



# The McKergow Quarterly

News from Mark McKergow and the Centre for Solutions Focus at Work

ISSUE 1 | Autumn 2011

## Welcome to the McKergow Quarterly

**Our first edition celebrates our move to London, as well as bringing you news of the latest ideas, work and events with Mark McKergow and sfwork – the Centre for Solutions Focus at Work.**

The title of the publication is, of course, a deliberate poke at the famous McKinsey Quarterly. While we may not be able (yet) to match the scope and reach of that famous title, we aim to bring you the latest developments in the field of Solutions Focus – still way ahead of the big consulting firms.

Appearing every three months, you'll be able to read about our practical tools, latest assignments, publications, events, customers and how to join in with us in learning and applying SF ideas to 'building progress rapidly in tough situations'

## First online SF Business Professional course an amazing success – sign up now for October

Thirteen intrepid coaches, consultants and managers joined Mark McKergow on the first online SF Professional course this summer. Running online in conjunction with the University of Milwaukee Wisconsin (with its

historic links to Steve de Shazer and Insoo Kim Berg), the programme featured sixteen weeks of readings, discussions, exercises, coaching practice and a project – just like Mark's world-famous face to face courses.



The participants loved the mix of interaction, reflection, practice and theory, all facilitated by Mark himself. The projects ranged from team events to strategic planning, and restorative justice to re-thinking SF teaching. Participant came from all five continents – some comments included:

*"My confidence in using SF in organization setting has moved up significantly. I feel that I have all the skills and tools to handle assignments in demanding situations such as team coaching and organizational consulting."*

*"The impact with clients who I have in the past experienced some sense of "stuckness" has been amazing. I have seen a rise in energy and commitment by the client to take action."*

*"I was surprised on at least 20 different occasions, I discovered new materials and writings that I wouldn't otherwise have done, discovered 6 new training*

## Where's Mark?

Upcoming events around the world featuring Mark McKergow and members of the sfwork team

### ■ SF Coaching Masterclass

Singapore: 6 September 2011  
[www.sf-academy.com](http://www.sf-academy.com)

### ■ SF coaching 2-day training

Sydney, Australia: 12-13 September 2011  
[www.growthcoaching.com.au](http://www.growthcoaching.com.au)

### ■ SF Masterclass

Sydney, Australia:  
14 September 2011  
[www.growthcoaching.com.au](http://www.growthcoaching.com.au)

### ■ Online SF Business Professional

Online: Starts 23 October 2011  
Full details and booking

### ■ SFCT Trainer's conference

Bad Soden, Germany: 28-29 October 2011  
[www.asfct.org/trainer.php](http://www.asfct.org/trainer.php)

### ■ SF for multi-cultural virtual teams

Budapest, Hungary: 17-18 November 2011  
More...

### ■ Coaching At Work 'Beyond Frontiers' conference

London, UK: 23 November 2011  
[tinyurl.com/3otv77w](http://tinyurl.com/3otv77w).

### ■ SF coaching training

Prague, Czech Republic: 23-24 March 2012  
Contact Leos Zatloukal,  
[leos.zatloukal@centrum.cz](mailto:leos.zatloukal@centrum.cz)

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*exercises, I developed some of my own too."*

*"I have better knowledge and understanding of SF, both theoretical and practical, feel more confident in using the SF approach. Work seems less "heavy" when using SF, spending less time talking about problems"*

The next course starts on 23 October 2011, and there are still places available. Full details are available at

<http://www4.uwm.edu/sce/course.cfm?id=22222>. Save \$300 by registering before 1 October 2011!

## Practical tools for tough times

Our new website (coming soon at [www.sfwork.com](http://www.sfwork.com)) will showcase the amazing sets of tools created by Mark and his colleagues over the years. All these are ways to put the positive power of Solutions Focus into action in particular situations, and are original to sfwork.

- Six Solutions Tools – as featured in The Solutions Focus book
- OSKAR coaching – ideal for managers who coach
- MAGIC negotiations – getting better results AND relationships quickly
- iFLOW personal effectiveness – deliver more, stress less!
- PARTNER conflict management – resolve conflicts as they happen
- Nine Keys to Accelerated Learning – tools for trainers, whatever the subject

All these are proven in the heat of the real world. We can help you to use them, help you learn them, or even use them with your organisation.

## We're coming to Australia again!

Mark and Jenny will be in Sydney in early September 2011 to run a two day coaching course (12-13 September) and a one day SF masterclass (14 September). We are working in partnership with John Campbell and *growth coaching international*, and you can get full details at <http://www.growthcoaching.com.au>.

We're also looking forward to meeting up again with Tony Grant in Sydney. Tony is one of the leading coaching psychologists using SF and positive psychology ideas, and has published many papers. He writes about our visit:

*"Mark McKergow is one of the key figures in contemporary solution-focused work. If your interest is coaching, consulting or personal change Mark's solution-focused approach will resonate for you. Highly recommended."*

**Anthony M Grant PhD. Director of the Coaching Psychology Unit, University of Sydney**

We also have events coming up in Singapore, Germany, Hungary, the Czech Republic and even London! See the 'Where's Mark' section below for details.

## Leading Conversations – Mark interviewed by Cheryl Esposito



Leading Conversations Radio features weekly conversations introduced by Cheryl Esposito with leadership thinkers, writers and developers. Mark's three part interview covers many topics including Solutions Focus, the implications of rutenso thinking (change is happening all the time), and the leader as host metaphor. Mark also offers his thoughts, as a recovering nuclear power station physicist, on the incidents in Japan (recorded a few days after the tsunami). Tune in now to hear how Mark's work connects with Cheryl and her worldwide leadership audience. Listen via

<http://www.voiceamerica.com/episode/52934/solutions-no-problem-the-simple-way-to-positive-change> .

## The Quarterly Case: Solution-building with team conflict

Each issue will bring news of some real work we've been doing using SF ideas. This first issue describes some work Mark did in Scandinavia earlier this year with a unit from a household-name multinational.

The situation was one of a clash of approaches. The manager, a direct man with a track record of succeeding through direct communication in difficult parts of the world. The team, broadly Scandinavian, struggling with

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difficult market conditions and also valuing their participative and consensual approach. The result – one thing led to another, mutterings in the corridor turned towards outright complaint, and it seemed as if something had to give. The trade unions got involved and European HR heads began to think seriously about what to do.

Fortunately, someone thought about SF as a way of building progress in tough situations and got in touch with Mark. Some preparation led to a one-day workshop with everybody involved. With his usual combination of holding possibilities and a delicate touch, conclusions were reached that everyone wanted to carry out, and they all agreed to go on together. Even six months later, the progress continued.

The team manager wrote afterwards to say:

*“On behalf of the team, I would like to thank you for an exceptional day. It does not happen often that one can really sense the energy in a room. That was clearly the case during our Team Day. Your contribution was very important in bringing us all to this new level.”*

The European HR director, who was also present, said:

*“A very practical team workshop – the right flow of exercises leading to personal commitments, plenty of variety and mixing, good contact with the group beforehand, just the right amount of time taken. Thank you once more for your help and inspiration for me!*

We can help with YOUR tough situation – give us a call to see how, on +44 (0)8453 707145.

## TED Fellows feel the power of SF in New Orleans

### TED Fellows

Many of you will know of the wonderful TED organisation ([www.ted.com](http://www.ted.com)) with their high-octane conferences and free web-talks all focusing on ‘ideas worth spreading’. A lesser known feature of TED is the TED Fellows programme – support for brilliant young scientists, artists, activists and thinkers, often from the developing world. Each year some 1200 people apply for just 20 places on the Fellows programme, and you can see details of them at <http://www.ted.com/pages/fellows>.

One of the benefits of the Fellows programme is that Fellows can obtain a coach. This is called the SupportED program, and is run by Renee Freedman and RuthAnn Harmisch of the Harmisch Foundation. Mark is one of the coaches, and has been coaching a TED Fellow from Chile working in biodiversity science and street art (really!).

A new development in SupportED is the TED Fellows Collaboratorium. Thirteen Fellows gathered with around 50 coaches in New Orleans in April 2011. The format was one Fellow with about eight coaches for a day. Mark led the facilitation effort for the event - each group had a Facilitator, and also an Advocate to speak up for

the Fellow and what they wanted from the day. He managed to get lots of SF processes in, and many of the coaches commented on how useful it was.

The TED Fellows all contribute to a blog, and you can see a report from Jon Gosier about the event at <http://tedfellows.posterous.com/supported-success>. A wonderful way to spend a weekend, working with fantastic people and all in the convivial atmosphere of New Orleans too

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### ■ Online SF Business Professional

Online: Starts 23 October 2011

Our online SF Business Professional course with the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee (UWM) will run again over 16 weeks starting on October 23 2011, Places are limited to 20. It’s a great way for managers, coaches and consultants worldwide to work with Mark and learn SF the very best way possible.

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**October 2011**

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21st century productivity - use SF to achieve full potential in multi-cultural and virtual teams. Promoted with SoL Hungary. More...

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