



## ***GEMM Strategy Intensives:***

### **Leading in the Complex World of Resources, Places, and People**

*Problem Centered - Solution Focused - Action Driven*

#### ***What are GEMM Strategy Intensives?***

1. The GEMM Strategy Intensives have been created to support organizations struggling to come to grips with the challenges faced by companies, communities and governments struggling to find effective and resilient ways to engage with each other, and each internally to increase their effectiveness at doing so. These programs will be customized for the context, the size and complexity of the organization. They will be in the nature of problem solving workshops, focused on finding solutions that can be tested in practice, adapted as needed, and implemented. They will be constituted with groups who can bring to bear different perspectives to inform the discussions in different ways. They will be developed with and by participants to meet their needs and expectations; different sizes, different mediums: sessions, seminars; speaking to meet different needs and different times and resources, from hours to a day, or several days or weeks. They will build on the success of the well-recognized GEMM Dialogue Series ([www.gemm.ca](http://www.gemm.ca)) which has brought together diverse players from across the sector into significant conversations on critical topics in a unique format. **The GEMM Strategy Intensives will take the GEMM spirit, learnings and tools into a focused action learning and doing settings that can be adapted to meet the needs of companies, communities, governments, both individually and in cross-sectoral groups.**
2. GEMM Strategy Intensives will be **led by Glenn Sigurdson and Jessica Bratty who bring a proven track record** in both the public and private sector working within and between organizations, as intermediaries in resolving conflict, facilitators of partnerships, developing and leading multi-sectoral dialogues in the resource sector (including GEMM which they founded and lead), and delivering both customized learning programs and MBA course requirements. They will bring their extensive and diverse experience and unique resources to work with the participants to create with and for them the spaces in different contexts- both internally within organizations, or between and among them. They bring to bear the particularly unique perspectives of “on the ground” and high-level experience - interactions around a site, and in conference halls.

#### ***Why GEMM Strategy Intensives? A Challenging Context...***

3. **Complexity confronts the resource and energy sectors on multiple fronts.** The landscape is complicated. Many players and layers, global norms and local regulations, countries and markets intertwined on the ground and in international forums. Companies with their “business case” are being met face-to-face by communities with their “own case” for whom “consultation” is not enough. Alongside sustainability human rights are now high on the agenda, alongside indigenous rights which are both solidifying and expanding across the globe. Expectations and tensions quickly



spread out across regions and watersheds. The natural world is disquieted making its voice heard through many people and places with eyes and ears, asking and demanding. This “external” complexity is often an uneasy fit with boxes, lines, and mindsets “internally”. Terms and acronyms continue to pile up as prescribed and voluntary standards proliferate. The regulatory climate in many places is evolving, often over the life of a project. Communities are searching for ways to benefit and protect; governments are scrambling to align regulations and realities. Within industry, it is not an easy time to do business, nor are their easy places in which to do it.

- 4. Complexity equals risk. Managing complexity is to manage risk. With risk also comes opportunity, for those who see it, and seize it.** Organizations that can find the key to turning a negative into a positive will achieve a double barreled effect that will build competitive edge, and the bottom line. Some across the sector may continue to ask “why?” But for many that question is behind them. Some are struggling to find a way forward, asking "what will it take?" But for many the question has become “How can we do this better?” They have made significant investments of time and resources and people in ramping up their capacity. They now have the experience and the inclination to ask: are their better ways? They are questioning whether they are integrated internally for maximum efficiency and effectiveness? Whether norms and acronyms, check lists and reports, are delivering real impact at the sites? Are we using the right words? Is their common understanding of the “value equation? “Have we adjusted our thinking and our actions to align with realities as they have been evolving over the past decade? Are we making assumptions on what “engagement” means to those with whom we are “engaging”? Do we know their expectations are? Are we using the rights approaches and tools? Who “owns sustainability/CSR” in the organization? And questions follow upon questions?

### ***How do GEMM Strategy Intensives Address these Challenges?***

- 5.** The GEMM Strategy Intensives will be built on this platform: how organizations engage externally, and align internally from site/operations through to corporate office strategies are critical to how companies deal with complexity, and achieve competitive edge.
- 6. Recognizing relationships between and among diverse groups, organizations, and institutions as assets to be built and sustained** enables organizations to develop its leaders and managers from across different components, units and departments to:
- Work and think together- critically, creatively and constructively –by asking the right questions, challenging assumptions, exploring possibilities, and deepening understanding.
  - Build robust strategies to navigate the complexity of the world in which they must operate, and the internal challenges this presents.



- Deepen the understanding of the structures, and tools to build internal alignment and effective interactions with the neighbors with whom we interact in the places we are operating.
  - Manage risk, and create opportunities, externally and internally.
- 7. Information as a basis for common ground, not opposing experts.** Information lies at the root of conflict, and the strategies for finding mutual benefit. Technical expertise is critical, and best deployed when it combines best practice with external credibility. This can place new demands on professionals, who need new tools to develop solutions to technical problems in a way that is responsive to external concerns across geographic scales – site/operation, watershed and region, and time. Knowledge with a credential needs to build competencies to work with experience and wisdom from the ground, with a common accessible language. While companies operate on short time scales, with mergers and takeovers on the way, communities remain, memories persist and time is measured in generations behind and ahead.

### ***What Differentiates GEMM Strategy Intensives?***

The Intensives will be:

- 8. Problem Driven:** “If you want to solve a problem know the problem you want to solve” – the starting point. What is the real problem? What is the ostensible problem? What are we solving for? Can we drill through the complexity to find simplicity? How do we work with the different cultural and professional imprints that are play in the way that people understand and approach the problem? Do we “drill up” or “drill down” from the ground to the boardroom, or the other direction? The programs will be built around real problems that participants bring into the room.
- 9. Wide angled & Realistic:** Set firmly within the public policy and regulatory framework, and over time “casting forward and backward over the life of a project in a community, region, and country with the flexibility to adapt to suit the circumstances.
- 10. Solution Focused:** Drawing from the participants real situations that have or could occur, involving external parties, that involve or connect to different parts of the company - as a basis on which to ground subsequent discussions and presentations, and to think about questions like “What has worked and why? What has not worked and why not?” What could have been done differently? Could the approach be piloted?
- 11. Search for simplicity in everyday practical approaches and tools:** identifying what questions to ask? Of whom? Who do we need to talk to? About what? Who should do the asking? What are red flags? When do I need help? Of what kind? Who needs to be on board internally? Searching for more accessible language and words that work in the boardrooms and in the drill room.



**12. Implementation:** The resource project is in place and operating within a community in a region. Likely some understandings have been reached, tacitly or expressly with respect to some development project. And they will build backwards by examine the challenges arising in that relationship some year(s) later. This will open a new strategic window into the challenges now, that lie ahead, and what could have been done before to have avoided or mitigated what is now.

**13. Alignment:** challenges and opportunities in the context of reality based situations - not just "the business case", but also the "cases" of the government, civil society, community; connecting this with how groups and organizations are motivated to advance or protect their interests; and understanding each other's "agendas", and bringing them into "alignment"; and recognizing that what is the case externally is also true internally within different business units, miniseries, program areas, and faction.

**14. Creative:** draw from and build upon the creative design innovations of GEMM, using simulations through such devices as video/script provides the connective tissue weaving together the program/projects, "Hands on" role plays, based on realistic and relevant situations, but different from the actual substantive challenges facing the parties

When the sessions are concluded our hope is that people will take away reactions like "We...

- ...found simpler words, less jargon, to communicate with each other and others."
- ...uploaded not downloaded from the ground up to the Boardroom."
- ...worked up from the simple to the complex- micro to macro."
- ...asked good questions, like "what will it take to turn rights into results?"
- ...moved beyond 'making the deal' to 'delivering on it, and making it come to life.'"
- ...were not afraid to talk about emotions and mindsets where decisions are driven."
- ...felt comfortable to talk about uncomfortable questions, candidly."

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