Hostile Takeover

FORMAT:
Small group hands on process
Duration: 90 minutes

PURPOSE:
To learn principles of Conversation Technology by needing to apply them in a simulated emergency situation of dire consequence in a group situation.

SETUP:
Chairs are set up in a big circle.

INTRO / BACKGROUND:
Facilitator holds the mood of this exercise as serious, team spirit, working against a deadline and impossible odds, do or die. It is also fun, and completely open to possiblity so that principles can be tried and mistakes made.

INSTRUCTIONS / PROCEDURE:
(A larger competing company) is attempting a hostile takeover of (our company). Their purpose is to buy us out and take us apart, selling off the assets at a loss, and thereby eliminating us as their competition. The board of directors can see no possibility for saving (our company). If the takeover succeeds, we will no longer be working together as a company. Our jobs will be gone, and the environment we have worked so hard to create together will be gone with it.

You have been chosen by (our company) as the brightest, most inventive, most intuitive and creative leaders. You are our only hope. Tomorrow morning, you will be our negotiating team.

We have asked you to assemble here tonight because someone has heard a rumor about a newly emerging 21st Century science called CONVERSATION TECHNOLOGY which is said to give its users the ability to create possibility for self and possibility for the other in the situation known as "a conflict of conversations."

One page of a CONVERSATION TECHNOLOGY training manual was found, which shows the diagram below. A conflict of conversations could be, A) Let's do this. B) That is impossible. Or A) Let's do it this way. B) No, let' do it my way. The Conflict Of Conversations that we have is A) We want to keep being in business. B) No, you are out of out of here.
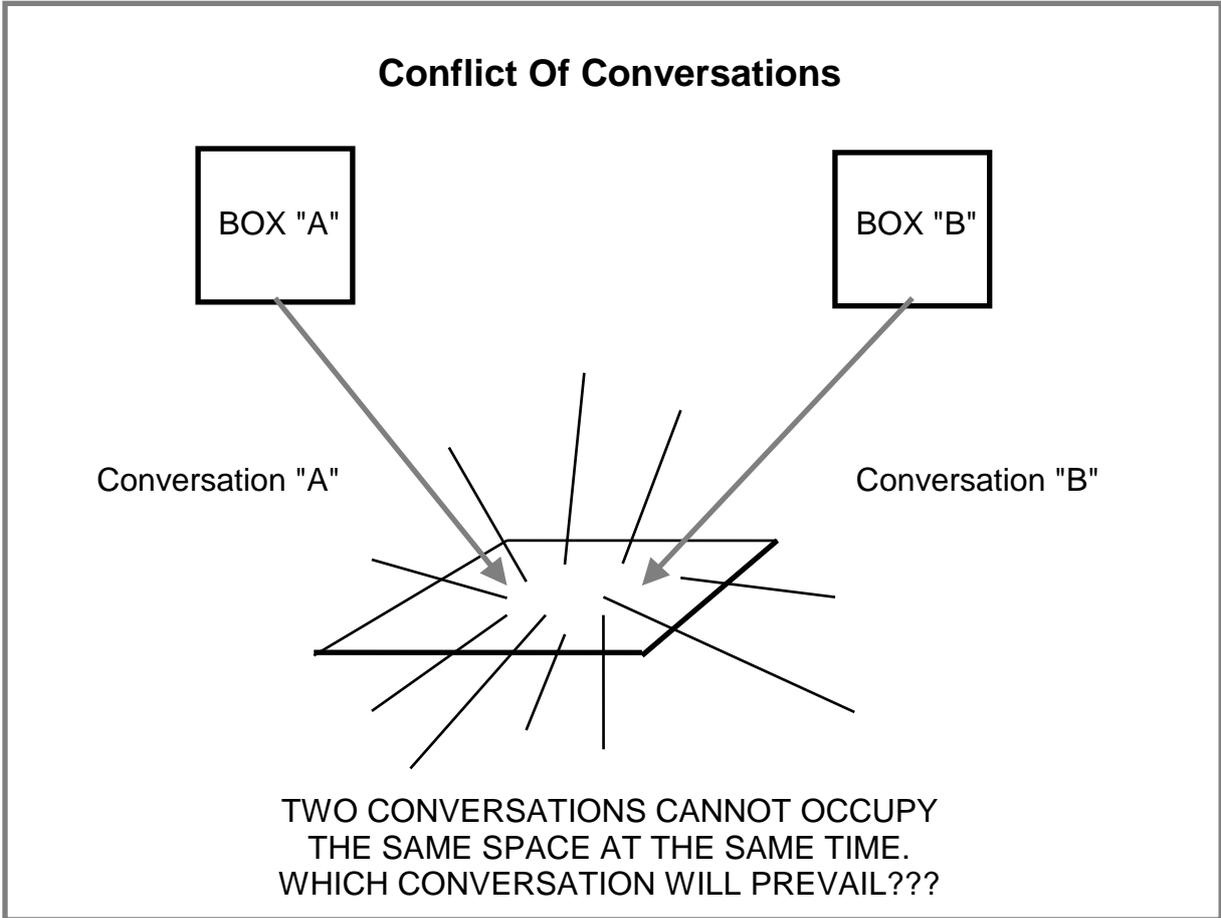
There is no time to take courses in CONVERSATION TECHNOLOGY. Top management has decided to assemble the brightest, most inventive and adventurous personnel of (our company) to discover the 12 most important principles of CONVERSATION TECHNOLOGY, and to train yourselves in using these principles before tomorrow morning when the hostile takeover meeting is to convene. Your team is to lead the negotiations tomorrow morning.

We will bring in coffee and snacks. We have some books for research. Please begin in groups of 5. Role play with one person being from (our company) and one person being from (the takeover company) and everyone looking for principles. Keep rotating the roles.

As soon as you discover a possible principle of CONVERSATION TECHNOLOGY write it out in words and make a diagram of it that shows how it works on a big piece of paper. Bring it to the wall to share with the others so that we can all benefit from each other's discoveries. Please make the posters in English.

An example of a principle might be: "If a conversation includes the assumption that "I am right and you are wrong," then that is a survival conversation, based on fear and scarcity."

Another principle could be: "Conversations conflict when there is a lack of information."

Conflict Of Conversations

BOX "A"

BOX "B"

Conversation "A"

Conversation "B"

TWO CONVERSATIONS CANNOT OCCUPY
THE SAME SPACE AT THE SAME TIME.
WHICH CONVERSATION WILL PREVAIL???

Other Possible Principles:
There are internal conversations (inside our own minds, within the box) and there are external conversations (between minds, between boxes).

Possibility (and impossibility) are creations of the human mind. It is far easier to create impossibility than it is to create possibility. Of all of the things that can be created, possibility is the finest. Expresses the yearnings of the deepest part of our soul. Possibility manifests as a conversation. (It can/cannot happen. It is/is not possible.) Any given conversation includes a set of limits which are often unspoken, assumed within the nature of the conversation. When you first begin having a conversation with someone, those limits are established, usually without speaking about it. The conversation is taking place in a certain field of possibility. Creating possibility shifts the nature of a conversation.

PERSONALITY
In almost every circumtance where a group of people are involved, such as a committee or a team or a project group or a department, personalities are involved. Different personalities require different kinds of attention or non-attention in very specific forms in order for the personality to feel comfortable or safe, in order to feel like it is going to be able to survive.

IDENTIFICATION
Most of us in our normal lives approach the situations that we are in as if we are actually in those situations. We do that because our own personality gets identified with the situation, and assumes that the situation is real. Our personality asserts that the positions of the various personalities involved are valid and that each of them are a solid, immovable, inflexible thing.

Personalities have developed sophisticated defense mechanisms. We are accustomed to accepting such mechanisms as real because we have our own defense mechanism, and our habit of thinking is to set up situations so as to keep our mechanism/conversation intact. Thus we play the game of: "I won't reveal the illusionary nature of your position if you don't reveal mine." The result is that the game wins, and we do not. We are imprisoned by the limits of the game. Our true powers are invisible to us, and therefore inaccessible.

THIRD PRINCIPLE: CONVERSATIONS ARE CREATED
It is in the department of conversations that everything happens. Things break down, conflicts arise, moods change, vistas shift, plans are made or destroyed, and success either does or does not happen in the medium of conversation.

ONE PERSON CAN CHANGE THE WORLD
We usually do not realize that one single person can change the world. We usually think that if we organized enough people and become big enough, then the world can hear us and will listen to us. **But the world does not change by force. The world changes through realization, through gaining clarity, through accessing new possibilities. One single person has the power to create enough clarity or possibility to change the whole world.** It is as simple as that.

INSTRUCTIONS (continued):
Facilitator takes turns being in one group and then in another, every now and then suggesting an idea for a principle.
After many principles have been posted, use the Genius dotting process to select the 12 most important principles. Give everyone 12 dots, with instructions to put only one dot per principle.

DEBRIEF:
What would keep you from using these principles in your life?
Where did these principles come from?