



## ATTRACTORS

### THE INFO-LETTER OF THE HUMAN SYSTEMS DYNAMICS INSTITUTE VOLUME 5.7 JULY 2008

Every month **Attractors** shares tips and tools from human systems dynamics. In this month's edition, Glenda Eoyang reflects on

#### *STRATEGY TO ACTION*

When a client comes to HSD Institute for help, they usually have a very specific and pressing need. What pressing needs of your own could you add to the following list? You need to plan in spite of a constantly changing environment. Groups who must work together are at war with one another. Processes and procedures that performed perfectly last year are insufficient to meet current demands. Collaboration and integration are mandated, but skills and traditions encourage competition. Management imagines and expects a change in culture. Customers want services and products that are more responsive. What's your specific need?

Human systems dynamics (HSD) offers theory, models, methods, and tools that can make a difference in any of these situations. The real challenge, though, is to translate insights about complex dynamical change into real and practical options for action.

In the past, HSD Associates and I have built the bridges between theory and practice one at a time. In collaboration with clients and colleagues, we create interventions that embed wisdom about HSD into individual and group action for results in client's specific situations. The benefit of this approach is that customers receive products and services that meet their needs and move their agendas forward. The difficulty of this approach has been that each and every project is unique, so the speed and breadth of the spread of HSD has been constrained.

We are beginning an experiment that we hope will help us respond to this challenge—a new webinar series called **Strategy to Action: the Power of HSD**. In this seven-part on-line series, I apply HSD to specific challenges that our clients have faced, including:

- Project management
  - Performance management
  - Planning
  - Communications
  - Training and development
  - Virtual teaming

Each session, including the first introductory one, defines the challenges that seem intractable using traditional tools and methods.

- Project managers plan for stability and encounter surprise
- Performance demands creative response to changing environments, but traditional performance management systems assume predictability
- We plan as if the future were knowable, when we all agree that adaptation is the path to success
- Additional investment in communication media fail to resolve the communications issues that are pervasive in organizations
- Training and development groups are asked to respond more quickly and reliably while content and contexts are more time constrained, complicated, and diverse
- Individuals and groups spend more of their time engaging electronically, while the efficiency and effectiveness of virtual teams are still in question

In this series of hour-long webinars, we move beyond the traditional challenges. We share the common and not-so-common knowledge about why old rules no longer generate the old successes in each of these domains. Each session introduces the theory, models, methods, and tools from HSD that are most relevant to one specific challenge. Participants and I share stories about new ways to approach each of these critical functions. The materials, as well as an on-going community conversation, provide HSD tips and tools to support attendees in resolving their own issues.

Our idea is that information this specific will help others—even beginners—learn enough about HSD to find innovative options for action. Over the coming months, we will be testing this hypothesis and adapting the content and process of the webinars as we learn more about how people respond. I invite you to join us in the laboratory. You will provide feedback about how HSD can help you resolve your own challenges in these and other functional areas. Each session begins at 12:00 Central time and ends promptly at 1:00. The first session, **Introduction to Human Systems Dynamics** has already been delivered, and we recommend that participants view the archive before participating in the other sessions. The schedule for the rest of the series is:

<b>September 10</b>	<b>HSD and Project Management</b>
<b>October 8</b>	<b>HSD and Performance Management</b>
<b>November 5</b>	<b>HSD and Planning for Change</b>
<b>December 10</b>	<b>HSD and Communications</b>
<b>January 7</b>	<b>HSD and Training and Development</b>
<b>February 11</b>	<b>HSD and Virtual Teams</b>

Each session will be recorded and archived. Registrants receive free unlimited access to the archived versions of the sessions, as well as a community space to participate in an ongoing conversation.

Click [here](#) to register for the webinars.

To provide feedback, join us in the on-line conversation or drop me an email. I look forward to your insights about how these webinar programs might help you bridge between HSD strategy and action to help you and your clients build adaptive capacity.

*Glenda H. Eoyang, Ph.D.*  
[geoyang@hsdinstitute.org](mailto:geoyang@hsdinstitute.org)  
[www.hsdinstitute.org](http://www.hsdinstitute.org)  
866-HSD-INST