Hi all, sorry not to get the notes from last Friday out sooner, I've been caught up doing the homework! It's at the bottom...

Our conversation started out with us recounting our definitions of the formal and pre-formal that we talked about last week. That got us talking about the pre-formal and how that actually builds capacity in us. And that's what the workshop is about, right?

OK, but what kind of capacity have we actually built at Cal Poly through these workshops? Is the individual capacity increase what we are aiming for, or is increasing the capacity of the organization the point? I know you want an answer; all but the really new people already know you're not going to get one. It's enough to say that we consider both important. We were contemplating, as we do from time to time, if we should do a better job of recruiting people from all around campus.

We wondered if we were successful, then how we would be useful for new people. What would keep them here? What are they looking for? The idea came up that perhaps we need a moderator of sorts. Nothing too official, but what could a moderator do?

It was suggested that a moderator can keep people from dominating a conversation; they can also keep a conversation focused. The moderator can make sure we all have an equal chance to participate. Is it possible that some people feel like they can't make a contribution? Sure, for many reasons. Possibilities include that it is cultural, a perceived hierarchy, or lack of self-confidence, for example.

A moderator could be anyone in the group, and it could change every week. However, we discussed how that might interrupt the informal nature of the conversation flow. We considered trying something overt that signals each person's turn to speak. Hand raising, a talking stick, flashing lights? Some solutions don't seem practical, but the idea behind giving each person a space to speak could be a point of attention for the group.

The goal is to never need a moderator. Everyone would naturally pay attention to the flow of conversation and give space to whoever feels the need to speak. No one would talk over anyone. All it takes is everyone coming to Friday class with the pre-formal loving disposition, then we'd be there. Which brings us to our homework.

Homework for this week is a follow on to the focus on the pre-formal from last week. If you do in fact carry forth with a loving disposition with everyone at all times, you might quickly be confronted with what it is you really care about most. Think about that list and note if you are surprised by anything that is on it. Thanks for continuing to be observational about all this, we don't need any major life changes before Friday.

Hoping to hear more stories then, Dianne