

EIPA ANNUAL RETREAT 2018

PLAYBOOK

COLLABORATING ACROSS BOUNDARIES

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CHECK-IN

Purpose

It is a way to begin work or a meeting with each person “checking in” by speaking briefly. It gets each person’s voice in the room, and helps each person be present.



Group Configuration

Depending on the number of participants – a large circle or small groups of 5-8. (Note: small groups of up to 8 people can self-manage discussions)

After the prompt is given, participants respond without interruption. Make it a question(s) that everyone can answer.

Results/Outcome

Participants begin to make connections to others in the meeting. The go-around without interruption provides an initial sense of safety.

Number of Participants

This design can accommodate very large numbers.

Time

The time will vary, depending on the size of the group. It is intended to be done at a brisk pace.

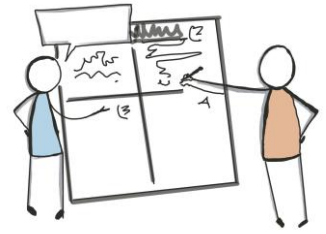
In Our Session

We used the Check-in to create initial connections.

ACTIVE IDEA SHARE

Purpose

This activity is designed to gather everyone's perspective on 4 topics in a relatively short period of time. This activity can be used to build connections to the task at hand while fostering a sense of community.



Group Configuration

Part 1 – 4 Rounds of Paired Interviews to Generate “Data”

1. Each person takes a piece of flipchart paper, puts his/her name at the top and divides the paper into 4 squares.
2. Round 1 – Pairs interviews each other for 2 minutes on question 1, writing partner’s response on his/her flip chart in the upper left square.
3. Round 2 – In a new pair, repeat the process writing partner’s response to question 2 on his/her flip chart in upper right square.
4. Round 3 – In a new pair, repeat the process writing partner’s response to question 3 on his/her flip chart in lower left square.
5. Round 4 – In a new pair, repeat the process writing partner’s response to question 2 on his/her flip chart in lower right square.

Part 2 – Analysis

After the interviews, hang flip chart sheets on the wall and form small groups to analyze the information generated by the interviews.

Results/Outcome

Databases on a variety of topics; common themes.

Number of Participants

This design can accommodate very large numbers.

Time

Approximately 45 minutes – 1 hour.

(includes framing the activity, the interviews, small group analysis, report-outs, and a brief large group dialogue)

Special Materials/Logistics

Everyone needs a marker and piece of flip chart paper. Wall space is needed to hang flip charts.

In Our Session...

Used this activity to “Create Connections”.

APPRECIATIVE INTERVIEWS

Purpose

Appreciative Interviews are a way to explore the positive core of an initiative (or organization, or community, or topic being studied.) They help illuminate the elements that made something successful, with the idea that we can learn from these stories and grow their impact.



Group Configuration

Individuals are invited to pair up with someone they do not know well. Using an Interview Guide, each person interviews his or her partner for a set amount of time, depending on the number of questions (usually about 10-15 minutes per robust question.) After both people have been interviewed, a Reflection Guide is used for each person to “mine” his/her partner’s story.

Results/Outcome

Root causes of success—strengths, capabilities, values, procedures, etc.—as well as possibilities that can be applied in other settings; an experience of listening in a distinctive way; seeing each other as resources

Number of Participants

No limit

Special Materials/Logistics

Space for face-to-face conversations

And...

An important first step with Appreciative Interviews is deciding on a topic and developing an Appreciative Question(s) and a Reflection Guide.

In Our Session...

Used to explore success factors for change and growth and sustaining momentum. We harvested the learnings by creating a group visual on banner paper.

Adapted from: liberatingstructures.com

OPEN SPACE

Purpose

Once an overarching theme or issue is identified, Open Space provides just enough structure for participants to talk with each other about what deeply interests them.



This meeting methodology was developed by Harrison Owen out of his frustrating experience organizing and coordinating an international symposium. On the evaluations, people talked about the value of the informal sessions—coffee breaks, meals, conversations before and after the formal presentations. Owen wanted to create an environment where the same stimulation and interest could be present throughout an entire conference. The rest is history!

Open Space runs on **Two Fundamentals**:

- Passion – to engage with topics that are motivating
- Responsibility – to convene a meeting, keep everyone in the conversation, get to the heart of the matter, make sure there are notes

And... **Four Principles**:

- Whoever comes are the right people. (Worrying about who didn't come is distracting.)
- Whenever it starts is the right time. (It will operate according to the rhythm of participants.)
- Whatever happens, is the only thing that could have. (Focus on the here and now so you can recognize opportunities as they arise.)
- When it's over, it's over. (When the conversation runs out of steam, it ends.)

And... **One Law**:

- The Law of Two Feet – each person can contribute and make a difference in this meeting. If that is not happening, people are encouraged to use their two feet to move to a new place where they can make a difference. (People can be Bumblebees, going from meeting to meeting and contributing and learning as they see fit. This is encouraged.)

Group Configuration

Opening

Participants start in a large circle or in concentric circles, if the group is very large. The leader/facilitator states the theme, shares a bit about the logistics (how it works) and reviews the principles and law of Open Space.

Creating the Agenda — “The Marketplace of Meetings”

1. The leader/facilitator invites participants to think about a subject, topic, or idea related to the theme that they have interest in exploring.

2. When ready, individuals take a sheet of paper, write the topic, announce it to the group, and post it on the Marketplace Wall, designating a location where he/she will convene this meeting. The conveners organize the schedule.
3. Once the schedule has been created, begin the meetings.

Closing

Participants come back to the original circle to share learnings, commitments, and observations. For example, those that want to can share, “What did you learn?” and “What did it mean to you?”

If desired, summary sheets can be scanned into one document and shared with participants.

Results/Outcome

People have followed their interests and passions. The conversations have provided the opportunity for individual learning and collective insights.

Number of Participants

This activity can accommodate large numbers. We’ve used it with groups of 200+.

Time

This too can vary. Two to three hours is usually a minimum for a stand-alone session. (This approach has been used for up to 3 day meetings....) The set up can take 30-45 minutes, depending on the size of the group. One round of 45 minutes will get conversations of interest started and energy flowing – two rounds is better.

Special Materials/Logistics

Wall space is needed to create the marketplace. A preset grid could indicate meeting spaces (e.g. corners of the room, outside spots, etc.) and rounds. For example...

	Main Room Table 1	Main Room Table 2	Alcove Near the Elevator	Patio	Coffee Shop
Round 1 (9:00-10:00)					
Round 2 (10:15-11:15)					

Paper, makers, masking tape. Give each convener a summary sheet to use, if notes are important.

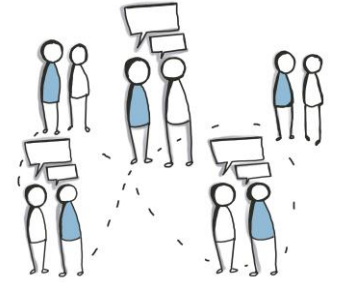
Reference in Our Session

Used in the afternoon to explore topics of interest. We did a shortened version.

IMPROMPTU NETWORKING

Purpose

This activity is designed to tap and deepen the thinking of participants through a series of successive conversations around engaging questions. In a relatively short amount of time, approximately 20 minutes, a group can begin to identify patterns and various threads of thinking.



Group Configuration

Participants are invited to pair with people they know least well. In each round, each person has 2 minutes to answer the question(s). At the end of 4-5 minutes, each person finds a new partner and repeats the process. This is done for three rounds.

At the end of the three rounds, hear themes people were hearing across their conversations.

Results/Outcome

Helps quieter people bring their voices into the room; fosters deeper engagement around relevant questions; gets energy going in a meeting; begins to surface patterns and make connections.

Number of Participants

This design can accommodate any number of people.

Time

20 – 30 minutes

Special Materials/Logistics

“Unobstructed” space for people to mill and move around; use bells to signal the time to shift.

Reference in Our Session

To discuss take-aways from the day