

## OPERA

OPERA is an efficient method for working in groups, above all for work meetings. In OPERA, a systematic way of working is combined with a creative process for solving problems. Together these merge into the best available perception based on the participants' knowledge and experiences. Another significant aspect is that the OPERA method engages those affected by the question. A participative approach is important in order for people to commit themselves to the result of the process.



OPERA differs from traditional forms of group work or meeting methods, above all because:

- All participants are active all the time. During ordinary meetings a few people talk while the rest are kept silent.
- Time is used efficiently. The method avoids the common “time thieves” such as getting caught up in irrelevant details, competing about who possesses the best expertise, or quarrelling about who is right or wrong.
- The method leads to collective, structured views on the matters under processing.
- The participants liberate new energy and express this through enthusiasm, good spirit and implemented tasks.
- The participants leave the OPERA meeting in a good mood without feeling that matters need to be reconsidered again afterwards.

## The Basic Process

The kernel of the work method is a simple procedure that enables you to collect the variety of opinions of the participants and join them into one view and a consensus decision on how to proceed with the matter.

Between the leading question and the decision, the process goes through six intermediate phases:

### 1. The Task

The process starts with the presentation of the task, usually as an open question.

### 2. Own Suggestions

The participants ponder the leading question individually and put down the thoughts it evokes, each participant on her/his own piece of paper.



### 3. **Pair Suggestions**

The participants discuss their written thoughts in pairs. They note their most important suggestions on separate pieces of paper. These are then attached to the workboard for everyone to read.

### 4. **Explanations**

Each pair briefly explains to the rest of the audience the suggestions they have attached to the board.

### 5. **Ranking**

Each pair selects, in accordance with agreed selection criteria, the most important ones of all the suggestions. They mark their choices on the workboard.

### 6. **Arranging**

The facilitator arranges the suggestions on the workboard according to the themes, following the instructions of the participants

In order to concretize the basic process, we have described a case in which the personnel of a department have processed their problems relating to meeting at the department.

## **How to Utilize the Process**

Originally OPERA was utilized as a problem-solving method in connection with organizational development. The method is still excellent for this method however it has proved to be at its very best in making everyday meetings more efficient.

Areas and modes of application:

- Department meetings, group meetings
- Projects in different phases
- Education and learning
- Teams
- Manager-subordinate relations
- Voluntary work
- Creative problem-solving
- Processes for total organizational change
- Athletic training
- Visionary and strategic processes, value processes
- Decision-making groups, steering groups