



Working Conference on
Authority, Organisation, Strategies
and Politics of Relatedness
(AOSPOR)
August 18-24, 2017



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Introduction

IIM Ahmedabad offers this Working Conference on "AOSPOR" as an opportunity for accelerated, immersive and experiential learning to harvest insights into management and to develop leadership skills for change that cannot be taught through lectures, case-studies or simulations. The primary purpose is building capabilities for strategy implementation and leadership challenges in a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous world.

Group Relations Conferences (also known as Working Conferences) were first offered by the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations, London in 1957 based on the work of Wilfred Bion who was born in India. The design and structure of Working Conferences have undergone many changes and innovations since then. Working Conferences have been offered in India in the IIM tradition since 1973. The processes in this 'temporary institution', designed for learning and co-created with the participating members, are similar to those with which they are familiar within their own and other organisations. What makes AOSPOR different and valuable is that experiences at these conferences become available for exploration, reflection and action in real time-by mobilising authority from personal and organisational roles for experiencing and studying transformations.

This Working Conference promotes the integration of intellectual capacity with emotional and cultural intelligence. It is an opportunity to examine different models of how groups, teams and organisations function and leadership styles. Our emphasis would be on connecting conscious agendas with unconscious dynamics and covert processes that lurk beneath the surface in organisations.



For Whom?

This Working Conference is for anyone interested in developing deeper understanding of managerial and leadership processes in organisations and developing skills to cope with covert processes. There is no requirement of any particular previous experience or knowledge. Willingness to learn from one's experience by participating in the events and processes of the conference is expected. Participants may come from business, professions, public systems, finance, politics, diplomacy, sports, mass media, government, local authorities, NGOs, health services, social care, education, consultancy, justice, systems, religious orders, agenda-based activisms, and environmental organisations. Previous IIMA conferences have drawn participation from all sectors, levels, career stages, and from across many countries in the world. The participant profile has included business leaders and team leaders of profit centres, HR professionals, government officials from IAS, IPS, etc. public sector managers, family business entrepreneurs, administrators, activists, educators, researchers, consultants, clinicians, professional service providers, scientists, health care professionals, bankers, IT practitioners, NGO leaders, etc.

Reflections of some previous AOSPOR participants...

- "An unforgettable journey in which I learnt to know myself and others so much more clearly already by the third day." (**IAS Officer, Government of India**)
- "The Working Conference made much more sense when I returned to my role in my organisation." (**Divisional Chief Executive, ITC Limited, Bangalore**)
- "I learnt in seven days what one may not learn even in a lifetime." (**Secretary, Antarnad Foundation**)
- "A rich learning experience about leadership and the exercise of authority in an institutional setting." (**Chief Executive, Multinational Business Firm, Singapore**)
- "Very insightful experience. A must at least once in one's life." (**Consultant & Executive Coach, Mumbai**)
- "Unbelievable that I learnt so much in so short a time... and impossible to share with anyone who hasn't experienced it." (**Entrepreneur, Ahmedabad**)
- "One of my most valuable learning experiences ever." (**HR Director, Bangalore**)
- "Wonderful opportunity to experience and understand unconscious processes in the functioning of groups and teams." (**Community Leader, Nagpur**)
- "This conference has made a huge difference to my perspectives... It has provided me with new lenses, besides increasing the power of my old ones!" (**Educator and Social Worker, North India**)
- "The insights were phenomenal. It was wonderful to be in the conference." (**Senior Executive, Petrolube, Tanzania**)

- “The working conference helped me understand so many different perspectives about my work.” **(Team Leader, Private Healthcare Services, Malaysia)**
- “I am able to connect better with my colleagues on professional differences; even my wife says I have changed a bit of late!” **(Senior Executive, NCDEX)**
- “I learnt how things can happen when power, authority and relatedness are understood.” **(Principal Scientist, R&D Centre, India)**
- “An excellent learning forum about self and organisation.” **(Vice-president, IT Industry, Mumbai)**
- “Great value addition in understanding what happens in groups, teams and organisations. The best parts of the conference were the insights it provided into how the ‘politics of relatedness’ governs us beyond our awareness.” **(Zonal Head, Lal PathLabs)**
- “I developed skills to understand the subtle nature of covert processes and have become a better leader, and a better human being.” **(General Manager, Finance, Public Sector Corporation)**
- “The conference brought me lots of enriching insights.” **(Eye Surgeon and Medical Director, Speciality Hospital)**
- “A very valuable experience... My colleagues at work have remarked on changes they have noticed in the way I think and act.” **(Chief Manager, South Eastern Coalfields)**
- “This conference will remain in my memory as one of the most significant experiences. It made me aware of the unconscious processes that affect us in organisations.” **(CFO, Kancor Ingredients)**
- “This was a marvellous journey exploring sources of authority and boundaries in organisations.” **(Diocese Administrator, Church of North India).**

What Makes This Working Conference Unique?

This Working Conference has as its theme ‘Authority, Organisation, Strategies and Politics of Relatedness’. The Conference provides a structured context of different systems and sub-systems in which to explore the dynamics of power, leadership, authority, change, dissent, collaboration and transformation as they arise and unfold.

Benefits to organisations include increased capacity to lead and manage in rapidly changing and complex environments.



This Working Conference offers unique opportunities for understanding and exploring authority relations, organisational relationships and strategic relatedness between organisational parts and wholes. How persons, groups and organisations develop and use dynamic latent capabilities for effective functioning in intra-group and inter-group interfaces can make all the difference between sustainable performance and stalled growth.

Participants will have opportunities to develop strategic thinking about management processes in groups and organisations. Together with conference staff, participating members can experientially understand ‘politics of relatedness’ and leadership phenomena through exercise of authority and its delegation; examine and develop their own capacities to lead; diagnose problems of organisational functioning in a variety of settings; and, learn to work through problems of resistance to change.

Participants experience and understand how they influence or are influenced by others and the ensuing consequences-intended or unintended, overt or covert. Thereby, they develop skills and sharpen their insights into how strategies take shape when groups function; how phenomena such as alliance and coalition formation affect the understanding of the group, by the group; and how it shapes motives and power bases; how competition, rivalry and exploration of what lies beyond immediate awareness unravel ‘pictures of relatedness’ that remain hidden in everyday interaction.

The lived experience of a Working Conference is vividly different from simulations or management games because there is no contrivance or manipulation towards possibilities pre-conceived by the staff. The role of the staff is to understand and share from their roles what they hypothesise is happening in the conference institution. The staff does not assume any monopoly of the truth. The staff creates learning opportunities by providing boundaries and consultations to various events. The staff to member ratio is high, about 1:4.

The diversity and talents of members and staff are expected to contribute to the scope and richness of the Conference experience. Experiences are personal, and takeaway learning is private. Hence these may differ from one participant to another. In this sense, participants have the responsibility for their own learning. If experiential learning and a pedagogy of learning that respects your own authority appeals to you, this Conference is likely to be of immense value to you. To integrate learning and help transfer it to organisational roles and contexts, appropriate events are built into the Conference design.

Participants take part in a number of pre-designed events such as small study groups, large study groups, praxis of inter-group, application groups, review groups, and harmony sensing matrix. They have opportunities to work with different tasks, to be in different roles and to explore the extent and limits of their personal authority. A prospectus containing more details will be provided to participating members of the Conference. The prospectus will have detailed event and session structure describing the primary tasks of the different events. A package of recommended readings will also be provided.

Learning Aims

- To co-create a 'temporary institution' where staff and members take up roles to study the development and exercise of authority, evolution of organisational logic and the discovery and invention of strategies from their lived experience in roles within the Conference institution.
- To enable the study of intra-group and inter-group dynamics and institutional relations that develop within the conference as an organisation and understand connections of organisations to their social, political and economic environments.
- To facilitate opportunities for exploring the foundational processes of linking, connecting, relating, and networking as members of work groups concerned with influencing others and being influenced in the course of formulating and implementing strategies.
- To discover underlying groups, organisational and social dynamics and the interplay between tradition and change, stability and innovation, creativity and harmony that may, at times, be beyond immediate awareness and to formulate "working hypotheses" about covert processes beyond awareness.
- To reflect on insights and learning that arises from the perspective of building bridges with organisational roles to which members return after the Working Conference with a view to applying roles taken up within the conference to one's own organisations and networks.

The Primary Task

The nature and core purpose of an organisation can be designed, discovered or located in a primary task. The Primary Task of this Working Conference is: *To explore the lived experience of roles through inter-personal, intra-group, inter-group and institutional relations that develop and shape the possibilities of transformation, pursuit of strategies and politics of relatedness within the organisational life of this conference as an institution.*

Concepts Fundamental to the Working Conference

The word "conference" is used to emphasize the process of "conferring" in direct experience through conversations, dialogues and explorations that can bring together strands of thinking or give rise to new thoughts, or articulate unthought thoughts or express unthought knowns.

Authority is the source of choices we make (or do not make), actions we take (or do not take), people we relate with, directions we give ourselves, and roles taken up. Authority is the springboard for leadership and its exercise legitimises roles in intra-group and inter-group relations.

Organisation enables roles to enmesh and collectively engage with valued tasks with reference to boundaries of task, technology, time, space, sentience and understanding. Organisations are structures of convenience designed to contain systems and processes.

Strategies may be regarded as grand designs and patterns we create, discover or influence through our thinking, feeling and actions - consciously and unconsciously. The Working Conference provides spaces in which strategies may be formulated and tested in intra-group and inter-group interactions, and also in the institution as a whole.

'Politics of relatedness' arises from how we work with organisational boundary conditions such as task, technology, time, space, sentience and understanding for linkages within, and regulating flows of resources and responses across such boundaries. Understanding politics of relatedness ('relatedness' connotes togetherness as a group or other collectivity beyond relationships) enables us to function more effectively in complex systems where there are several stakeholders trying to influence each other. The notion "pictures of relatedness" was developed by Pierre Turquet as an institutional stepping-stone to portray the behavioural characteristic of cementing that groups exhibit beyond inter-personal relationships.

Conference Director

Ajeet N. Mathur, Ph.D.

Professor in Strategy and International Business, Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad; Affiliate Life Member, Indian Psychoanalytical Society; Fellow, Sumedhas Academy of Human Context, Yoga Shikshak, Bihar School of Yoga, and Member of the Governing Board of the Global Foundation for Integrating Spirituality and Organisational Leadership (ISOL).

Conference Staff

The Conference Staff will be invited from among the following who have accepted to be on the Staff: Jan Baker, Sanjay Doctor, Bhavana Issar, Ajeet N. Mathur, Richard Morgan-Jones, Ashok Malhotra, Samar Singh, Maya Swaminadhan, Monica Velarde-Lazarte, Suman Verma and Nicola Wreford-Howard.





Venue, Date and Accommodation

Venue: Hotel Clarks Amer, Jaipur (a 5* Hotel and Convention Centre - see pictures above).

Jaipur is located in Rajasthan about mid-way between Delhi and Ahmedabad and is well connected for flights, rail and road travel. Members are required to arrive and register at the venue **between 10 a.m. and 11:45 a.m. on August 18, 2017** and collect the Conference Kit. The Conference will begin at **2.00 p.m. on Friday, August 18, 2017** in an Opening Plenary. It will end on **Thursday, August 24, 2017**.

Departures can be planned for **any time after 3 p.m. on August 24, 2017**. The fee, payable in advance, includes tuition fee, charges for reading materials, and room (on single occupancy basis) and board from **August 18, 2017 (10 a.m) until August 24, 2017 (4 p.m.)** We respect the privacy and autonomy participants need with single room accommodation for living to reflect on and work with the conference experience without dyadic entanglement of twin sharing accommodation.

Practical Arrangements

A maximum of 48 places are available at this Working Conference. Hence we advise that you send your nominations with fees sufficiently early to avoid any disappointment. If places are available, nominations may be accepted until **16:00 (Indian Standard Time) on June 16, 2017**. Every nomination will be acknowledged when received. Acceptance is not automatic.

Nominations received without fees are not considered.

Fee (including accommodation and all meals)

For international participants

US\$: US\$3000 plus 15% service tax, amounting to US\$3450.

EUROS: €2600 plus 15% service tax, amounting to €2990.

Early Bird Discounted Fees (for nominations received by April 30, 2017)

US\$: US\$ 2790 plus 15% service tax, amounting to US\$ 3209.

EUROS: €2418 plus 15% service tax, amounting to €2781.

For Participants from India

RUPEES: INR 172,000 plus 15% service tax, amounting to INR 197,800.

Early Bird Discounted Fees (for nominations received by April 30, 2017)

RUPEES: INR 159,960 plus 15% service tax, amounting to INR 183,957.

Bursaries

A few places at half-fee are available if neither the member nor the organisation can afford a full fee. Applications for these places should reach the Pre-Conference Administrator by April 30, 2017, with reasons for seeking the reduced fee.

Nomination forms, together with the Fees, are to be sent to:

Ms. Suman Verma

Pre-Conference Administrator (AOSPOR 2017)

Executive Education Indian Institute of Management
Ahmedabad 380 015 • **Phone:** +91 79 6632 4461
Mobile: +91-92277 93191 • **Fax:** +91-79-2630 0352
Email: sumanv@iima.ac.in

Fee can also be paid through Electronic Fund Transfer. The details are:

1. For credit to Savings Bank Account Number: 9369EEP, YES Bank, Limited, C.G. Road Branch, Ahmedabad (IFSC: YESB0000007, SWIFT Code: YESBINBB)
2. Name of Remitter: (Please mention the name of the sponsoring organisation)
3. Purpose of Remittance: **AOSPOR 2017**
4. IIMA Permanent Account Number (PAN): AAAT11247F

Please inform us the complete transaction details so that we can connect the same.

Cancellation Policy

Cancellations (with refund of fee) are permissible until June 15, 2017.

Substitutions of nominees can be made until August 1, 2017.

Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA)

IIMA was set up by the Government of India in collaboration with the Government of Gujarat and Indian industry as an autonomous institution in 1961. The Institute provides education, training, consulting and research facilities in management.

Major Programmes Offered by IIMA

- Two-Year Post-Graduate Programme in Management (equivalent to MBA)
- Two-Year Post-Graduate Programme in Food and Agribusiness Management (equivalent to MBA)
- Fellow Programme in Management (equivalent to Ph.D.)
- One-year Post-Graduate Programme in Management for Executives
- Executive Education Programmes (EEP) for industry, business, agricultural and rural sectors, and public systems covering education, health, transport and population
- Faculty Development Programme for teachers in universities and colleges

The Institute has about 97 faculty members working in the following management areas and sectors:

Disciplinary Areas and Groups

- Business Policy
- Communications
- Economics
- Finance and Accounting
- Human Resource Management
- Information Systems
- Marketing
- Organisational Behaviour
- Production and Quantitative Methods
- Public Systems Group

Interdisciplinary Centres

- Centre for Gender Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity
- Centre for Innovation, Incubation and Entrepreneurship
- Centre for Infrastructure Policy and Regulation
- Centre for Management in Agriculture
- Centre for Management of Health Services
- Centre for Retailing
- IIMA-Idea Telecom Centre of Excellence
- India Gold Policy Centre
- Insurance Research Centre
- Ravi J. Matthai Centre for Educational Innovation



कार्यकारी शिक्षा कार्यक्रम
भारतीय प्रबंध संस्थान अहमदाबाद

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