

ELIZABETH SIMPSON

Group Dynamics & Teambuilding Specialist



Elizabeth Simpson has been working with the group dynamics and difficulties of nonprofits, small businesses, intentional communities, grassroots organizations, and individuals since 1995. Her innovative and effective methods help assess and implement strategic plans and public relations, develop vision and mission, and enhance day-to-day effectiveness using unique tools and strategies. Her work has strengthened and supported countless groups, from board members and executive directors to volunteers and staff.

Elizabeth specializes in addressing the root causes of both structural and interpersonal problems, and in developing functionality, cooperation, and confidence within groups. Her skills, enthusiasm, and creativity have brought new and established groups – whether successful or on the verge of organizational collapse – to a renewed sense of purpose and passion. She has addressed infighting, lack of motivation, idea drought, re-visioning and re-structuring, outdated images, volunteer erosion, and boredom. With clarity and efficiency, she guides groups painlessly, leaving participants refreshingly knowledgeable about the topic at hand and the implementation strategy for its success.

Her talents helped a tech company re-orient its vision and mission as it transitioned from start-up to wildly successful business. She shepherded the board of a volunteer-based organization through a divisive internal conflict that threatened to implode the group. She has developed countless custom trainings in mediation, volunteer management, customer service, board participation, and effective meetings, and many others.

Elizabeth has been active in numerous grassroots and nonprofit organizations where she saw firsthand how group energy can be dissipated by factionalization, lack of coordination and planning, and poor leadership. She dedicated herself to learning the skills necessary for success in group decision-making and business management. Having begun what would turn into a 10-year relationship with the Gesundheit! Institute, she began her career in facilitation with recognized leaders in the field such as Laird Schaub, Caroline Estes, and C.T. Butler.

Elizabeth continues to deepen her commitment to conflict resolution by being an active part of projects which provide individuals with skills and communities with alternative responses to violence and criminal behavior. Her experience teaching in public schools committed her to addressing racial injustice. From facilitating workshops to teaching courses at the University of Illinois to coaching nonprofits in diversification techniques, Elizabeth strives to address racism in all forms.

Her passion for and participation in social change through nonprofit organizing has exposed her to a variety of organizations, meetings styles, personalities, broadening her approaches of how to work with donors, volunteers, and staff. Her capacity to reinvigorate a group, coach organizations away from pitfalls, and to proactively address latent issues have made her a favorite facilitator of for organizations off all types.

Relevant Training and Certificates of Achievement

Waging Peace, Designing Justice (2009)
Gender Justice (2008)
Theater of the Oppressed: Rainbow of Desire (2008)
Dynamic Governance (Sociocracy) (2007)
How to be an Inclusive Organization (2007)
Restorative Justice Train the Trainer (2007)
Victim-Offender Reconciliation (2006)
Peacemaking Circles (2006)
Financial Management (2006)
Storytelling (2006)
Family-Group Conferencing (2006)
Anti-Racist Organizing (2005)
Peaceable Schools (2003)
Peer Mediation (2002)
CRISS (Creating Independence through Student Owned Strategies) (2001)
Theater of the Oppressed: Forum Theater (2000)
Formal Consensus (2000)
Consensus Process (1996)
Group Facilitation (1996)

Select Service Profile

Development Volunteer, Education Justice Project (2009)
Volunteer Mediator, Champaign County VORP (2006-09)
Librarian, Books to Prisoners (2008-09)
Community Connections, Independent Media Center (2008-09)
Bookkeeper, Independent Media Center (2006)
Volunteer Organizer, Community Labor United (2005, New Orleans)
Organizational Resource Coordinator, PHRF (2005-06)
Lead Organizer, Liberation Education (2003-04)
Organizer, School for Designing A Society (2002-05)
Volunteer Coordinator, Gesundheit! Institute (1995-2004)