

### **Eavesdropping Over Breakfast**

While on a business trip recently, eating breakfast in a hotel restaurant, I couldn't help but notice a group of people at the next table having a spirited conversation over their eggs and bacon. Clearly the six people were some sort of work team, and I soon overheard they were putting together a strategy for a meeting that morning with a client company. Apparently, the client was unhappy with the product or service that had been provided by the team's company. Hence, the six people flown in and now converging for an energetic strategy session before the big client meeting.

Suddenly their senior leader arrived and joined in, immediately launching into *his* plans and what *he* thought the group needed to do. After a couple of minutes, a few folks tried to interject, yet the leader kept talking. In fact, he didn't even pause for a breath or to check in for confirmation from the folks around the table. His litany boiled down to what he, the leader thought had gone wrong, what needed to happen now and his plans and ideas for the meeting.

There was no room for the others to provide any feedback or perspective. What a missed opportunity to get contributions and find out what the other teammates might have provided. Perhaps there was a new or different perspective others might have or important data to include. What other data might they have shared? As subject matter experts what domain information might they have contributed?

It was all I could do as a coach, not to barge in to facilitate a better process!

When working on a team, whether as team leader or member, always remember it is part of your responsibility to make sure all voices are heard and perspectives get shared. No matter how pressing the meeting.