

Keeping your Cool When Temperatures Rise

SHELBY KRANTZ

NRLI CLASS XV



IN COLLABORATION WITH JONATHAN DAIN & JESSICA IRELAND

Context

- ▶ UF is home to many climate change researchers and programs
- ▶ Climate change research & outreach is inherently interdisciplinary
- ▶ Interdisciplinary work is challenging
- ▶ These challenges, in addition to everyday interpersonal conflicts in the workplace, can lead to the need for skills in conflict management, communication, and listening to create more effective teams
- ▶ We decided to address this need through a workshop in a joint effort

Why is Team Science Challenging?

- High diversity of membership
- Knowledge Integration
- Large Size
- Goal Misalignment with other teams
- Permeable boundaries
- Geographic dispersion
- High task interdependence

Stakeholders

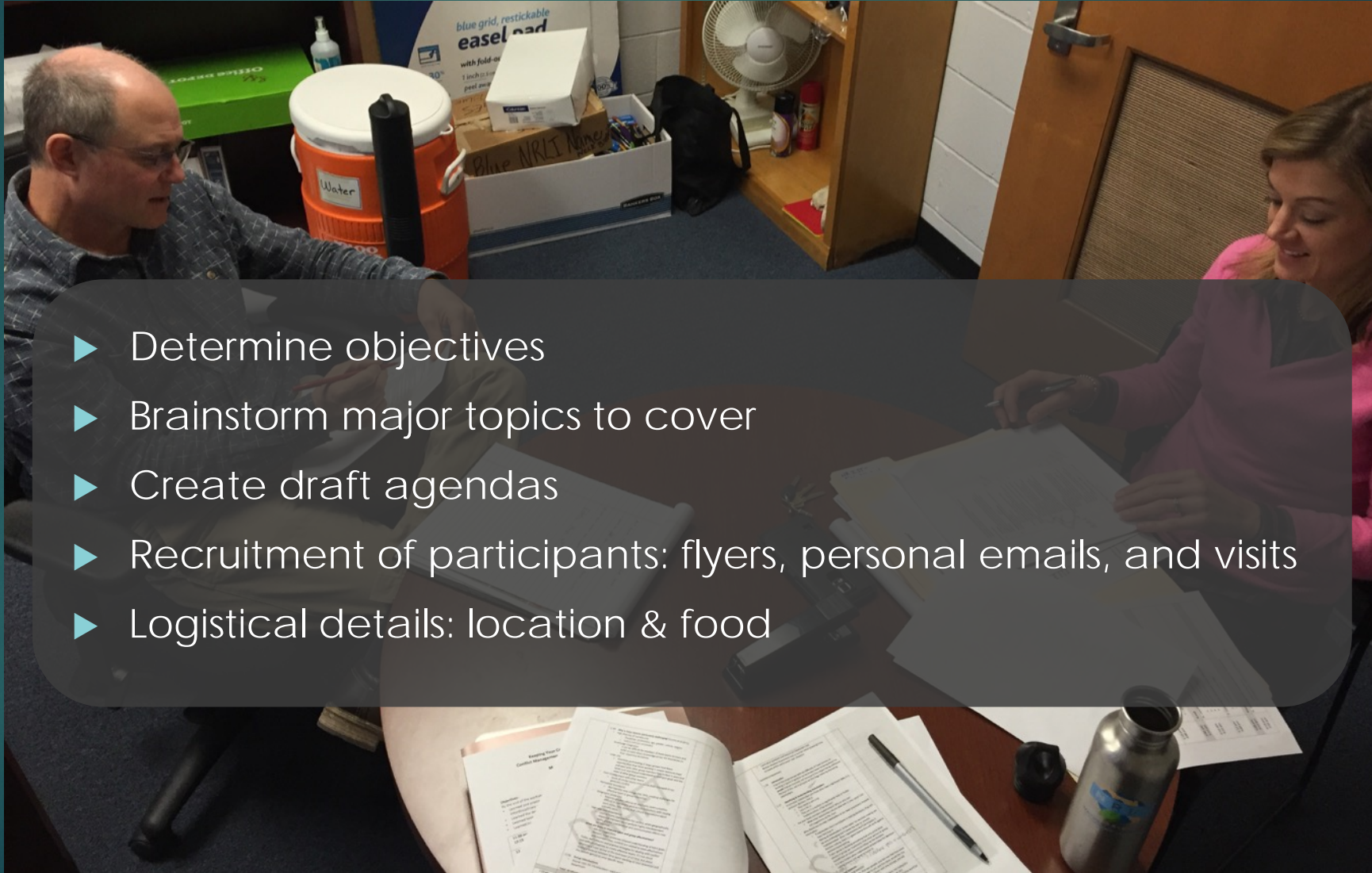


- ▶ Students, staff, and faculty working on interdisciplinary climate projects at the University of Florida
- ▶ Why?
 - ▶ Have an expressed need for conflict management and communication skills/training
 - ▶ Interested in improving team effectiveness in the face of challenges of interdisciplinary work

Step 1: Stakeholder Interviews

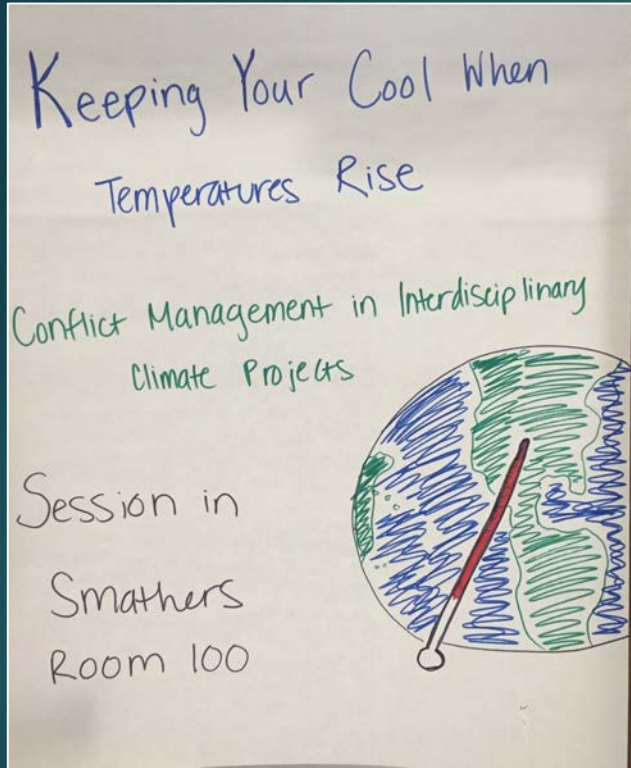
- ▶ Identified key people and contacted them for interviews
- ▶ Gathered information on:
 - ▶ biggest obstacles in doing interdisciplinary climate work
 - ▶ challenges in communication and leadership
 - ▶ suggestions for participants
 - ▶ logistical needs

Step 2: Agenda Planning



- ▶ Determine objectives
- ▶ Brainstorm major topics to cover
- ▶ Create draft agendas
- ▶ Recruitment of participants: flyers, personal emails, and visits
- ▶ Logistical details: location & food

Step 3: Implementation



Step 3: Implementation

Objectives

- Learn & practice the foundations of communication for working in & managing interdisciplinary climate projects to avoid miscommunications & misunderstandings.
- Discuss the definition & roots of conflict
- Explore tools to promote team effectiveness
- Address strategies for dealing with impediments to team work.

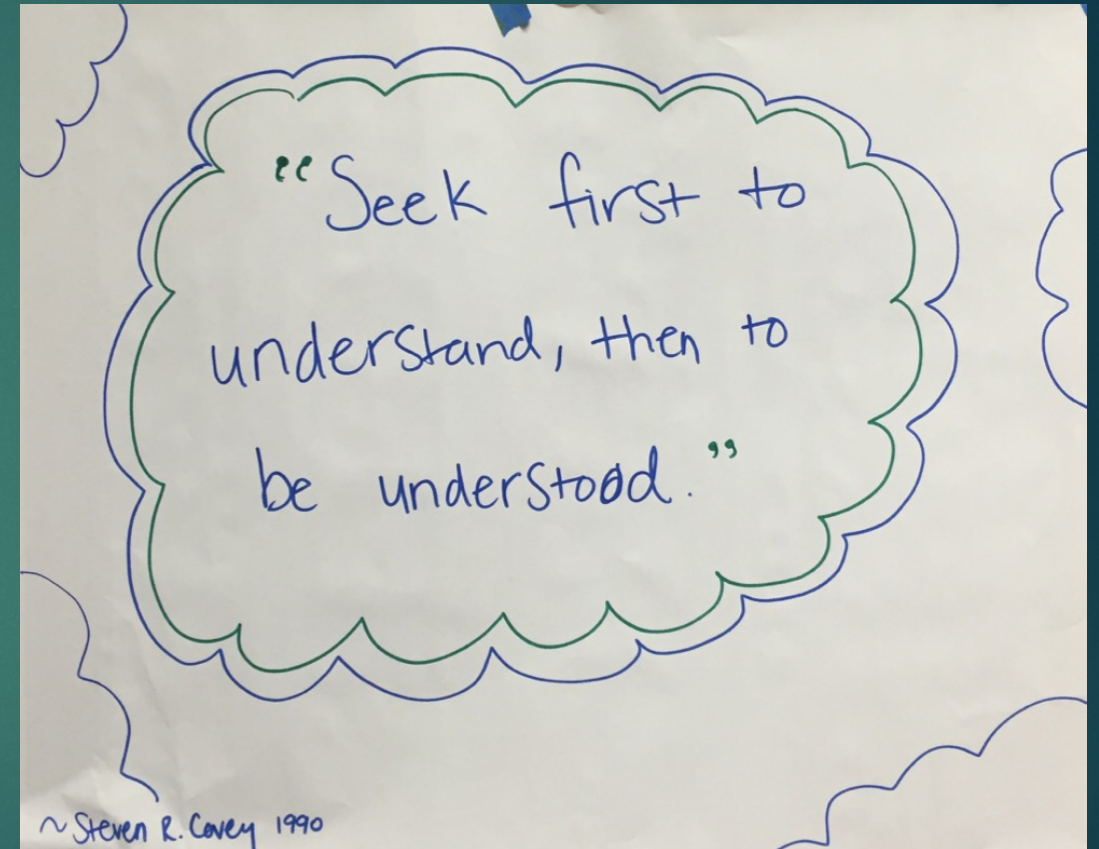
Session Agenda

- 11:30 - 12:15 Lunch & Check-in
- 12:30 - 1:10 Welcome and Introductions
- 1:10 - 2:00 Conflict Analysis I
- 2:00 - 2:15 BREAK
- 2:15 - 3:15 Conflict Analysis II
- 3:15 - 4:00 Listening to Promote Team Effectiveness
- 4:00 - 4:15 BREAK
- 4:05 - 5:15 Dealing with Impediments to Team work
- 5:15 - 5:30 Wrap Up
- 5:30 Adjourn



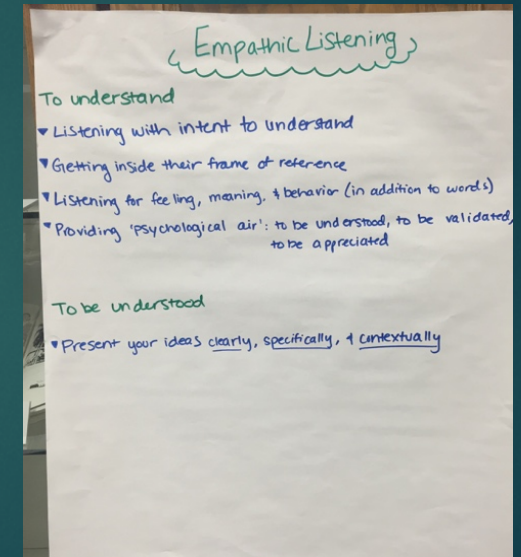
Step 3: Implementation

- ▶ Welcome
 - ▶ Introductions
 - ▶ Icebreaker
- ▶ Challenges of Team Science
 - ▶ Team processes as a way to improve group effectiveness
- ▶ Conflict Analysis 1
 - ▶ Stakeholders, Positions, Interests
 - ▶ Triangle of needs & Interests
- ▶ Conflict Analysis 2
 - ▶ Definition of Conflict
 - ▶ Roots of Conflict
- ▶ Listening to Promote Team Effectiveness
- ▶ Dealing with Impediments to Teamwork
 - ▶ Difficult Dynamics



Step 4: Reflection

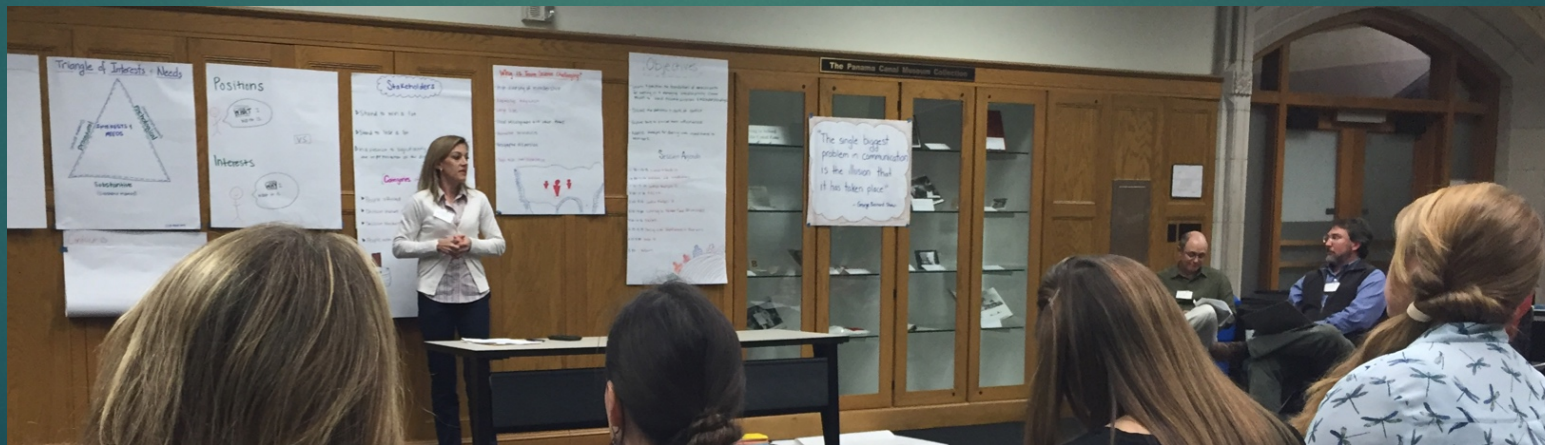
- ▶ It takes a good amount of planning to host a half-day session
- ▶ Importance of flexibility in the process agenda to add or cut items depending on timing
- ▶ Getting into small groups can shift dynamics and get people more engaged
- ▶ Wrapping up effectively takes practice
- ▶ Need to work on saying “um” in uncomfortable situations
- ▶ **Large** writing on flip charts is important!
- ▶ From observing Jon and Jessica in action:
 - ▶ Turning the question back to the group
 - ▶ Using direct examples from peoples’ work to engage them



Tiny flip chart writing

Step 5: Evaluation

- ▶ Most agree or strongly agree that they learned something applicable to their work
- ▶ Most planned to apply what they learned to their work
- ▶ Most agree or strongly agree that the workshop improved their understanding of, and gave tools to be more effective in dealing with...
 - ▶ Conflict
 - ▶ Their teams/co-workers
 - ▶ The challenges of team science



Step 5: Evaluation

What Worked

- ▶ Flow of materials & energizers
- ▶ Q&A with Jon about specific solutions
- ▶ Self reflection
- ▶ Presenters prepared and knowledgeable
- ▶ Diversity of participants
- ▶ Hearing others' experiences
- ▶ Listening & communication styles that bug people
- ▶ Mixing up instructors with different skills/interests/styles
- ▶ Values story (river)



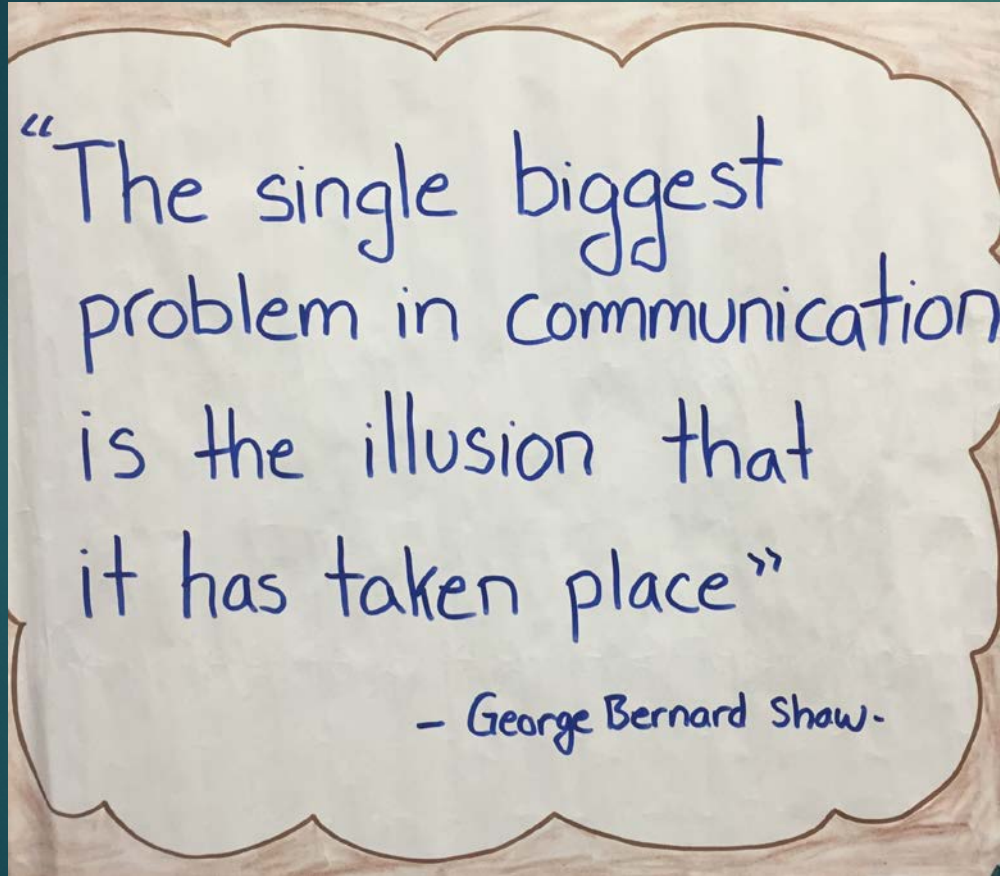
Step 5: Evaluation



What could be improved

- ▶ Needed more mixing up so buzz groups weren't the same every time
- ▶ Visual aids (flip charts)
- ▶ Hard to hear in the room
- ▶ More case studies/specifics
- ▶ More information on resolving issues related to culture/gender/age conflicts
- ▶ More time on each topic– more clear objective for each section of the workshop
- ▶ More time efficient– less time on each topic (too many break outs)

Step 5: Evaluation



- ▶ Almost all were interested in participating in other trainings to learn about:
 - ▶ Team management
 - ▶ Diffusing community conflict
 - ▶ Climate change communication
 - ▶ Building effective and long-lasting collaborations
 - ▶ More in-depth conflict management training
 - ▶ Agenda setting
 - ▶ Leadership
 - ▶ Proposal team formation
 - ▶ Industry collaboration

NRLI Techniques Used

- ▶ Identifying stakeholders and their interests
- ▶ Designing a meeting and group activities based on identified objectives that incorporate both content and process elements
- ▶ Building trust and facilitating a trusting group environment
- ▶ Managing my emotional state when involved in meetings, conflicts, and negotiations
- ▶ Facilitation skills
- ▶ Listening skills
- ▶ Conflict management strategies



Next steps

- ▶ At UF...
 - ▶ Further collaborations with NRI & Florida Climate Institute
 - ▶ Possible module in Climate Change concentration in UF's School of Natural Resources and Environment
 - ▶ Future trainings on topics participants mentioned in evaluation
- ▶ For me...
 - ▶ Taking away reflections from evaluations, collaborators, and myself on the NRI skills used in this project
 - ▶ Interest in pursuing further practice in facilitation, meeting & group management, and mediation





Thank you!

Questions?