

# Maximizing Teamwork and Innovative Thinking – Event Highlights

[fwa.org/spotlight/maximizing-teamwork-and-innovative-thinking/](http://fwa.org/spotlight/maximizing-teamwork-and-innovative-thinking/)

In March, the BOLD Committee’s first Friday professional development workshop on Teamwork and Innovative Thinking, was held at the Park Avenue head office of the Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation (SMBC).



Coach Maria Guida (in red) with the event participants.

The interactive workshop was led by Maria Guida, corporate communication consultant and former Broadway actor. Maria, who studied acting improvisation with master improviser, John Monteith, uses this skill to help her audience unleash their creativity and develop their cognitive ability, and trains them to feel safe to leap into the unknown and to listen deeply to others.

At the start, Maria reminded participants to think of the workshop as an adventure, an opportunity to suspend judgment. She stressed that everyone try not to judge their abilities or the abilities of others. The workshop would be, as she described it, “serious fun” with games that tested participants’ ability to work together, be spontaneous, innovative and think outside the box. And it was!

Throughout the 90-minute session, Maria provided techniques for enhancing teamwork, connectivity, innovative thinking, and the ability to identify with others. Working in pairs and small groups, the attendees were guided in a variety of exercises exploring physical/vocal expressiveness, understanding the opposite side of an argument, and building upon the ideas of others, unleashing imagination and creativity. Takeaways included being mindful and “in the moment”, deepening awareness and empathy, and using improv to increase collaboration and productivity.

The BOLD Committee organizes monthly professional development workshops that are open to all FWA members. Please check the [events page](#) on our website for information on the next workshop!