

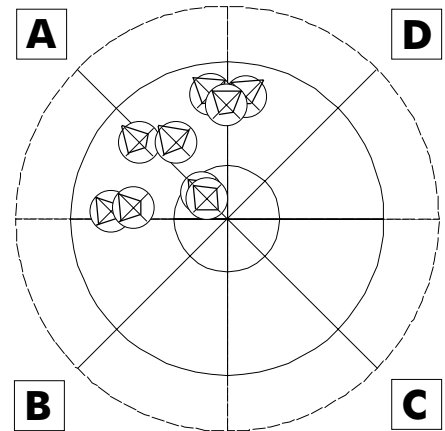
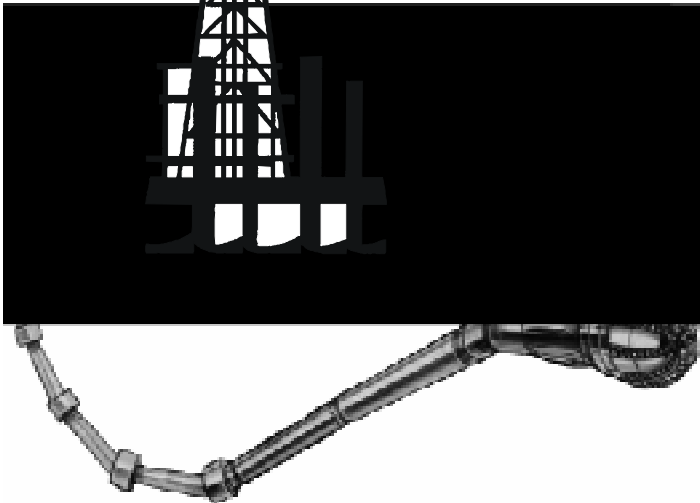


## Off Shore Oil Exploration Project.

**Company:** Shell Oil

**Contributors:** Ned Herrmann and Ann Herrmann-Nehdi

**The challenge:** The case involves a team of world level experts brought together to develop a billion dollar proposal to design a superior offshore rig and drilling method to optimize the deep water oil exploration process.



### Purpose:

Assemble a team of world class experts in each of the technical phases of offshore drilling that would combine their expertise synergistically in order to create the optimum drilling process.

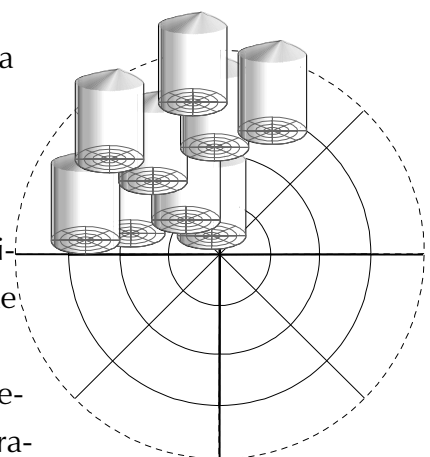
### Existing Conditions:

The experts chosen were so skilled in their own narrow area expertise that they could neither relate nor communicate with other team members. For example, the drilling expert was unable to work effectively with the offshore platform expert. Their expertise was so deep and narrow that it was in essence a "silo" that was impenetrable from adjacent silos of expertise. This group of world class experts was as ineffective as a classroom "team" of kindergarten students.

### Desired outcomes:

Short term: Overcome the barriers between inter-expert communication and technology sharing so that technical synergy could take place in the design of the specific oil exploration proposal.

Long term: Increase team effectiveness to the level needed to develop the proposal, win the contract and implement the oil exploration project successfully.



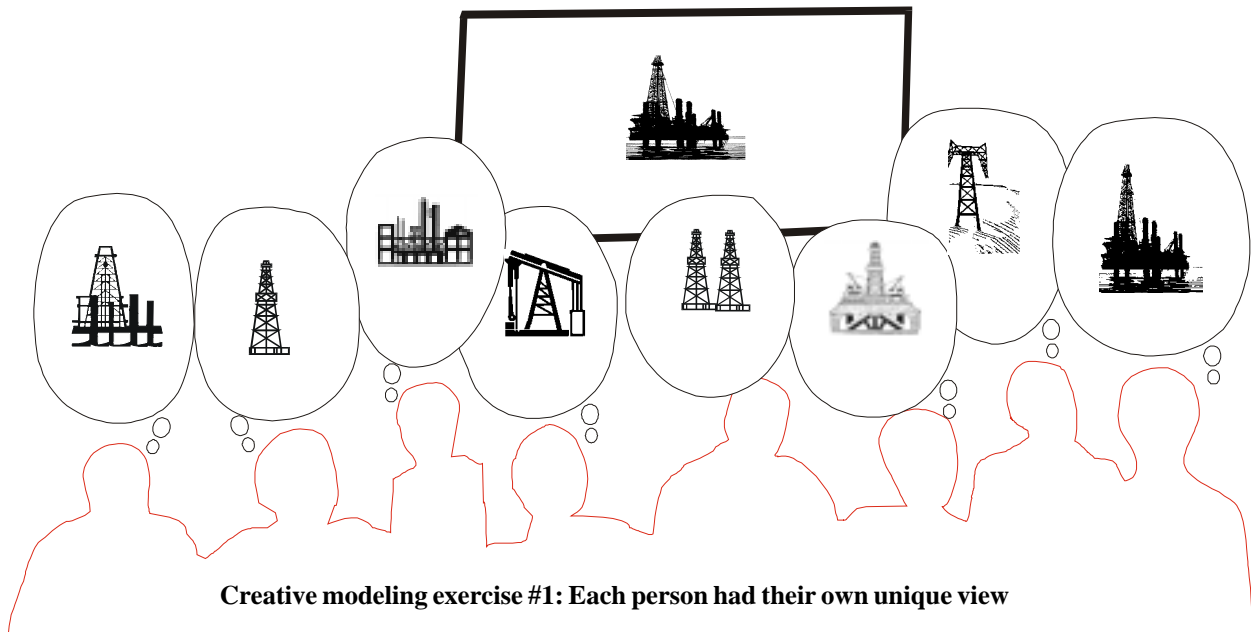
"Silos" of expertise

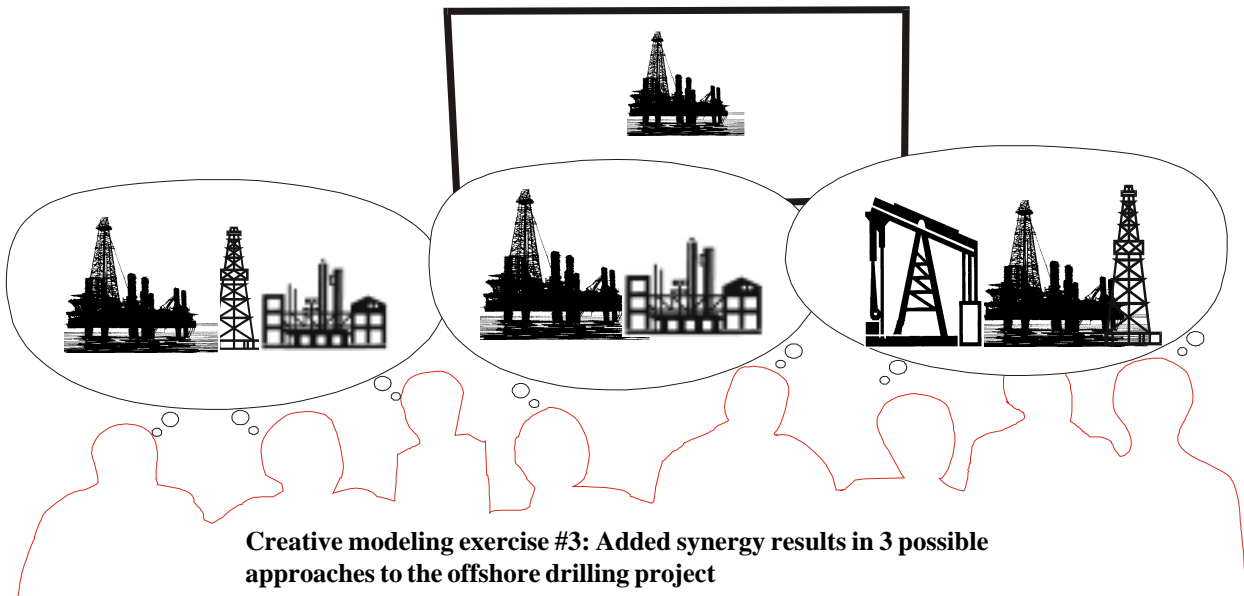
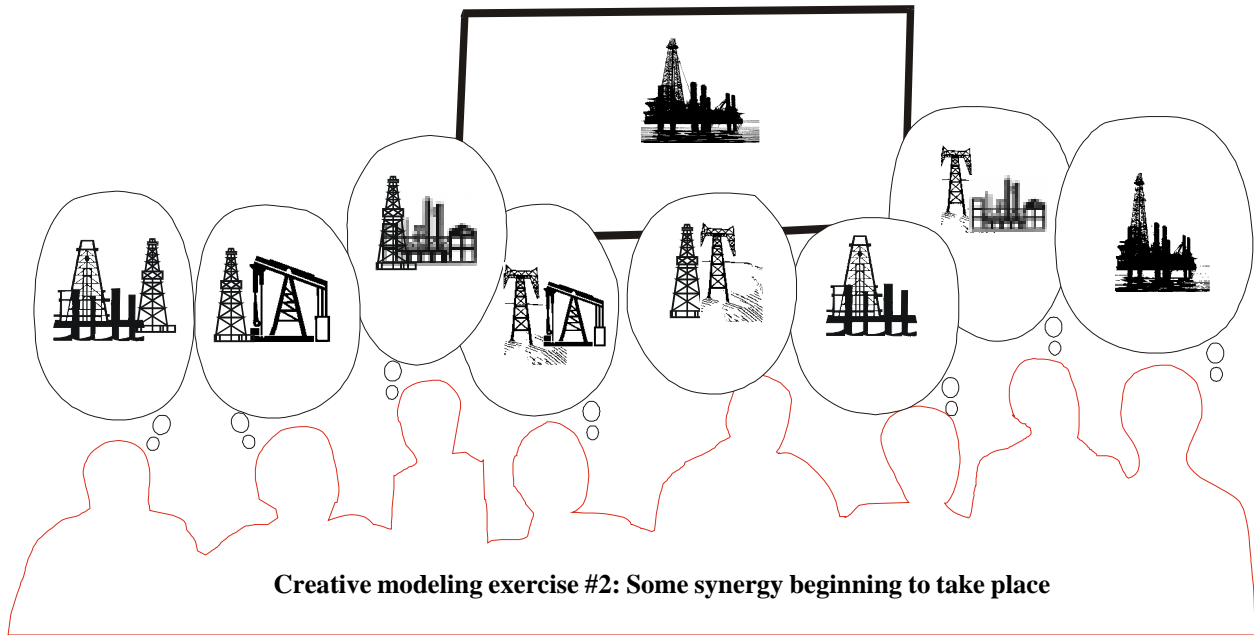
**Whole Brain intervention methods, processes and strategies:**

The team along with the General Manager agreed to a four-day creative process workshop held in the Herrmann International Learning Center in Lake Lure. Although Ann Herrmann-Nehdi and I had been briefed on the purpose and existing conditions, we were shocked by the reality of the team's dysfunction. Since all of the team members were technically competent and trained in such fields as experimental Engineering, Chemistry, Geology and Physics, we focused a lot of the workshop design on bridging the gap between the technologies through three dimensional model making an application of a wide variety of creative processes. For example, each member of the team states the problem situation in terms of his own technology and passes this written statement to the next person who annotates it and passes it to the next person. In less than an hour it became evident that there were major technical barriers between the individual areas of expertise. Team members saw the problem very differently and were unable to relate to solutions based on technologies other than their own.

A key exercise in resolving these differences was a model making activity that required each team member to build a three dimensional model of the entire system from the perspective of that person's specialized area of expertise. The first pass of this model making exercise produced a dozen extremely different approaches to the same problem. Each team member had worked independently and was required to describe the rationale for his approach and how it worked. This resulted in total chaos, but a number of learnings emerged. When the exercise was repeated, synergy began to emerge. Enough progress was made in this step to combine several technologies, and by trying a third pass, we ended up with three different, but workable models of the entire offshore drilling process.

At this point we turned the process over to the General Manager who spent the final two hours of





the workshop attempting to integrate the best of the three different approaches into one workable proposal.

### Summary of outcomes:

The team had moved from an inability to communicate with each other to a group of experts who could at least share their expertise and in some cases begin to combine their narrow domains into more of a synthesized whole. Although the team had made significant progress they were not yet ready to move into the final phases of design.

**Optimizing the results:**

Short term: While many of the communications barriers had been broken through, many others had not. The team members were still reluctant to move from their narrow focus into a multi disciplined approach to the design task. Part of the workshop design was to equip each team member with some continuing tools to apply to their own development. The most important coaching was directed by the General Manager who had several months of online, onsite developmental time before the full scale project was launched.

Long term: Six months after the team left the Learning Center we received a message indicating that the team had finally jelled and the project was fully under way. It looked like a winner.

**Measurement criteria applied:**



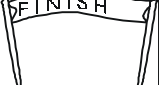

The four quadrant success measurement process provides up to 100 points to indicate the level of success attained in each of the four different aspects of the project. The "Success Measurement" results are as follows:

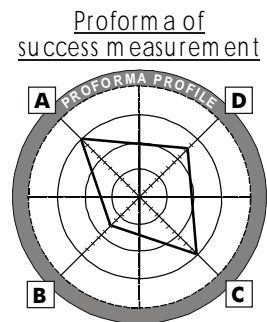
A quadrant: Technical solution ultimately achieved.

B quadrant: Implementation required six additional months

C quadrant: The experts learned how to communicate with each other.

D quadrant: Strong synergy and creativity ultimately took place.

Metaphors		Success measurement points	
A 	D 	A 100	D 85
B 	C 	B 50	C 100



**Other outcomes:**

Since this was the second major team project for this client, its success added to our growing track record which would, at some point in the future, help qualify Herrmann International for resolving other significant corporate problems.