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# Making process accessible

## Processes for learning, change and action research

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## Abstract

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This explication reflects on over 30 years of my experience as a facilitator of and theorist about learning, change and action research. After summarising the nature of that experience and the conceptual roots of my thinking I briefly describe the documents from those 30 years that are attached. For purposes of explication I categorise the documents into four loose categories: theory (chapter 3), learning processes (chapter 4), change processes (chapter 5) and action research (chapter 6).

From the documents I draw conclusions about the characteristics of effective and robust processes, and how they may be facilitated. I do so first for each category of process, and then overall. The most important characteristics are then conceptualised as the integration or resolution of four apparent polarities or tensions.

The apparent polarities may appear to be resolvable only by trade-offs between them. I show that they are resolvable in ways which allow benefits of both poles of the polarity to be achieved. The polarities are: between adversarial and consensual processes, for which the resolution is dialectical processes; between challenge and support; between guidance and choice; and between rigour and relevance.

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## Statement of originality

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My knowledge is derived from many sources. A lifetime of experience, 30 years of it as educator, facilitator and change agent, has contributed. I have learned from the many colleagues and clients I've worked with. I have been an avid reader for almost all of my life. It is difficult always to be certain where knowledge originates.

However, neither this explication nor the associated documents incorporate any material submitted for an award at any university. To the best of my knowledge the explication does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

*Bsb Dick*

October 2005

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## Attached documents

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These documents will be found in volume 2 and beyond, in the order shown here. Documents marked **B** (for book) or **M** (for monograph) will be found in the final volume.

### Chapter 3 - The nature of knowledge

#### The nature of theory

- 01 Bob Dick (nd) A model of models. Background paper for a departmental seminar. First written about 1976. Graphics updated and reformatted.
  - 02 Bob Dick (2001) Maslow revis(it)ed: Maslow's hierarchy of needs examined and reformulated. A discussion paper originally written in the 1980s, revised 1990, 1993. References added for this version, 2001.
  - 03 Bob Dick (2002) Practitioner theories. Draft paper.
  - 04 Bob Dick (2002) Questions for reflection. A resource paper for a public on line course in action research. Available on line at <http://www.scu.edu.au/schools/gcm/ar/reflques.html>
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## Chapter 4 - Learning processes

### University classes

- 05 Bob Dick (1989) *Mechanisms for democracy in learning: some reflections on continuing experiments on democracy in the tertiary classroom*, second edition. Chapel Hill: Interchange. First edition 1987. Reformatted with very minor changes 2002.
- 06 Bob Dick (1991) Educating the change agents. *Studies in Continuing Education*, 13(2), 139-152. An invited and refereed paper.
- 07 Bob Dick (1990) Democracy for learners. In B. Smith, ed., *Management development in Australia*. Sydney: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich [pp 140-148]. Invited book chapter.
- 08 Adelle Bish and Bob Dick (1992) Reflection for everyone: catering for individual differences. A paper prepared for the Reflective practices in higher education conference held in Brisbane 11-13 July 1992.

### The design of learning processes

- 09 Bob Dick (2001) *Design for learning: processes and models for the design of learning activities*. Chapel Hill: Interchange. (Version 5.06). First edition 1981. Revised and reformatted regularly, this minor revision 2001.
  - M** Tim Dalmau and Bob Dick (1992) *Managing transitions: a key to creating effective learning environments*. Chapel Hill, Qld.: Interchange.
-

### **Examples of activities**

- 10 Bob Dick (2002) The design of experiential learning activities. Unpublished paper (mimeo).
- 11 Bob Dick (1986) Self and others. An extract from Bob Dick, *Learning to communicate: activities, skills, techniques, models*. A joint publication of Interchange and the University of Queensland Bookshop.
- 12 Bob Dick (1987) Tight-rope: a video script on telephone communication skills. Developed for Department of Social Security.
- 13 Bob Dick (1991) Powerplay: a “do-it-yourself” simulation. A paper accompanying an experiential workshop at the Experiential Learning Conference, Hawkesbury Agricultural College, 1989, and subsequently revised.

### **Other papers**

- 14 Bob Dick (1996) Is it time to revise the scientist-practitioner model? An unpublished discussion paper.
  - 15 Bob Dick (1995) A Venusian anthropologist's report on the teaching of psychology, with the preface “On being a Venusian anthropologist.” Nathan, Qld: Griffith University, School of Behavioural Science.
  - 16 Bob Dick, Alf Lizzio and Keithia Wilson (1995) Course design: a Masters/PhD program in organisational psychology. Nathan: Griffith University, School of applied psychology. A discussion paper.
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## Chapter 5 - Change processes

### Change models

- 17 Bob Dick (2001) *Community and organisational change: a manual*. Chapel Hill, Qld.: Interchange.
  - 18 Bob Dick (1990) *Processes for community consultation*. A resource document prepared for the use of facilitators and members of local area consultative committees associated with the community consultation project for road planning in Queensland. Brisbane: Department of Transport.
  - 19 Bob Dick (2001) *Community consultation checklist, fifth revision*. Interchange: mimeo.
  - 20 Bob Dick (2002) *Joyful productivity: creating joyful and productive cultures, version 1.06*. Chapel Hill, Qld: Interchange.
  - 21 Bob Dick (2003) *A brief history of organisations*. Interchange, unpublished mimeo.
  - 22 Tim Dalmau and Bob Dick (1991) *A diagnostic model for selecting interventions for community and organisational change, second edition*. Chapel Hill: Interchange.
  - 23 Tim Dalmau and Bob Dick (1990) *Politics, conflict and culture: concepts for cultural change*. Chapel Hill: Interchange.
- M** Tim Dalmau and Bob Dick (1990) *From the profane to the sacred: small groups as vehicles for cultural change, revised edition*. Chapel Hill: Interchange.
- M** Bob Dick and Tim Dalmau (1994) *To tame a unicorn ... recipes for cultural change, third edition*. Chapel Hill: Interchange.
-

### **Change skills and methods**

- 24 Bob Dick (2002) *Building agreement from disagreement: the anatomy of dialectical processes*. Chapel Hill, Qld.: Interchange.
- B** Bob Dick (1991) *Helping groups to be effective: skills, processes and concepts for group facilitation*, second edition. Chapel Hill, Qld.: Interchange.
- 25 Bob Dick (1987) *The management of conflict: a systematic approach to team building and mediated and unmediated conflict resolution*. Chapel Hill: Interchange (mimeo).
- 26 Bob Dick (1983) *Conflict resolution skills and techniques in management development*. Part 1. *Journal of Management Development*, 2(3), 42-54. Part 2. *Journal of Management Development*, 2(4), 15-31.
- M** Bob Dick (1990) *Frameworks for effective third party conflict management*. Chapel Hill: Interchange.
- 27 Bob Dick (1996) *The 7 functions of team building*. An unpublished conference paper

### **Personal applications**

- M** Bob Dick (1989) *Jung for sceptics: Jung's psychological types as decision-making preferences*. Chapel Hill: Interchange.
- 28 Bob Dick (2003) *Managing upwards: a workbook*. Chapel Hill, Qld.: Interchange (mimeo).
- 29 Bob Dick (1990) *Planning your own development*. In B. Smith, ed., *Management development in Australia*. Sydney: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich [pp 260- 266].
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- 30 Bob Dick (1983) *Life and career planning: a workbook exercise*. Brisbane: Department of Psychology, University of Queensland.

### **Interventions**

- M** Bob Dick (with the help of ideas from Frank Denham, Robyn Cross and Eve Robinson) (2001) *Search: a participative community planning process including a participant workbook, version 7*. Chapel Hill, Qld: Interchange.
- 31 Vidler, Lloyd, and Dick, Bob (1985) *Mapping: planning for the future of the Division of Mission and Parish Services [of the Queensland Synod of The Uniting Church]*. Unpublished mimeo.

### **Action learning**

- 32 Bob Dick (2002) *Action learning*. An extract from Cropper, B., Dick, B., Donaldson, B, and Patty, C., *Learning from action*. Brisbane: Department of Families.
- 33 Bob Dick (in press) *Improving leadership capability with action learning*. Prepared for Stewart Hase and Lester Davis, eds., *Forget the map. Get a compass*. Australian Institute of Management / McGraw-Hill Australia.
- 34 Bob Dick (1997) *Universities are learning organisations, aren't they? An invited talk given at Southern Cross University, 9 October 1997*.

### **Action science**

- B** Bob Dick and Tim Dalmay (1999) *Values in action - applying the ideas of Argyris and Schön*, second edition. Chapel Hill, Qld: Interchange.
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- 35 Bob Dick and Tim Dalmau (1992) Discussing the undiscussable: improving group effectiveness and openness. Paper presented at the Second World Congress on Action Learning, University of Queensland, 1992.
- 36 Bob Dick and Tim Dalmau (1992) Discussing the undiscussable workbook. Experiential workshop presented at the Second World Congress on Action Learning, University of Queensland, 1992.
- 37 Bob Dick (1992) Practising what we preach: identifying the gaps between espoused and actual values. A brief paper prepared for the First International Values Symposium, Warilda Conference Centre, Brisbane, 20-21 July 1992.

## **Action research processes**

### **Action research overall**

- 38 Bob Dick (1997-2005) *Areol: action research and evaluation on line*. Copy of an email and web based course in action research. An index to the original materials is on the web at [http://www.uq.net.au/action\\_research/areol/areolind.html](http://www.uq.net.au/action_research/areol/areolind.html)
- 39 Bob Dick (1997-2002) *Occasional pieces in action research methodology*. Occasional discussion pieces appearing on the armnet-l mailing list. Available on line at <http://www.scu.edu.au/schools/gcm/ar/arm/op000.html>
- 40 Bob Dick (2001) Action research: action and research. In Shankar Sankaran, Bob Dick, Ron Passfield and Pam Swepson, eds., *Effective change management using action learning and action research: concepts, frameworks, processes*,
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*applications*. Lismore, NSW, Australia: Southern Cross University Press. [21-27]

- 41 Bob Dick (2002) Action research: action and research. A paper prepared for the seminar "Doing good action research" held at Southern Cross University, Monday February 18, 2002.

### **Data collection and rigour**

- M** Bob Dick (1990) *Convergent interviewing*, version 3. Brisbane: Interchange.
- 42 Bob Dick (1999) Rigour in data collection. An unpublished paper prepared as a resource for thesis candidates using interviewing for data collection.
- 43 Bob Dick and Pam Swepson (1994) Appropriate validity and its attainment within action research: an illustration using soft systems methodology. Paper presented at World Congress Three on Action Learning, Action Research and Process Management, University of Bath.
- 44 Bob Dick (1999) Sources of rigour in action research: addressing the issues of trustworthiness and credibility. A paper presented at the Association for Qualitative Research Conference "Issues of rigour in qualitative research" at the Duxton Hotel, Melbourne, Victoria, 6-10 July 1999.
- M** Bob Dick (1999) *Rigour without numbers: the potential of dialectical processes as qualitative research tools*, third edition. Brisbane: Interchange.
- 45 Bob Dick (1990) Small group decision-making: a robust version of Heller's group feedback analysis. Chapel Hill:
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Interchange. Revised from an earlier drafts written in 1988. There have been minor corrections since 1990.

- 46 Bob Dick (1999) Structured focus groups. Chapel Hill: Interchange (mimeo). An unpublished paper first written in 1993 and revised in 1994 and 1999. It is used as a resource document for helping people learn to facilitate focus groups.

### **Characteristics of action research**

- 47 Bob Dick (2002) Action research as meta-research. A paper prepared for the International Sociological Association Conference, Brisbane, 7-13 July 2002.
- 48 Bob Dick (2001) Making the most of emergent methodologies: a critical choice in qualitative research design. A paper prepared for the Association for Qualitative Research conference, Melbourne, 5-7 July.
- 49 Gerry Roberts and Bob Dick (2003) Emancipatory design choices for action research practitioners. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, 13(6), 486-495.

### **Action research theses**

- 50 Bob Dick (1993) *You want to do an action research thesis? - How to conduct and report action research.* (Including a beginner's guide to the literature). Chapel Hill, Qld.: Interchange. Available on the web at <http://www.scu.edu.au/schools/gcm/ar/arp/arthesis.html>
- 51 Bob Dick (2002) Action research for theses and dissertations. *The Learning Organization*, 9(4), 159-170. This invited paper first appeared in O. Zuber-Skerritt (2000) *Action learning, action research and process management: theory, practice, praxis.*
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Brisbane: Action Research Unit, Faculty of Education,  
Griffith University.

- 52 Bob Dick and Alan Davies (1995) Thesis supervision at a distance: the potential of email. A paper presented at the Open Learning Conference, Ballina, 4-6 September 1995.
- 53 Bob Dick (1995) Action research theses. A resource paper accompanying AREOL, the on line course in action research.
- 54 Bob Dick (1994) Action research: is it too risky for theses? Address to Social Psychology Study Group, School of Behavioural Science, Griffith University, May.

### **Reviews**

- 55 Bob Dick (2001, October). Utopia made practical? Action research comes of age. Review Essay: Peter Reason & Hilary Bradbury (Eds.) (2001). Handbook of action research: participative inquiry and practice [32 paragraphs]. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research* [On-line Journal], 3(1). Available at: <http://www.qualitative-research.net/fqs-texte/1-02/1-02review-dick-e.htm>. An invited book review.
- 56 Bob Dick (2002) The essential U&I. Review of Wadsworth, Yoland, ed. (2001) The essential U&I. Melbourne: Victoria Health Promotion Foundation. ISBN 0-9579990-0-3. [pp 225 + xi] Au\$27.50. *ALAR: Action learning and action research journal*, 7(2), 106-112. An invited review.
- 57 Bob Dick (2004) Action research literature: themes and trends. *Action Research*, 2(4), 425-444. An invited review of recent action research literature.
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- 58 Bob Dick (2003) Rehabilitating action research: response to Davydd Greenwood's and Björn Gustavsen's papers on AR research perspectives in *Concepts and Transformation*, 7(2), 2002, and 8(1), 2003. *Concepts and transformation*, 8(3), 255-263.

### **Grounded theory**

- 59 Bob Dick (2000) Grounded theory: a thumbnail sketch. A paper written as a resource document for thesis candidates using grounded theory for data analysis. It is available on the web at <http://www.scu.edu.au/schools/gcm/ar/arp/grounded.html>
- 60 Bob Dick (2003) What can action researchers learn from grounded theorists. Paper prepared for the research symposium at the Australian and New Zealand ALARPM/SCIAR conference, Gold Coast, 4-5 May 2003. A refereed paper.

### **Action research and evaluation**

- 61 Bob Dick (2003) The Snyder evaluation process. A resource file to support the on line program AREOL: action research and evaluation on line. Slightly revised in 2003 from earlier editions in 1990, 1997 and 1999. The 1999 version is available on line at [http://www.uq.net.au/action\\_research/arp/snyder.html](http://www.uq.net.au/action_research/arp/snyder.html)
- 62 Bob Dick (2001) Qualitative evaluation for program improvement. A document prepared for and distributed at the IIR conference on evaluation, Brisbane, 7-8 September. Initially prepared as a resource document for an invited paper in 1992. Revised 1998, 2001.
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If I were to list all the people to whom I am indebted for this explication and the accompanying documents this would be a very long account indeed. I'll let the acknowledgments in the attached documents serve this purpose. For the actual explication there are some people who especially deserve mention.

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