



# TMS CONSULTING

***Helping people interact effectively  
in an uncertain world***

**The following information is a high level overview of the consulting work we engage in with clients. Our primary focus is helping people interact effectively since it is only through interaction that things change and develop. Our work in this area is not about making old concepts work better. We focus on new thinking and designs which challenge existing methods and thinking. It is a very realistic and practical approach.**

**We would appreciate the opportunity to interact further with you about these offerings and explore how our work with you can add value.**

## About

### Our Consulting Focus and Approach

TMS-Americas Consulting (TMS Consulting) endeavors to work consciously and practically within the reality that our future is to a significant degree uncertain and unknowable and that organizations are better served if enabled to develop capacity to work effectively within this uncertainty and complexity. Further, 'the work' and 'the people doing the work' are profoundly and inextricably linked.

***Organizations are the local patterns of interaction between people. Nothing happens in an organization outside of the interactions between people and these interactions are fundamentally unpredictable.***

Consequently the focus of our consulting is to enable the most realistic and effective interactions possible and to help people stay open to what is emerging as those interactions occur.

Whether it is strategy, change, performance, transitions or learning we focus on the interactions that are happening within the specific context and make them primary. This enables those we work with to see their organizations in a very different and more realistic way; subsequently making different and more realistic choices about how they will act into the unknowable future that is their organization.

### Organization Development Consulting

Our work in this area is not about making old concepts work better. We focus on new thinking and designs and we will challenge you as much as you challenge us. We consult through the lens of Complex Responsive Processes and can help you be more effective by applying this lens to your own OD initiatives. In addition please click the other tabs on this site to access specific design frameworks we consistently work with.

[Strategy](#) [Group Coaching](#) [InterAction Coaching](#) [New Leader Assimilation](#) [Teams In Crisis](#)



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## Strategy

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Clearly, the purpose of a strategy is to plan for some desired future state and planning is important. However, most work in strategy makes a dangerous assumption; that the future state is predictable and therefore reachable directly by the deployment of the strategic plan.



TMS-Americas Consulting work in strategy is founded on different assumptions:

- The future is highly uncertain and unpredictable.
- Change happens through the local interactions between people in an organization.
- Detailed plans, beyond 3 months often inhibit the ability to respond effectively to changes in the organizational environment.

Given these assumptions our strategy work focuses less on the actual plan, and more on the local interactions between people where the ideas and intentions of the strategic plan are discussed, made sense of and acted upon. Even when the organizational reality demands something like a 3 or 5 year plan, we focus on what can be done at the local level to create interactions that are informed by these plans.

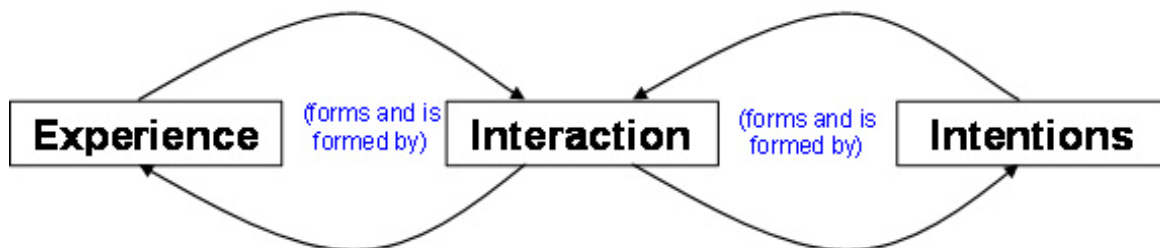
We emphasize the 'process' of planning and assisting managers to stay present to the patterns of interaction that are emerging in their environments so more effective responses to an uncertain future can be acted upon.

### Areas of Focus

- Where an existing strategy or plan exists, helping the senior manager or team rethink their role in terms of an uncertain future and how they can affect local interactions to more effectively focus those interactions on the strategy at hand.
- Helping senior management reflect on the patterns of interaction within their organization and how their own behavior can affect positive change that is aligned with their strategy work.
- Development of intentions that will act as filters to inform day to day behavior to help focus on the strategy.
- Coaching senior managers to help them understand and act into an uncertain future while still being accountable for the results of their organization.

### Basic Framework

We like to use the model below to depict the flowing and emergent nature of strategy within organizations, emphasizing that nothing happens in organizations outside of the interactions between people.



Applicable blog posts: [Problems with the Creative Tension Model](#); [Problems with the Creative Tension Model – A Recent Story](#); [An Alternative Approach to Strategy – What We Do at TMS Americas](#)

# Group Coaching

TMS Americas Consulting



This is a fundamentally different design to enable groups to apply new concepts to real work challenges and access the knowledge and expertise of their colleagues in a structured and self directed way. Based on the principles of both action learning and complex responsive processes, participants work on real issues plus build capacity for self management leading to higher levels of performance excellence.

This design brings all the benefits of one to one coaching without escalating costs as numbers increase or creating dependencies on external resources.

## **Basic Design Framework**

New concepts are introduced and explored in half day workshops. These concepts are then used as filters to understand and act on real work issues by pre-determined coaching groups. These self

directed meetings are supported by an internal steering committee and meet once a week for about 6 weeks at which time a new concept is introduced and the meetings now use this new concept as a filter. The following is a design and concepts we have used with very good success:

- Formation of internal voluntary steering committee and assignment of coaching groups.
- First half day concept delivered focusing on self and other knowledge using the **Types of Work Model** and the **Team Management Profile**.
- Coaching groups meet once a week for 6 weeks.
- Second half day concept session focused on shared and self management using material in **The Changing Role of Management**.
- Coaching groups meet once a week for 6 weeks.
- Check in and adjustments made as necessary with the steering committee.
- Third half day concept session focused on choice, influence and control using material in **Accountability and Choice**.
- Coaching groups continue to meet and steering committee sustains the initiative as needed.

## **Options**

This design is purposely open and alternative concepts can be applied. The organization may have existing concepts in place and this design is an excellent way to activate more practical use of these concepts.

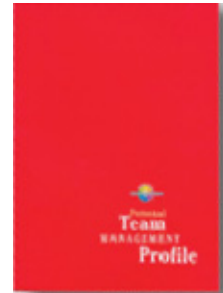
For a more extensive understanding of this design and the research and thinking behind it you may find our paper on this topic of value [Group Coaching](#)

Applicable blog post – [Bringing Coaching to the Masses – Without Developing Masses of Coaches](#)

## Description of Concepts Used in Above Design

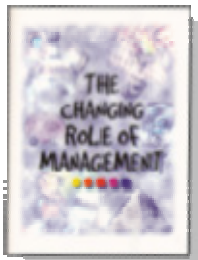
### Team Management Profile

The Team Management Profile (TMP) is a researched, work based preference assessment that is used world wide to help individuals, work groups and teams improve their performance. The 4000 + word profile is created from the participant's responses to 60 questions focused on 4 measures of work preference. The on-line questionnaire takes about 15 – 20 minutes to complete and a hard copy profile is provided to the end user. The profile is debriefed with the end user by an Accredited TMS Network Member either one on one or in an initiative such as the TMS Peer Coaching & Learning workshop. The profile contains data concerning the individuals work preferences relating to:



- Primary Areas of Work Preference
- Related Areas of Work Preference
- Leadership
- Decision Making
- Interpersonal Skills
- Team Building
- Areas for Self Assessment and Improvement
- How Others Can Effectively Interact With You

The TMP is actually a combination of two distinct, yet related models. This focus on work (the Types of Work model), plus preference (the Team Management Profile) is critical since for high performance to occur, the work must be performed regardless of preference. Once it is determined what work needs to be done then the preference information can help us to understand the diversity of ways people may go about performing that work, both individually and with others. When skill in both these areas is developed the potential for high performance is enhanced.

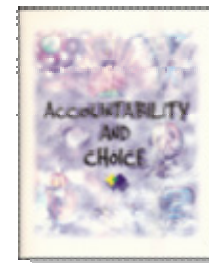


### The Changing Role of Management

Focusing on the concepts of power, mental models, self and shared management this session challenges the way we think about managing in organizations. Participants then take these concepts into their real work scenarios and apply them.

### Accountability & Choice

Building on the Changing Role of Management, this session focuses on the concepts of choice, consequences, accountability and the 5 futures of organizational life. Participants use these concepts to act on the day to day realities of their work.



### Peer Coaching & Learning Meeting Format

A highly structured meeting format ensuring each manager receives peer coaching on a specific application of the conceptual material in their day-to-day work

## InterAction Coaching

### TMS Americas Consulting

Coaching does not have to be a long drawn out process susceptible to dependencies that constrain self management and limit the capacity to bring individual change into the social environment of work.

Organizational coaching can be concise with high impact results that are sustainable. To do this, the process must be self driven, have a reasonable amount of objective data, and must include a social component. It must find a balance between one to one interaction and group interaction and in doing so be based on a different foundation than traditional coaching. There is also a much higher level of transparency with this work than traditional one to one coaching



### Basic Design Framework

1. Agreement to move forward with one to one coaching
2. A phone interaction with the coach and coachee to outline the process and accountabilities for results. Identification of an internal resource the coachee can interact with in addition to the external coach.
3. Objective data gathering for the individual – may include the Team Management Profile, QO2 Profile and potentially the Linking Skills Profile
4. Distance or face to face debrief of the data and how it impacts the process and needed results
5. Five, – 45 – 60 minute phone interactions between coach and coachee to apply learning from the data to business situations the coachee is experiencing. These are spaced 2 weeks apart.
6. Objective data gathering for the team the coachee leads or is a member of – includes the Team Performance Profile
7. Half day face to face debrief of the Team Performance Profile with the coachee and the team where the coachee applies learning from the one to one work within this context of improving team performance
8. Two months of ‘as needed/desired’ contact between coach and coachee

### Options

Alternative data sources can be substituted or added to those noted above. Performance review data is often of value as may be other assessments dealing with skill or capabilities.

Applicable blog post – [The Challenge of Executive Coaching – Individual Change and Social Response](#)

### Assessments Used in the Above Design

#### Team Management Profile

Understanding work preferences is a critical component in developing individual, team, and organizational performance. Team Management Systems’ Team Management Profile Questionnaire (TMPQ) is a 60-item assessment focused on enhancing understanding of an individual’s approach to work. Based on the responses around four dimensions of work preference, the Personal Team Management Profile provides constructive, work-based information outlining an individual’s work preferences, based on the Team Management Wheel, and the strengths that an individual brings to a team.



## Opportunities / Obstacles Quotient – QO<sub>2</sub><sup>TM</sup>

Is your glass half-empty or half-full? This Profile looks at people's approach to risk and determines the balance of effort put into seeing the opportunities and obstacles at work. Some people have a higher risk acceptance than others and may see only the opportunities, often ignoring the obstacles. Others may be risk averse and see only the obstacles, ignoring the possibilities of new projects or ventures. This Profile measures the five subscales of MTG Energy, Multi-Pathways, Optimism, Time Focus and Faultfinding and calculates an individual's Opportunities-Obstacles quotient QO<sub>2</sub><sup>TM</sup>.



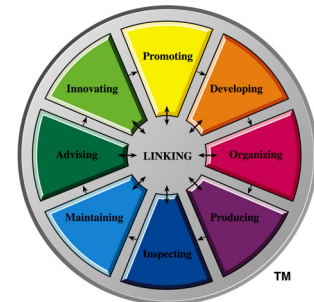
## Linking Skills Profile

The integrating of people and work process is critical to ensure high performance at work. Extensive interviews with teams and team leaders throughout the world continue to highlight common elements responsible for integrating teams into a coherent "whole". Team Management Systems identifies these elements as Linking Skills, a set of 13 distinct skills which need to be implemented by all members of a team, though often focused on the team leader. Team Management Systems' Linking Skills Profile Questionnaire (LSPQ) is a 66-item multi-source assessment through which a number of different people provide feedback on an individual's linking skills capacity.



## Team Performance Profile

For high performance in teams, ongoing assessment is a requirement. The Team Performance Profile Questionnaire (TPPQ) and resulting Profile are tools developed to support this process. The TPPQ is a 54-item multi-source instrument that focuses on assessing a team's performance in the nine team performance factors associated with high performing teams



## New Leader Assimilation

### TMS Consulting

***“Leadership transitions .... Are critical times when small differences in your actions can have disproportionate impact on results.”***

**Michael Watkins, The First 90 Days**

Whether an unexpected or long planned transition, an effective on-boarding process for a new leader will effectively accelerate the process of building relationships with his/her team and gaining critical insight and clarity around the business context of this new role.

Our approach to new leader assimilation engages the entire team early and is focused on developing sustainable interpersonal and team capacity to work effectively within both the current context and the reality of ongoing uncertainty.



### Basic Design Framework:

- Pre-work (interviews and/or questionnaires completed) by both the new leader and the team or work group. Question content focused on clarifying both the current work and the team dynamics.
  - *‘What do I/we need to know about you?’*,
  - *‘What I/we want you to know about you?’*,
  - *‘What are our main work priorities right now?’*, etc.
- Completion of a Team Management Profile Questionnaire by the new leader and the team or work group;
- Working with the new leader on an agenda/approach for a one day session with the group: the agenda includes a debrief of the Team Management Profile including the team map and focusing the debrief on both effective interpersonal relationships and current work context. Depending on the leader and team preference, the agenda may also include a formal presentation by the leader and or team, focused work on existing projects, etc.;
- Compilation by the facilitator of the major ‘themes’ or insights which emerged from the one day session:
- An optional 6-week half day follow-up meeting to review themes and team dynamic

## Teams In Crisis

### TMS Americas Consulting



A team is 'in crisis' when the interpersonal dynamics are compromising the work – a team no longer able to work together to produce needed results. Conflict, communication breakdowns, lack of agreement around direction or values: as a result productivity, engagement, satisfaction and possibly performance issues escalate becoming more and more problematic.

Our approach is focused on developing sustainable interpersonal and team capacity to work effectively within both the current context and the reality of ongoing uncertainty. We use the circumstances of the state of crisis to frame the work of increasing the effectiveness of daily interactions.

***“An organization is nothing more than the patterns of interactions between people. Working at this level – specifically with the quality of their interactions, will have an immediate and significant impact on individual and team behavior and results.”***

### Basic Design Framework

1. Initial consultation with the team lead or process initiator to gain an understanding of the specific context and determine the appropriateness of this approach;
2. Agreement by team members to work together with an external facilitator to address the current situation with the team;
3. A pre-session process of one-on-one confidential interviews with each team member to provide everyone with and opportunity to express their views/ concerns;
4. Compilation by the facilitator of the major 'themes' which emerged from the interviews;
5. A phone interaction with the team lead and/or other designated team member to review the themes;
6. Distribution of the themes to team members along with an agenda for the one day session;
7. A one day facilitated meeting which includes:
  - An opportunity to work extensively with each theme;
  - A primary focus on changing the daily interactions and dynamics around each theme;
  - An opportunity to work with/practice behavior or interaction changes;
  - A built-in team creation of a follow-up feedback mechanism to maximize sustainable changes.

Often a 6-week half day follow-up meeting is scheduled to review themes and team improvements.

### Options

- Specific data may be of value to this process such as the Team Management Profile or the Team Performance Profile
- A series of follow meetings can be scheduled over an extended period of time to monitor progress and make adaptations to changes made. These can also be done via teleconference
- In some cases more formalized coaching sessions are scheduled with the group leader or perhaps specific members of the group

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Many years ago the journey to my present position with Team Management Systems began in an ice cream plant with Ault Foods. This included a variety of positions and levels of management in the manufacturing environment followed by a number of years in the corporate Human Resource function as Director of Organizational Development. During this time I completed my undergraduate studies in Psychology and Sociology and worked extensively in the learning and strategic management fields.

After 20 years with Ault Foods I began my own business, focusing on strategic planning, performance systems and developmental learning and worked with a wide range of clients and at all levels within organizations. I joined Team Management Systems in 2003 and as of 2007 became a partner in the TMS - Americas business and act as President and Managing Director - Sustainable Development.

On a personal note, I live with my family in London, Ontario. Bev and I have 4 children, some grown and some still actively at home, all of which creates an interesting and very stimulating foundation in which to learn and work.

Partial Client list:

Nestle, Disney Consumer Products, Exxon Mobil, KPMG Canada, Ivey School of Business, S.C. Johnson, Hewlett Packard, Alcon, Boston Scientific, Rio Tinto, Diavik Diamond Mines.

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My 'first' career was in social services and field work with emotionally disturbed or troubled children and adolescents after an undergraduate degree in Psychology and Sociology from the University of Waterloo in Waterloo, Ontario. A role as Executive Director of a Big Sisters agency (London) led to a desire to understand how to bring a business approach to the social service sector. Studying for a Masters of Business Administration at the Richard Ivey School of Business at the University of Western Ontario contributed to that understanding.

Since receiving my MBA, my work has been focused on the implementation and people part of business – the planning process, change management, managing in complex environments. A leadership and management development professional, I bring over 20 years experience in training, development and coaching in both the private and public sectors including work with the General Electric 'Work-Out!' process prior to joining KPMG as a Manager in their consulting practice in 1992. Working within my own consulting practice since 1995 enabled me to pursue a specific interest in developing high performing individuals and teams. My current role as Partner and Managing Director - Sustainable Applications of Team Management Systems deepens that focus.

On a personal note, I live on the shores of Lake Huron, near Bayfield, Ontario with my partner, Rick. We have two grown sons who share our interest in travel. Rick and I have both been able to apply our understanding of the business world to the social service sector through our volunteer work with local and international organizations.

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