

The Collaboratory Experiment

Wednesday, September 3, 10:00AM to 12:00PM and 2:00PM to 4:00PM

Location: [Impressionist](#) (4th Floor)

Facilitator: [David Coleman](#)

Location: The Collaboratory Experiment is hosted by the [Unconference](#)

Sponsor: Sponsored by [Mindjet](#)

Content: This experiment was born from my frustration in looking at collaborative tools at a booth in a trade show, and also learning about the tools through a demo, which removes all the social aspects. The idea of Collaboratory is to provide an environment in which you (and your team) can evaluate collaborative tools within a specific context and with the social interaction. I talked about my frustration and what I had come up with as a solution (Collaboratory) with Ismael, and he offered me some time at the Office 2.0 Conference.

The idea of Collaboratory is to create a scenario with roles and data. To create teams of people that will play through a (facilitated) scenario to better understand not only the collaborative tools they are using, but to see how the tools support the social dynamics of the team.

Because many collaborative tools are SaaS-based today, it is possible to just have each team at a table, where each person gets assigned a role and then looks at the data for that role (much like any other online multi-player game like Dungeons & Dragons or World of Warcraft). In this experiment we will have tables of 8 people, who will be joined by 2 virtual players (off site) to create a team of 10 people. Each person will have a laptop (with power

strips supplied) and a high speed Wi-Fi connection (provided by Swisscom). Those taking part in this experiment will have to register to the Office 2.0 Unconference, who will pass their e-mail addresses on to Collaborative Strategies (we are creating the scenario and facilitating the experiment) so that we can get you (free) subscriptions to the tools that will be involved in the scenario. That way, you will not have to go through the process of logging in to each tool as we use them in different parts of the scenario.

The scenario is one around crisis management for an ecological event. Each team's goal is to not only figure out how to deal with the disaster, but to determine (based on the data) if the event is natural or man-made, and if man-made what to do about it! The scenario is designed to be similar to business processes, but different enough so that participants can get into their roles and feel part of the team and the outcome. In past simulations, participants were able to migrate what they learned in the scenario over to the critical processes in their businesses.

The event is scripted to take about 2 hours to play through the scenario and give everyone a chance to use all of the different tools for their role and tasks. Each of the vendors that has a tool selected for the scenario will provide free subscriptions to all Collaboratory members for the duration of the event, and will also provide an "Angel" in person at the event to help with any technology snags that may arise.

Because this is a first time event, with a complex mix of technologies, Murphy's law applies! However, we will try to have as many resources as possible at the event to help out and make playing through the scenario as painless as possible. This experiment is a precursor to a possibly planned larger event (Spring 2009), so any feedback the participants can give us will be very helpful.