

California Center for Cooperative Development
California Co-op Conference, San Diego
Pre-Conference Training: Saturday, April 28, 2018, 9:30am-5:30pm

Sociocracy: Become More Effective Together

[Start Your Registration Here!](#)

Does your organization's right hand and left hand know what the other is doing? Do you know how to effectively weigh in when a policy decision makes your work more difficult? Is there a clear way to self-correct when a policy yields poorer results than expected?

[Sociocracy](#) (also known as dynamic governance) is an approach to decision-making, governance, and project management in which people at all organizational levels create policies that govern their own work. Communication flows bottom-up as well as top-down, and decision-making is transparent and inclusive.



In this experiential workshop, you will learn how to run more effective meetings. You will also learn how to provide stakeholders with a clear communication channel to make sure policy decisions support their work toward the organization's aim(s).

"Watching a group of people in the same business with differences of opinion make decisions they all agree to in 15-20 minutes is a powerful thing. After seeing that, new people will want to learn it." –Joe Garrison, Co-Owner, Blue Scorcher Bakery & Cafe, a worker co-operative using Sociocracy since 2012, Astoria, Oregon.

Sociocracy

- Frees up creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurial spirit.
- Reduces tensions around power.
- Streamlines decision-making, generates more productive and enjoyable meetings, and fosters coordination among stakeholders.
- Increases individual and collective engagement, commitment, and initiative.

Organizations of all kinds and sizes use Sociocracy – from three-person startups to companies of hundreds or even thousands. Cooperatives in several countries use Sociocracy, and it fits well with Cooperative Principles.

Here is what you will learn at this workshop:

- A complement to the traditional hierarchical organizational structure, to enable communication and alignment among all stakeholders;
- The difference between a policy meeting and an operations meeting;
- A simple technique for any meeting so that all voices are heard;
- A 3-part process to untangle any complex issue, craft a proposal, and make a decision;
- A 5-step process to select people for jobs and roles, in a way that builds trust, confidence, and accountability.

At the end of the workshop you will know whether sociocracy is right for your organization, and will have new tools you can use immediately.

What do Sociocracy Users Say about it?

Everyone Empowered

"We adopted sociocracy and all of a sudden there is a room full of empowered people helping make decisions. People feel different. I'd say that at the end of 100% of our circle meetings – where we set policy – everyone says, 'My goodness. I feel so much more energized.' We have fewer meetings over time as we've implemented sociocracy, the decisions are better, and the follow-through is better because everyone's on board." –Paul Kervick, Outreach Coordinator and Board Member, Living Well Residential Care Home & Assisted Living, Bristol, Vermont, using Sociocracy since 2004.

New Leaders

"Partnership for Undergraduate Life Sciences Education (PULSE) is a community of life science faculty leaders that is using sociocracy to function better as an organization. We help undergraduate life sciences departments at colleges and universities across the U.S. develop programs that are inclusive and student-centered by promoting the use of evidence-based teaching and learning practices. Using sociocracy has allowed us to readily modify our organizational structure as our needs have changed, and has improved the efficiency, effectiveness, and inclusiveness of our (primarily virtual) meetings. Since adopting sociocracy we have moved forward quickly on developing and implementing programs, developed new leaders, added members, obtained additional funding, and incorporated as a 501c3 nonprofit." --Professor Kathryn G. Miller, Ph.D., President of PULSE, using Sociocracy since 2014.

Gratifying Meetings

"After 1½ years [of using sociocracy meeting formats in our Ordination Program], I cannot imagine going back. Our meetings are less contentious. Everyone gets a chance to say their piece and to listen. We are making more decisions and getting so much more done, and that's gratifying. It's been a joy to achieve this level of cooperation." –Rabbi Leila Gal Berner, Dean of Students of the ALEPH (Alliance for Jewish Renewal) Ordination Program

Workshop Leader



Sheella Mierson, a founding member of [The Sociocracy Consulting Group](#), helps organizations implement Sociocracy in support of their strategic goals, and to create adaptive and effective organizations where all members' voices matter. In addition to being a Sociocracy Consultant, she is a Certified Facilitator for the [Blueprint of We Collaboration Process](#), used to build trust, creativity, effortlessness, and resilience in [relationships](#).

Sheella draws on broad experience as a teacher, business trainer, facilitator, and organizational consultant. Initially trained as a biophysicist, she became skilled at fostering collaborative teamwork in both research and classroom environments and has published articles on highly interactive methods of teaching in academic and business settings. After a career in science, she shifted from laboratory research to the people skills that deeply impact the outcomes of scientific ventures. Sheella incorporated Sociocracy into her consulting practice as the most effective method for making decisions and for creating cultures that support strong collaborative skills. She has worked with clients across several continents in the pharmaceutical, insurance, financial, apparel, service, and health care industries, as well as in education, government, and the nonprofit sector.

Sheella's interest in cooperatives started in childhood. In fact, she credits early involvement with cooperatives for some of her interest in creating organizations where all voices matter.