
Are You Being Delphied?

- *United Nations Global Strait Jacket* (pp. 355 - 357) by Joan Veon

The Rand Corporation in the early 1960s developed the Delphi technique for the purpose of maneuvering segments of the public into accepting predetermined government policies.

In the 1970s and '80s, it was ideally used to convince land owners of the merits of accepting joining and general plan maps. Now it is being employed to persuade the public to accept outcome-based education and the licensing of all employees, via endorsements in the Certificate of Initial Mastery (CIM) and Certificate of Advanced Mastery (CAM) programs, a.k.a. school-to-work.

The goal of the Delphi technique is to lead a targeted group of people to a predetermined outcome, while giving the illusion of taking public input and under the pretext of being accountable to the public. For the Delphi to work, it is critical that the targeted group be kept away from knowledgeable people who could lead them away from the Delphier's predetermined outcome.

One variation on the Delphi technique is to use a series of meetings. The attendees are often given a number or a colored card when they enter the room, to determine at which table they are to sit. The purpose of this is to break up the groups of potentially knowledgeable people who arrive together so that they will be sitting with strangers and therefore be subdued.

Typically, at each table is a facilitator, someone who will know which way to help "steer" the group. Usually the people at each table are instructed to answer among themselves some of the questions and arrive at a table consensus. Someone is chosen to speak for the table, most of the time it is the person who has been secretly pre-briefed about the desired Delphi outcome. The table spokesperson is the only one allowed to address the podium and the others have little opportunity to address the podium or the crowd directly.

Anyone knowledgeable enough, or brave enough, to speak out in opposition will not be welcomed. Often they are told from the podium, "We don't have time to discuss that now," or "We discussed that on another date," or "We can discuss that after the meeting." They will attempt to quiet, isolate, and discredit dissenters. After attending the Delphi meeting, participants may feel uneasy that they are in disagreement with the apparent majority. The Delphi technique is often successful in bluffing people into submission. Don't let them succeed. Call their bluff.

The Delphi technique often uses a series of surveys to bring about "consensus." The surveys are promoted as information gathering regarding the wishes of the targeted public, but in reality they are designed to manipulate the desired outcome. The survey will sometimes use a grading like, "agree all of the time," "agree most of the time," "agree some of the time," "agree not much," "agree never." Or, the survey grading will ask the respondents to use ratings like "most important," "moderately important," "least important."

The questions are typically "loaded" questions. An example is the question asked of Oregon teachers on a Delphi technique survey: "Do you agree or disagree that the following elements of H.B. 3565 [Oregon's Education Act for the 21st Century] will lead to improved student learning

if implemented?" The survey listed such items for the teachers to agree or disagree with; "site councils," "increased accountability for school site and districts," "full funding for preschool programs to enable all students to enter school ready to learn," "extended school year," "certificate of initial mastery," etc. The question is patently "loaded." For example, site councils are not charged with improving student learning. Their function is to implement the state law, dole out professional development courses and money to selected teachers, and apply for grants from foundations and the federal government. For the teachers to answer, "agree" or "disagree", that the site councils will lead to improved student learning is misdirecting the respondent.

The Delphi surveys serve to "educate" the people taking the survey. After the first survey is taken, the respondents are given an analysis and told that most people agreed or somewhat agreed on the predetermined outcome. Then usually they are given another survey and asked if they can be flexible and try to rethink the "few remaining" areas of disagreement. When the series of surveys are accomplished, the respondents are told that the majority of respondents achieved "consensus" with whatever direction the pollers wanted in the first place.

These techniques were developed decades ago. The Rand Corporation has more recently been developing games that groups of business people, site council members, organizations, etc., can use to help "sell" people on collectivism, consensus vs. majority rule, etc.

Never, ever compromise when it comes to "right and wrong." With the right attitude you shouldn't care what people think, as long as you are standing up for what is right. Accept persecution gratefully.