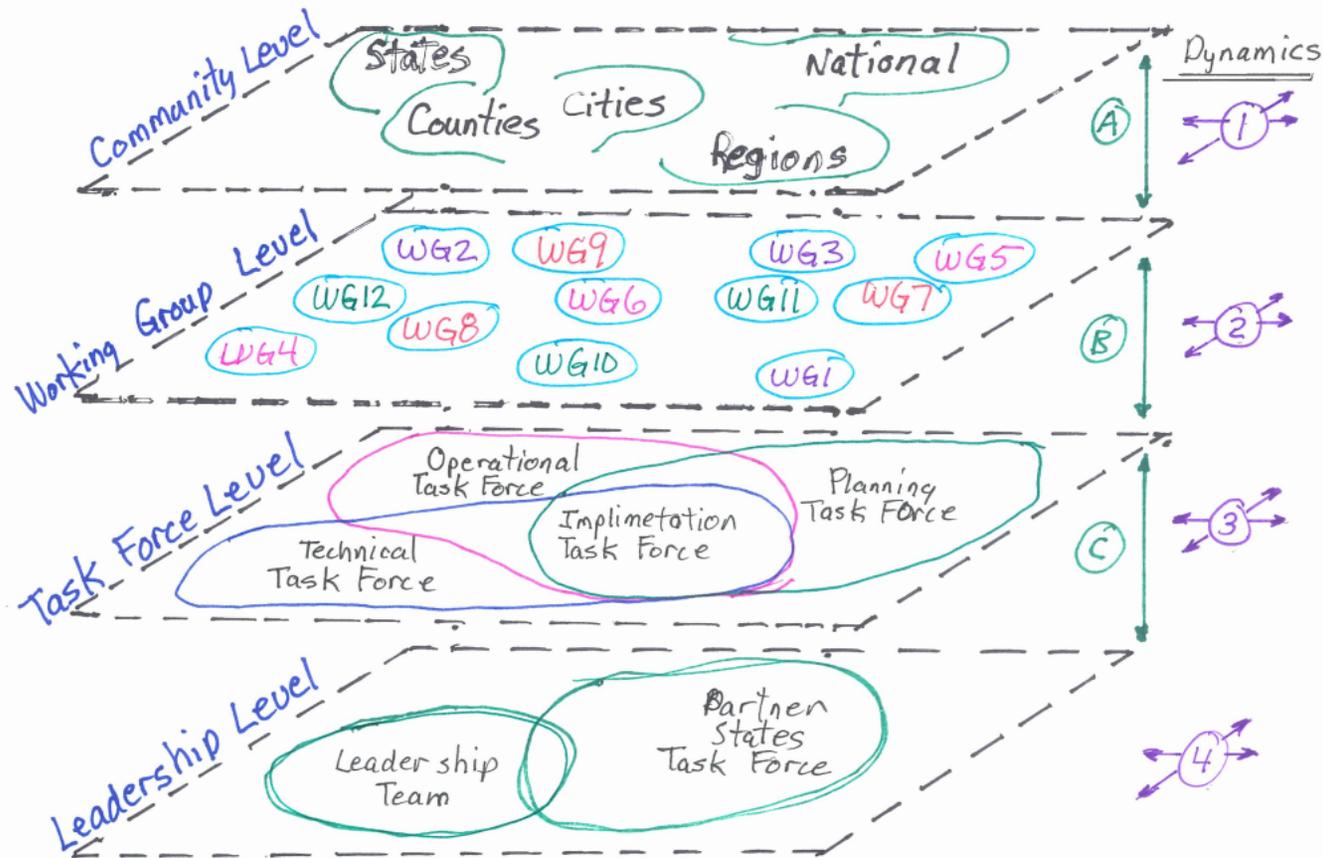
- **This presentation will:**
  - Describe how the I-80 Corridor System Master Plan study is being facilitated;
  - Discuss Doyle a Straus Interaction Method for meetings;
  - Adaptations for virtual environments; and
  - Closing thoughts.
- Please go to [www.i80vision.org](http://www.i80vision.org)

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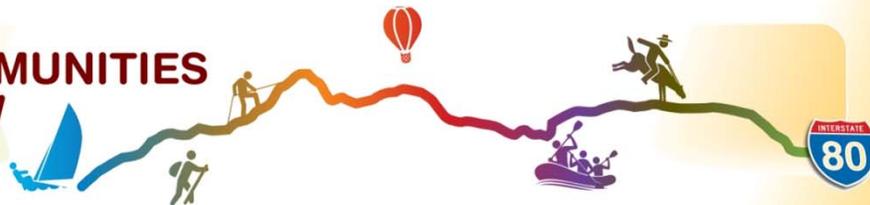


# I-80 CSMP Study Organization



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# Conversation Level Dynamics

## Community Level

Typical complex of public, private, nonprofit, and civic sector interactions. Actors are coping with modern issues in more or less traditional one-way communications strategies.

## Task Force Level

Large groups (up to 100 members) broadly recruited from a diverse range of potential corridor stakeholders. The groups organized around four areas of interest: planning, technical, operational, and implementation. Communication is typically information exchange.

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# Conversation Level Dynamics

## Working Group Level

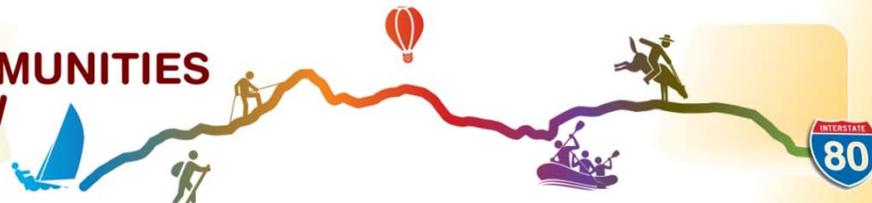
Small groups (up to 20 members) recruited based on topical interest. Groups have a consultant chair and NDOT co chair to facilitate a self-initiated dialogue. Dialogue dynamics are encouraged and the group charts its own course and established their own work products based on their topic.

## Leadership Level

Group comprised of executive level organizational individuals with decision making authority. This includes the consultant support team. Conversations focus on facilitating the short and long term group initiatives.

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# How to Make Meeting Work

**Michael Doyle and David Straus (1975)**

Basic element in collaborative practice

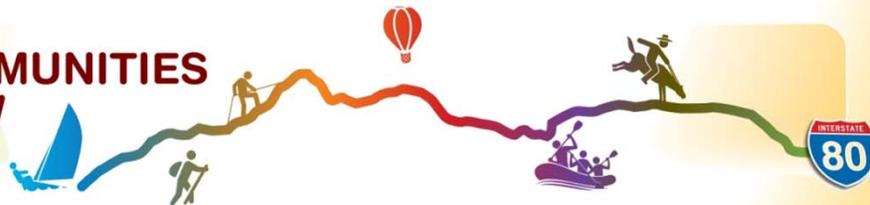
Begins with why meetings fail: lack of focus; too many issues at one time; confusing process and content; abusing power;

Successful meetings: content focus; process focus; facilitate open balanced conversation; protect participants from personal attacks; and clear understanding of roles and responsibilities

Seek win-win solutions

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# How to Make Meeting Work

**Michael Doyle and David Straus (1975) continued**

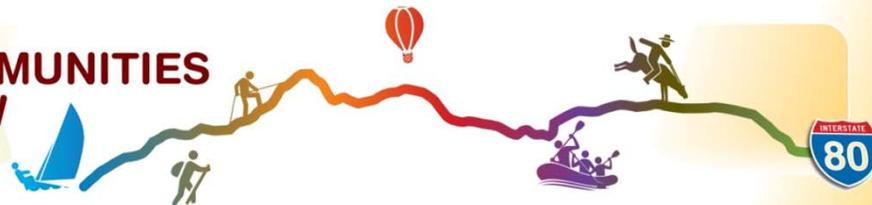
**Facilitator** – neutral meeting leader focused on the meeting process and member interactions.

**Recorder** – individual recording the group's conversation in neutral terms to capture the short term memory for the group's ongoing work.

**Participant** – all other meeting attendees responsible for the content dialogue that is the focus of the meeting.

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# How to Make Meeting Work

## The problem people

**Latecomer** – always late

**Early leaver** – always leaves early

**Broken record** – always brings up the same points.

**Doubting Thomas** – puts down everything

**Head-shaker** – Dismissive body language

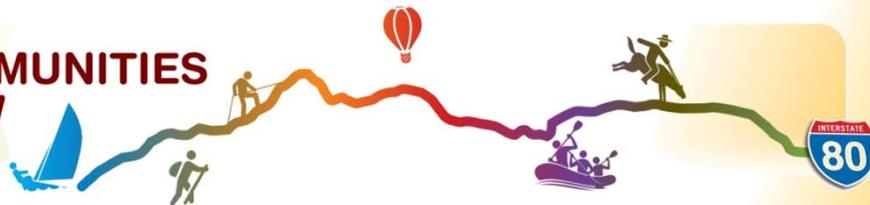
**Dropout** – Sits in the back of the room

**Whisperer** – Constant talking to neighbors

**Loudmouth** – Talks too much and loudly

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# How to Make Meeting Work

## The problem people (continued)

**Attacker** – gets personal

**Interpreter** – speaks for other people

**Gossiper** – introduces hearsay and gossip.

**Know-it-all** – overuses credentials

**Backseat driver** – tells what should be done

**Busybody** – always checking messages

**Interrupter** – starts talking before other finish

**Teacher's pet** – always looking for approval

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# Meetings Done Virtually

## Adaptations for Conference Calls

**Require RSVPs** – know who plans to attend and send that information to all group members

**Roll Call** – call on all RSVPs to ensure they are in attendance and ask for other on the phone (people want to know who they are speaking with)

**Chat or Muter** – use the first five minutes of the meeting for everyone to settle in (joining a call in progress disturbs everyone)

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# Meetings Done Virtually

## Adaptations for Conference Calls

**Provide topical information to everyone** – without the ability to do an effective group memory, members need to follow the conversation with a common text

**Call on attendees** – constantly ask for ideas and opinions from attendees (silence is not acquiescence)

**Constantly summarize and clarify** – group memory for short term information must be done verbally in a conference call (your personal notes will look like spaghetti when the meeting is over)

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# Meetings Done Virtually

## Adaptations for Conference Calls

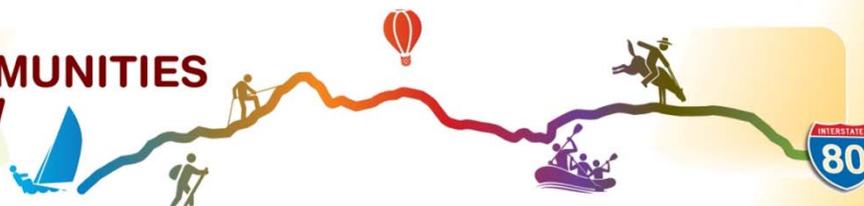
**Use short web surveys between meetings** – surveys provide clarification and further organization of information (plus people like to hear the results)

**Use a web page for the collective memory of the group's work** – provides transparency and openness

**Announce who you are** – members have different abilities in recognizing voices so announce who is speaking until people are comfortable

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# Closing Thoughts

**Still identifying strategies for problem attendees (we may not have any)**

**Strategies for recharging after facilitating a conference call**

**Enhance our feedback loop for the process**

**Excitement building for what these groups can produce**

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