



Context,
international cooperation



NGO Leadership Master Classes 2011

Utrecht, Tuesday 14 – Friday 17 June 2011

Successfully leading NGOs involves overcoming 'wicked' problems. These are critical issues and dilemmas for the whole organisation that have multiple, interdependent causes and many possible, complicated solutions. These Master Classes will focus on four areas where these problems are often found: **NGO Identity, Resilience, Capacity Building and Managing Complexity.**

The series is designed for people with leadership authority and accountability: CEOs, directors, senior managers and those whose professional growth is in this direction.

Drawing on collective experience, with reflexive dialogue and insights from recent innovations and publications, the courses will enable participants to identify ways to surmount these problems and communicate a way forward. Each event, designed and facilitated by Alan Fowler, will be limited to 18 people.



Alan Fowler

Alan Fowler has worked as a manager, adviser, researcher and writer. His focus lies on the experience and perspectives of citizens, civil society and non-governmental organisations, usually in the context of international relations and social change. He is a past President of the International Society for Third Sector Research and was a board member of CIVICUS, the Global Alliance for Citizen Participation. He is currently an affiliate professor at the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague.

Duration: Each Master Class will be for one day **Cost:** €400 per Master Class (A discount will be given if you like to attend more than one day)

Venue: De Witte Vosch, Utrecht

Master Classes Descriptions:

14th June Master Class 1 – The Dilemma of NGO Identity

15th June Master Class 2 – Leading for Resilience

16th June Master Class 3 – Capacity Building 2.0

17th June Master Class 4 – Managing for Complexity

Register your expression of interest by email:

Email: ab@developmenttraining.org

with a list of the master classes you wish to attend.

Final registration form will be available from March 21, 2011 onwards and registration allocated on a first come first served.

Detailed Class Descriptions

Master Class 1 – The Dilemma of NGO Identity

Some twenty years of official financing has increased NGOs in size and number. Are they now non-profit extensions of states? Growth has also often brought business rather than civic perspectives to leadership and to ideas about performance. Are NGOs businesses in an aid industry? These processes cast doubt about NGOs truly belonging to civil society. Moreover, ambiguity about identity can inculcate public mistrust and cause staff disappointment. What is the true picture? What is civic identity and what is being done by NGO leaders to (re)capture what it means in the 21st Century? What do innovations in thinking about civic-driven action offer? Working with these questions will bring originality, new ideas and depth to tackling identity dilemmas.

Master Class 2 – Leading For Resilience

The world is becoming more uncertain. The 'unknown unknowns' grow at a more rapid pace and defy the guiding capabilities of today's international governance. And in operating from the local of households and projects to the global of transnational campaigns and lobbying, uncertainty and risk are often gender sensitive. Consequently, in increasingly unpredictable scenarios, strengthening the links between organizational performance, relevance and resilience become vital. This realization is driving innovation within the NGO community and development practice. But what looks promising? Organizational transformation? Hybridization? Enhancing performance through learning? Steering using outcome metrics? Embracing new technologies? This Master Class is an opportunity to expand personal repertoires by exploring the meaning of leadership and management when combining results with adaptability and resilience.

Master Class 3 – Capacity Development 2.0

Societies cannot endure by relying on old capabilities. Correspondingly, sustaining the development outcomes that NGOs strive for depends on enhancing people's abilities to carry social change forward under shifting conditions and across generations. Gaining this form of empowerment is a fundamental test of NGO efforts. But, with a few exceptions, NGO capacity and leadership development is in a deep, narrow, gender-blind rut. Anything beyond the Version 1 toolbox of pre-defined courses, modules, training packages, manuals, exchanges and workshop after workshop is a notable exception. Capacity development results are seldom empowering or enduring. The gap between intention and achievement is not for want of knowledge. The obstacles lie in lack of a substantive, proven alternative and inadequate leadership backing for innovation to realize this core outcome. This Master Class will introduce and explore a significant advance – Version 2.0 - in capacity development thinking and practice with strategic significance for effectiveness.

Master Class 4 – Managing for Complexity

Many wicked problems are just so because they are complex. That is, they arise uninvited from unseen sources as well as from combinations of what can be seen but not controlled. This experience is found in all walks of life. Leaders and managers are therefore paying greater attention to what the study of complexity has to say about being better able to cope with the next wickedness when it rears its head and cannot be avoided. This Master Class will enable participants to explore the progress being made when a complexity lens is applied to managing the world of NGOs and their work. It will offer new ways of reading and interpreting organisational processes.