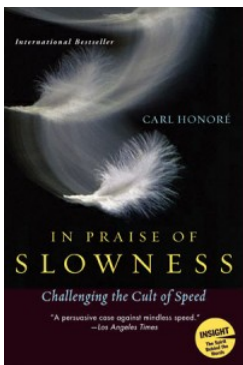


# “In Praise of Slowness” Discussion Tool

## Objective

- To enhance the Social Sustainability of workplace cultures.
- To create greater dialogue and connection with co-workers around the principles of sustainability.

## Background Information



Our work as Green+Leaders is not only about encouraging people to adopt one-off behaviours like turning off lights or recycling properly, but also to create deeper conversations about sustainability and how we can create community where we work.

Carl Honore’s “In Praise of SLOWNESS” talks about how the West’s emphasis on speed erodes health, productivity and quality of life. We could also argue that speeding through life is not only unsustainable for ourselves but also for our planet. When we’re always in a rush, we tend to create more waste.

This 20-minute TED Talk will help the group ground themselves in the concept of ‘SLOW’. You will then lead them in a thoughtful discussion to help synthesize their learning and take it forward into the workplace, home and/or community.

Remember, not everyone has to agree with what is presented in the video and the discussion should be based on the following working assumptions\*:

- *Everyone has wisdom*
- *We need everyone’s wisdom for the wisest result*
- *There are no wrong answers*
- *The whole is greater than the sum of its parts*
- *Everyone will hear others and be heard*

You may wish to write these assumptions on a whiteboard or read them out to people at the start of the session.

## Steps

### Step 1:

Organize a time for your team to spend about 45 minutes together. It might be that you have a special meeting or do a lunch n’ learn.

### Step 2:

You can access the talk through TED Talk; [http://www.ted.com/talks/carl\\_honore\\_praises\\_slowness.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/carl_honore_praises_slowness.html) or on You Tube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UhXiHJ8vfuk>. The easiest would be to watch the video streaming on the internet. If that’s not possible, then contact the Green+Leaders Program Coordinator to get a downloaded version (.wmv file) sent to you.

\*Group Facilitation, Focused Conversation Method. The Canadian Institute of Cultural Affairs, 2012.

## Steps

### Step 3:

On the day of your meeting, start by showing your participants the video. Before you start, you can introduce the video and set the context using the following speaking notes or your own:

- This is a 20 minute video that looks at how speeding through life can affect our health, productivity and quality of life
- As you know, I'm part of the Green+Leaders program that focuses on bringing sustainability into the workplace
- An important part of this work is creating connections with the people I work with and inspiring a culture of openness and dialogue about the issues we are facing
- This video gives us permission to take some time to reflect on our own pace in life and how we might modify it to create more mindfulness and presence

### Step 4:

Once the video has concluded, lead the group in a 20 minute discussion using the ToP© Focused Conversation Method. This method asks a series of questions in a natural order (using the same sequence the brain uses to process information).

Questions:

- Objective: What stood out for you that Carl said?**
- Reflective: How do you want to work and live, in terms of speed?**
- Interpretive: What can we do to integrate SLOW into our lives at work and at home?**
- Interpretive: How would this help or hinder the organization?**
- Decisional: What are our next steps?**

If you have a large group (more than 12) then consider breaking people into small groups for the discussion. If you do this, make sure you ask each group to share a theme that emerged from their discussion with the larger group.

### Step 5:

Wrap-up the session by asking participants to share any final thoughts. You can also ask how you might, as a team, incorporate some of the principles of SLOW into the workplace.

## Evaluation

Share any outcomes that emerged from the meeting as well as anything you learned from this experience to Green+Leaders Program Coordinator at [angie.woo@fraserhealth.ca](mailto:angie.woo@fraserhealth.ca).