

## SFCT UK Chapter meeting, Monday 8 March 2010, London

The first meeting of the UK SFCT chapter took place at the offices of LSN in central London on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2010. 18 members made it on the day, out of the 30+ total of UK membership. We were very honoured to be joined by Aoki-san from Tokyo, the Japanese SFCT chapter head.



Our main topic for discussion was ‘what are the Unique Selling Points of SF in a recession?’.

Our host Shaun Lincoln (right) led us through a variety of processes to explore this, including look at what our existing customers already value about SF, what’s different about it and what would our customers say is our ‘signature presence’. Mark McKergow introduced the idea of ‘challenger brands’ (a marketing term for small brands that take on a market leader by being definitely different), and we examined some of the key leaders we might challenge (NLP, McKinsey-type consultants, expert consultants and six-sigma), what might be the ground we were challenging and how might we summarise that in terms of a dramatic image or statement.



We concluded this part of the programme by looking at how, in the end, SF was different in ways that customers valued. (The Wittgenstein connection is indeed a difference, but not one that most customers value!) Shaun offered to get the final results written up and they will be put in the UK SFCT LinkedIn group for all to see.

We heard from newly reviewed Full Members Phil Aspden and John Brooker about their pieces of work and the experience of the review process. Everyone present was impressed by the work described, and there was a good deal of writing down of the various exercises and ideas they had employed. Both Phil and John said that the review had really made them think about their practice in very useful ways, and had indeed identified things they were doing without realising it.

The last part of the day was given over to working on the challenges and issues brought by the participants. We split into different groups and used reflecting team and other processes to look at:

- Working with cultural differences between a German company and its UK arm
- Working with people in very unresourceful states
- How to introduce SF ideas as networking and influencing language with admin support staff
- Ideas for half-day strategic planning workshops
- How to make large project team meetings more time-effective (shorter)
- How could SF help companies in merger/acquisition/takeover situations

- How to introduce SF to the world of business schools
- Are there limits to introducing SF into a world of medical expertise (connected to patient choice in the NHS)

Many thanks to Shaun Lincoln and LSN for hosting the meeting and generously providing lunch.

Next SFCT UK telecall: Tuesday 13 April, 7pm (host John Brooker)

Next CPD day: Friday 2 July, Oxford, 12 noon – 6pm (host Julie Gregory)



Back: Mark McKergow, Sophie Cook, Carey Glass, Victoria Copas, Jenny Clarke, John Brooker, Bruce Woodings, Ruth Allott, Yasuteru Aoki, Mike Brent, Paul Z Jackson

Front: Pat Walker, Phil Aspden, Rob Rave, Sarah Cudmore, Jackie Keddy, Shaun Lincoln, Antoinette Oglethorpe