

Eric Svaren
Principal
Groupsmith, Inc.

Eric Svaren specializes in helping leaders and teams *get traction*—by facilitating change, clarifying strategy, strengthening trust, and improving communication. He helps individuals, teams and entire enterprises achieve breakthrough results. Eric is particularly known for his intensive intervention with teams, as well as his facilitation of high-stakes conflict situations, including multiparty mediation and labor contract bargaining.

A master change agent and facilitator, Eric also designs and facilitates organizational change, leadership development, and retreats and off-sites with groups of all sizes. In addition to his consulting and facilitation work, Eric teaches mid-career professionals for Cascade Executive Programs at the Daniel J. Evans School of Public Affairs at the University of Washington. He has created and led workshops on influence leadership (“Leading without Authority”) and how to manage decision making processes (“Dangerous Decisions”).

Clients include a wide array of government agencies, non-profit organizations, companies, higher education institutions, and health care providers. Among them are the Bellwether Housing, City of Seattle, Eddie Bauer, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Harborview Medical Center, Housing Development Consortium, Johnson & Johnson, King County, Law Enforcement Support Agency (LESA), Lifelong AIDS Alliance, NPower, Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Port of Seattle, Seattle Housing Authority, The Seattle Public Library, Sound Transit, State of Washington, Teamsters Local 117, Unitus, University of Washington, Washington State University, Weyerhaeuser, and Woodland Park Zoo. He has also presented at dozens of conferences, such as the National Labor Management Conference, the Housing Washington conference, and the Public Sector Performance Conference.

Eric is a certified trainer in Crucial Conversations and also the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). He has received specialized training in organizational change, executive coaching, mediation, and dialogue facilitation.

Before launching Groupsmith in 2000, Eric managed a joint labor-management program for the City of Seattle designed to increase employee participation in the improvement of service delivery. He also worked as a public policy analyst for Seattle city councilmember Tom Weeks and city departments, and as a human services planner for a regional nonprofit. He earned his Master’s Degree in organizational sociology and social psychology from the University of Washington.

Eric has served as board member and officer for several non-profit organizations. He is a founding faculty member of Leadership Eastside and served as board chair of curriculum and programs there. He also provides pro bono services to non-profit organizations.

Eric lives in Seattle with his wife, Alice Shobe, and their sons, Carl and Beck.

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