

The Book of Me - Introduction

The Book of Me started as a request from an organisation who wanted a presentation that was different and inspiring delivered to a set of their colleagues. The aim was to make them more aware of themselves which in turn would make them hopefully more aware of their clients.

In essence the organisation didn't actually know what they wanted, but they knew what the end result was to be. Otherwise I had a blank canvas.

The presentation was written by me and delivered to the group in a workshop style. We met every two weeks for 6 months.

Two weeks before the our start date the group were requested to

1. Arrive in what dress they felt comfortable in
2. Bring with them
 - a. A4 ring binder and paper
 - b. A pen that was comfortable to use
 - c. A journal that they had selected as something nice to use

On the first day of the course we did the usual introductions, although many of the colleagues knew each other.

They were instructed that

1. There was no pass or fail
2. They should share whatever they felt comfortable sharing and they would spend lots of time writing, talking and thinking. (At this point they had no idea of the content they would be working with, but I explained their work would be prompt driven and the prompts were provided by me.)
3. Kept a note of anything that occurred to them – not specific situations, but a single trigger word.
4. Refrain from using any mobiles, laptops etc. for the duration of the day including our working lunch we focused only on the group and the prompts

Over the duration of the next six months I produced each time we met two prompts. One they could work on within the group and the other they could take away and work on in the week before we met again. We discussed both prompts, but what they worked on within the group was the individual's choice.

Results

As we worked our way through the prompts the results was staggering. We headed back to basics with the prompts we covered, the questions, illustrations and over the duration of the Book of Me the participants became close, inspired, challenged, motivated and they shared more and more as the weeks passed.

We dealt with some sensitive issues, where the prompt evoked a sad, upsetting, joyous memories and every other emotion in between. Some were shared amongst the group, others between myself and the participant.

There was to be 20 people in the workshops. None dropped out and out of the group 17 of them are continuing with the Book of Me that they started.

In terms of the organisation that asked for the course they are delighted, it has reached their objective and a new wave of participants is starting later in the summer of 2013.

Going Forward

The Book of Me has been written with a degree of flexibility in mind. Therefore it can be delivered in a

1. Workshop style with fortnightly meetings using the method above
2. Workshop style meeting weekly
3. Delivered online using a variety of methods depending on the recipient needs and time zone
4. Delivered as an initial presentation and then switching to the workshop style.
5. A variety of ways to suit.

What started out as a very vague request from an organisation has developed into something that can be used for the professional group it was initially written for and a host of other interested parties.

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