

## Eric Svaren

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### Work Experience

#### **Principal consultant/owner**

April 2000 – present

Groupsmith, Inc.

- Provide training on leadership development, communication skills, conflict resolution, dialogue, influence leadership, and decision making for a variety of public, private and non-profit sector clients, using an array of adult learning methods, including simulations, case studies, and PowerPoint and video presentations.
- Designed and present new courses in *Leading When You're Not in Charge* and *Managing Group Decision Making* for Cascade Executive Programs at the Evans School of Public Affairs at the University of Washington.
- Designed and present sessions on *Crucial Conversations* and *Dialogue and Communication* in the Executive MPA program and the Leadership Academy at UW's Evans School.
- Facilitate a full range of meetings, processes and events—including off-site retreats, all-hands meetings, labor contract bargaining and regulation negotiation with groups ranging in size from four to 150.
- Conduct research into clients' goals, needs and issues, analyze findings, and prepare and present reports, including specific recommendations for action.
- Conduct intensive team interventions and team building for groups ranging from small teams to entire departments and organizations and provide coaching to managers and executives.
- Write blogs on influence leadership ([www.influenceleader.com](http://www.influenceleader.com)) and team rescue and relationship repair ([www.groupsmith.com/blog.php](http://www.groupsmith.com/blog.php))

#### **Employee involvement coordinator**

July 1998 – April 2000

City of Seattle, Office of the Mayor

- Managed joint labor-management program to increase employee participation in improving service delivery.
- Worked closely with all levels of management, from Mayor and City Council down to crew chiefs—as well as union representatives from the city's 30 unions.
- Designed and trained employee involvement committees (EICs) in problem solving, group dynamics, labor contract limits, and other skills.
- Managed \$250,000 program budget, authorized expenditures, and developed systems for tracking and reported results.
- Recruited and supervised other EIC trainers and facilitators.
- Provided technical assistance to employee teams, including training in teamwork, results measurement and problem-solving.
- Designed and conducted the NOVA Institute for Facilitative Leadership, the city's 72-hour internal facilitator training program.

## Work Experience (continued)

### **Policy analyst**

City of Seattle, Executive Services Department

January 1997 – July 1998  
October 1992 – January 1995

- Performed issue analyses, gather data, define options, and prepare recommendations concerning (a) use of information technology within city government, (b) providing on-line access to city services and (c) cable TV franchise renewal.
- Provided organization development facilitation, intervention and consultation to a variety of units within city government.
- Facilitated interest-based bargaining between city management and Coalition of City Unions.
- Designed and presented in the NOVA Institute for Facilitative Leadership.

### **Internal organization development consultant**

City of Seattle, Department of Administrative Services

January 1995 – December 1996

- Provided organization development facilitation, intervention and consultation to a variety of units within city government.
- Planned and facilitated a wide variety of meetings and retreats for clients, including line staff, senior management and citizens.

### **Aide to City Councilmember Tom Weeks**

Seattle City Council

September 1991 - October 1992

- Analyzed sensitive issues and advised on strategy. Worked closely with community groups, Mayor's staff, and city department staff. Represented Councilmember Weeks at community events.
- Scrutinized proposed legislation and departmental budgets. Served as committee staff to the City Council's Finance, Budget, Management and Personnel Committee.

### **Staff associate**

Eastside Human Services Council, Bellevue, Washington

October 1988 - September 1991

- Provided technical support to a variety of human services programs and community groups. Actively participated in creating new programs. Prepared analysis of human service needs of children and youth in eastern King County. Analyzed and packaged 1990 census data for agencies.

### **Instructor & Teaching assistant**

Department of Sociology, University of Washington

September 1985 - August 1988

## Education

### **Master of Arts, Sociology** (Concentrations: Organizations and social psychology)

University of Washington, Seattle

June 1987

Thesis title: *Administrative Succession and Organizational Change: The Case of a Non-Profit Organization*

### **Bachelor of Arts with High Honors, Sociology**

Portland State University

June 1985

## Community involvement

<b>Member</b> Building Leadership Team (BLT), McClure Middle School, Seattle	2009 - present
<b>Board member and Vice-chair of curriculum and programs</b> (2008-2009) Leadership Eastside, Bellevue	2007 - present
<b>Board member and Board president</b> Hilltop Children's Center	2002 - 2005
<b>Board member and Board vice-president</b> Seattle Infant Development Center and Preschool	1998 - 2000

## Publications

**"When Conflict is Good (and when it's not)"**

*HR Advisor*, Municipal Research and Service Center (<http://www.mrsc.org>); January 2010

**"Speak Consistently and Abandon the Big Stick"**

*Journal for Quality and Participation*; volume 23, number 1 (January-February 2000)

## Selected Conference Presentations

**Washington Financial Officers Association (WFOA):** "Dangerous Decisions: How to involve people in decision making" (2006) and "Exercising influence when you're not in charge" (2006)

**Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM),** Seattle chapter: "Dangerous Decisions" (2006)

**Public Sector Performance Conference:** "Persuasion to Performance" (2004)

**Public Sector Quality Conference:** "Managing "Process": Making Decisions When Employees Expect a Voice" (2003); "Expanding Group Learning and Creativity...Without Doing the Work for Them" (2002)

**Washington Public Employer Labor Relations Association:** "Managing Change: Making Decisions When Employees and Unions Expect a Voice" (2003)

**National Labor Management Conference:** "Making Employee Involvement Work" (2000)

## Selected Continuing Education

**Executive Coaching (Theories and Concepts and Skill Building),** MBO Consulting, 2007

**Process Work Group Facilitation Training,** The Process Work Institute, 2006

**Crucial Conversations Trainer Certification,** VitalSmarts, 2005

**T-Group Pre-Conference Intensive,** NTL Institute for Applied Behavioral Sciences, 2003

**Power of Dialogue (facilitator training),** Public Conversations Project, 2003

**Multi-Party Mediation,** Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) Institute, 2002

**Facilitating and Managing Complex System Change,** NTL Institute for Applied Behavioral Sciences, 1999

**Managing a Future Search Conference,** SearchNet, 1994

**Group Facilitation Methods,** Institute for Cultural Affairs, 1994

## Professional Affiliations

**Human Systems Development Professionals (HSDP)**

**Organization Development Network (ODN)**

**Pacific Northwest Organization Development Network (PNODN)**