

Christina's Top 10 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE GROVE CONSULTANTS INTERNATIONAL



As a teacher and mentor in graphic recording and graphic facilitation... I often share my recommendations with mentees about other products and services on the market place. With the internet and our information society, I find myself being asked to act as a defacto info editor or agent (its gets a little overwhelming for new folks just entering our field so they like some trusted advice).

1054 Southgate Street, Suite 4
Victoria B.C. V8V 2Z2 Canada
www.shift-it-coach.com

1.310.295.1061 Direct
1.866.925.2351 Toll Free Phone/Fax

Some mentees are surprised with how enthusiastically I endorse and 'wax poetically' about so-called 'competitors'. There really are no 'competitors' in my mind. The demand for our unique skills, products and guidance is so great, that there is definitely plenty to go around. Different clients prefer different styles and approaches. I've found that an abundance attitude, rather than a scarcity one serves me best (and fits with my spiritual values).

One company that I recommend repeatedly is **The Grove Consultants International**, under the leadership of David Sibbet.

I worked for the Grove back in the 1990s for several years. Started as a grad school intern and eventually became an internal graphic recorder and co-trainer. While my work has deviated away from my Grove roots over the decade+ since, I will forever be indebted to David Sibbet for the pioneering thought/belief path he forged and the role model he was to me and many others of my generation in this field.

In my [trainings](#), and in my [one-to-one coaching](#) with developing graphic recorders and graphic facilitators, I consistently refer certain Grove products and services over and over again.

Grove's offerings have grown over the years, and some folks are confused about what would serve them best in their selection. So, for those who are interested, here are my top 10 Grove recommendations (ala David Letterman style) ... so you can find what I think are the real gems!

CHRISTINA'S TOP 10 "GROVE" PICKS:

Graphic Recording and Graphic Facilitation Recommendations from The Grove Consultants International's suite of products and services.

Number 10:

The Grove printed catalog. Its free, its beautifully done, and on the back cover, look for a 10% discount code you can use on most orders. Just call 'em up and ask them to send you one (1-800-49-GROVE). I hand them out at all of my trainings (helps you really get 'your head around' their products, unlike online).

However, here's another tip: enter my last name "Merkley" (no extra 'e' for those of you who think it rhymes with Berkeley ... its doesn't!) into their online shopping cart and get an even better discount, as you've been recommended by me (a Grove partner) you'll get 15% when you enter my name as a discount code.



Number 9:

[Charters markers](#). Grove's own custom design marker – it's a beaut! Gorgeous chisel tip. Solid colors. Bleed resistant. To do this work, you've gotta have the right tools, and off-the-shelf markers only get you so far. Treat yourself - you and your charts are worth it!

Number 8:



[Big, white, stickie notes](#). Large size (8"x6"). Great for doing cluster work with participants input, and doubles as a big 'correction' label too. I prefer the white ones, as they photograph better for reports, etc.

Number 7:

[Artist's tape](#). Good artist's tape is hard to find. Even though I'm up in Canada, I still order Grove's white artist tape for my posting needs. Its gentle on walls, yet tough enough to hold up the huge, wall size sheets of paper. Good stuff!



Number 6:



[The 'Fundamentals of Graphic Language' Practice book](#). A great little handbook that will teach you some of the basic shapes and drawing that are sprinkled throughout graphic recording and graphic facilitation work.

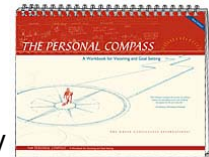
Number 5:



[The Facilitating Community Change book](#). I attract my fair share of mentees who work in community and city/region venues. I almost as a rule, I recommend this book to them. Co-created by Grove and their partners, Community Initiatives Consultancy (three community-change consultants with over 30+ years experience in over 300 communities) – it rocks!

Number 4:

[The Compass](#). Fan of my SHIFT-IT work? Looking for another visual coaching tool? Several of my clients have done both SHIFT-IT and The Compass (a self coaching product that Grove produces). If you are looking for a quick, rapid self-coaching tool in the visual medium – it might be right for you (not as meta-physical or as detailed as my stuff).



Number 3:

[Graphic Facilitation Series](#). I get a little confused about which book is which in Grove's 7 book facilitation series. However, you can't go wrong with ordering this duo: *The Principles of Facilitation* and *Best Practices for Facilitation*.

Number 2:

What's my second most favorite Grove recommendation? Their [Strategic Visioning training](#)! I love this process. I did an action research project using it for my thesis back in grad school. It's a Grove trademarked process, so its not appropriate for me to train others in how to do it – go to San Francisco to receive training in it directly from them. (*A tip: be sure to ask who's leading the training (David Sibbet, Laurie Durnell and Kayla Kirsch are who i know best), and that its not being used to train up new SV trainers ... past folks have reported somewhat disappointing experiences when this was the case*).

And drum roll please, my number one top Grove recommendation is:

Number 1:



The Grove's Strategic Visioning Process --- [Leaders Guides](#) and [Graphic Guides](#). These are wonderful 'template' products that aid seasoned (and not so seasoned) facilitators in creating a 'visual container' for doing organizational visioning and planning work. Large, wall-size, pre-printed 'templates' (graphic guides) and their companion instruction manuals (leaders guides). Not the greatest artist? Like leading structured processes? Back when I was doing organizational work, I would consistently use these

templates to lead visioning and planning retreats for corporations, not-for-profits and governmental agencies. I adore them, and unfortunately, some folks in the graphic community don't quite understand the full power of these helpful tools. What a shame!

For my informal explanation of this process, [click here](#).

My recommendation is to purchase the complete set of [Leaders Guides](#) (facilitator's how-to instruction manuals). Grove has a mass of templates now, so its best to understand what they are first and the situations they are best used in.

Then go back and carefully order the corresponding [Graphic Guides](#) (templates) for the one's you resonate with the most.

Well, there you have it. My take on what I like the most from Grove's great offerings. Hope you enjoyed it. Now I have somewhere to direct my mentees when they ask me to recommend things for them from Grove's catalog. Should have done this years ago, would have saved me a lot of time of repeating myself!

© 2008 Christina L. Merkley

WANT TO USE THIS ARTICLE IN YOUR E-ZINE OR WEB SITE? You can, as long as you include this blurb with it:

Christina Merkley, "The SHIFT-IT Coach" and creator of the SHIFT-IT Method® is a Visioning and Strategic Planning Expert specializing in Graphic Facilitation and Law of Attraction techniques. Based in charming Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, she works deeply with individuals, partners and groups in defining and getting what they really, really want. For more information visit: www.shift-it-coach.com.

