

# Toolkit booklet

ANIMATION AND DEBATE TECHNIQUES

**WORKSHOP**

*for the* SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

*training as a tool*

In this booklet, you'll find sheets to help you use the facilitation methods modalities we've tested together during the Train to Transform seminars and project development workshops. These tools can be used for a variety of purposes (facilitating and regulating discussion, allowing new ideas to emerge, imagining a project or action in a participatory manner...) and in different spaces (with the collectives, but also within the project team). You may use the last pages of the booklet to record your ideas and observations.

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# Icebreaker



## OBJECTIVE :

- To give the floor to all participants, to kickstart a training session or meeting while helping all participants to feel comfortable participating.
- To situate and better understand each participant's point of view, with icebreakers that allow participants to get to know each other better.
- To make a meeting or training session more dynamic.



## DURATION :

10 to 30 minutes



## SOME EXAMPLES TO USE :

**First-name or family-name game** : in a circle, ask each participant to tell the story of their first or last name.

**Potatoes** : ask participants to form groups based on commonalities.

For example: "Form groups according to the number of children you have" or "Form groups according to your age" or "Form groups according to your profession/activity".

**Cross presentation** : Around one or more questions, ask participants to talk in pairs:

- What's the story behind your surname?
- Describe where you live in three words.
- How did you end up here?
- What motivates you to come here ?
- In the past month, what has revolted you?
- What have you learned this past week?

You can then ask participants to introduce their partner to the rest of the group.

**Storm warning** : Participants are placed in a circle, all seated on a chair. There should be no more chairs available than there are people sitting in them (put any extra chairs away).

A volunteer stands in the center. This person makes a statement that qualifies him or her and other members of the group :

They might say *"I'm issuing a storm warning for anyone who (for example) wears blue clothing"* or *"I've just received a warning call for those who have conducted training this week"*.

Those who feel concerned get up and move to another chair.

If a person stands up, they cannot sit down again in the same chair.

The goal of the person that made the statement is to find a chair to sit on. So there's bound to be one person left in the middle, without a chair, who in turn makes a new statement.

## Colored cards



### OBJECTIVE :

The colored cards are used to build a collective proposal and to make decisions based on consent. Decision-making by consent aims to find a solution that is acceptable to all, respecting everyone's limits, rather than seeking unanimity or the “best” solution, which is often a source of conflict or delays. Thanks to this tool, you can more easily regulate and structure who takes the floor, and thus facilitate group discussions.



### PRACTICAL USE :

These cards can be used within a group (during group meetings or when preparing an activity with the project team, for example).

Instruct the group:

**“After each presentation or talk, choose a colored card and show it to the group. You are then free to change color throughout the discussion. Your card should reflect your current position.”**



I agree with this proposal



I would like to add something or qualify this proposal



I have a question of understanding



I do not agree with this proposal

To distribute the floor among the participants, the moderator suggests that the yellow and purple cards speak first. This can give time for those who show a red card to change color as the questions are asked. Those who show a green card don't usually speak up: this prevents people from rephrasing what has already been said, and leaves the floor to people who have questions.

# Speech tickets



## OBJECTIVE :

Speech tickets are used to regulate speech during a small-group debate.



## PRACTICAL USE :

Each participant has a specific number of tickets (e.g. three).

Each time they intervene, even briefly, they must give a ticket. When they run out of tickets, they no longer have the right to speak. You can also set a maximum length of time (e.g. 5 minutes).

## VARIANT : THE TALKING STICK

Speech is symbolized by a stick, or any other object. The person holding the holding the stick is the only one allowed to speak, and the others must not interrupt.

When they have finished, they pass on the talking stick to whoever asks for it, and so on. This format helps visualize the flow of speech, and any potential monopolies.

# The moving debate



## OBJECTIVE :

This debate technique enables a large group to express itself by moving around to give their opinion. It helps to visualize how many people are for or against a topic.

This technique is suitable for a variety of subjects, from social debates to more concrete issues. The key is to make a polemical statement to stimulate discussion.



## DURATION :

At least 5 minutes per question



## PRACTICAL USE :

The facilitator gives an assertion (for example, "it's the members of the collective who decide on the content of a concerted collective action").

After some consideration, participants place themselves :

- To the left if they AGREE
- To the right if they DISAGREE
- In the middle if they are undecided (you can also tell participants that it's not possible to stay in the middle)

The facilitator then gives the floor to participants to exchange their arguments. Participants can, of course, change their place in the room listening to the different arguments, if their opinion changes. The facilitator can ask them to explain their change of position.

## 4-CORNER VARIANT :

You can also use this technique to discuss several proposals with a group. In this case, you need to determine one question and several possible answers. Write down the answers on posters and display them in the four corners of a room; when you call out the question to the group, invite participants to stand under one of the answers to express their opinion.

A debate example :

Question : Who is responsible for mobilizing participants for a group activity?

Field  
facilitators

Community  
leaders

Project  
coordinators

Community  
members

# The fishbowl



## AIM :

This activity makes it possible to regulate speech while debating in big groups. Please note that this debate technique is not easy for those who aren't used to speaking in front of others. Thus, it would be better if used among a group where the participants know each other, or are all at ease.



## DURATION :

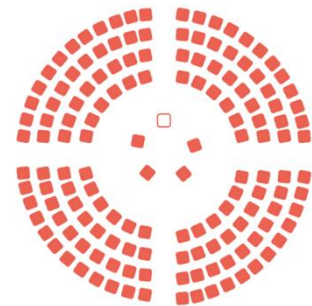
30 minutes to 1 hour ½. Up to an hour and a half, depending on the number of questions.



## PRACTICAL USE :

Prepare the room with two circles of chairs : a small circle in the middle with five chairs that face the centre and a big circle of chairs surrounding the previous small circle.

Invite 4 individuals to take their places in the center, leaving one chair empty. Start with a first question for the group to launch the debate between them. Those sitting on the big circle's chairs should listen. The ones in the small circle must not take turns to alternately answer one at a time, rather it should be a discussion, an exchange.



Those who wish to join the discussion must get up, take a seat on the empty chair and join the exchange. One of the four people seated in the center must get up and go join the big circle, leaving a chair empty once again. There must always be an empty chair in the small circle.

Those sitting in the big circle are also welcome to note their observations. You can also, once the discussion taking place in the center has reached its term, ask those observing what they thought of the discussion.

You can pre-determine a fixed period (for example 20 minutes), so all of those present are not obligated to sit in the middle and participate.

# Snowball



## AIM :

This activity makes it possible to collectively analyze a subject by progressively confronting all of the different points of view. All of the members should participate at the outset, to allow a sense of belonging to the group, and of having all participated in the thought process or final proposition. It's a method of progressive maturing of ideas.



## DURATION :

An hour minimum



## PRACTICAL USE :

This activity is generally carried out in big groups of at least 16 people.

- The big group is divided into small groups of two people that discuss the same issue (duration : 10mn).
- Each duo joins another duo and they hold a four-way discussion of the subject. Each duo should keep a principal idea from the prior step to present to the other duo they're discussing with. (duration : 15mn).
- Each group of four joins another group of four to discuss in a group of eight. Each group of four should keep a principal idea from the prior step to present to the other group of four they're discussing with (duration : 20mn).
- Each group of eight should broadcast their debate to the rest of the assembly.

This animation technique allows the participants to participate in the debate. Meanwhile, an idea's "abandonment" must be the result of a common agreement during each group's debate. After the collective restitution, the points of disagreement can be discussed.

## AN ALTERNATIVE : Snowflake

For the alternative of Snowball, we start by taking time along, then by two, four, eight. The steps are the same, only adding time at the outset for individual reflection (around 5 minutes).



# Turning tablecloths



## AIM :

The aim is to put the participants in a situation of creating reflection in the the purpose of proposing concrete actions to apply in the group, collective or organization.

It is preferred to use this tool with a group that's at the same level of writing and reading.



## DURATION :

An hour and a half to 3 hours.



## PRACTICAL USE :

- To kickstart the workshop, identify a restricted number of question (around 3 or 4) that you would like to male the participants think on ;
- Then, place a sheet of paper on a different table for each question and note each question on one of the sheets.
- Divide the participants between the different tables and announce the following instructions : « Each group has to address a question for the next 40 minutes. Discuss your ideas with the group, then write them on posters. »
- At the end of the first round, invite the participants to move to the next table. They can complete the ideas written by the previous group on the sheet.
- Make sure that each group uses a different color pen to write.
- For time management, here is a possible allocation :
  - 40 minutes for the first round ;
  - 20 minutes for the second round ;
  - 10 minutes for the third round.
- For the restitution, each group represents the last sheet of paper they worked on.

You can also propose that three (or four, depending on the number of questions) people stay at the same table for the duration of the activity. In this case, these people would be charged to present the different arguments during the restitution.

# Bubbling



## AIM :

This activity aims at helping a group to construct a collective understanding of a concept or an idea, based on the initial knowledge of the participants.



## DURATION :

30 to 50 minutes



## PRACTICAL USE :

Prepare large sheets of paper with pre-drawn bubbles, with the main concept written in the middle. You can also provide blank sheets and let the participants draw the circles themselves.

### Step n°1 : working in small groups (15 to 20 minutes)

- Form teams of 5 to 6 individuals.
- Each group thinks up 4 to 5 keywords that define the main concept and writes them in the main bubble. (represented in blue on the diagram).
- For each word, the participants find concrete examples to illustrate it, based on personal experiences. The entertainer can go around the groups to guide them in their reflection.

### Step n°2 : restitution (10 to 15 minutes)

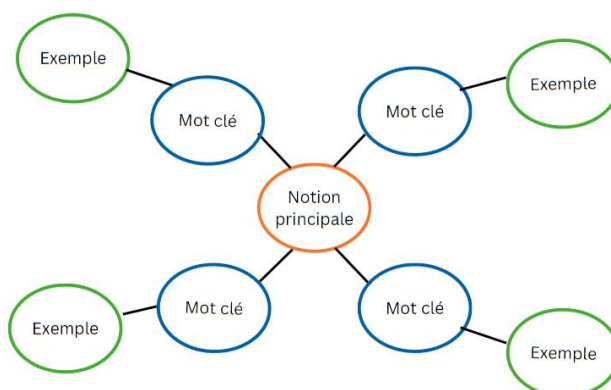
Ask each team to alternate in presenting the result of their work.

### Step n°3 : collective analysis and synthesis (5 à 15 minutes)

Invite the group to analyze the result to come to a common understanding of the concept.

Examples of questions to ask the participants :

- Which keywords are the most relevant and unifying?
- Do the different groups' ideas converge?
- Are there terms that seem contradictory?
- What can we agree on to advance?



**Bring what appears like a common and shared understanding to light.**

# The chain of ideas



## AIM :

Engaging all of the participants to quickly generate a big number of ideas.



## DURATION :

Between an hour and an hour and a half, depending on the number of questions



## PRACTICAL USE :

**First step** : Expose the question(s) to deal with. Explain to the participants that the aim is to produce a maximum of ideas for each question, without looking to judge or sort immediately. The in-depth analysis of the selected ideas comes later.

**Second step** : Form small groups of two to five people and distribute slips of paper or post-its for them to note down the ideas.

**Third step** : Announce the first question. Each team must produce the longest list or chain of ideas possible in three minutes (an idea per post-it or a list). You can use a chronometer so that the groups respect the allotted time.

Key instructions :

- We propose all of our ideas and we listen to the others' without judging whether they are realistic or not.
- The important point is the quantity, not the quality or the relevance.
- We're searching above all for a quick and spontaneous flow of ideas, original or unusual.

At the end of the allotted time, each group displays their chain of ideas on a table or a wall.

**Fourth step** : Each team chooses one to three ideas that they consider the most interesting and present them to the rest of the groups.

Once the ideas are shared, the host goes : « **Your ideas are all dead, start all over!** »

**Fifth step** : The teams produce a new series of ideas, different from those of the first round, following the same instructions on rapidity and quantity.

Once finished, compare the new ideas to the old ones (first round). Often, this step reveals the most creative and unexpected propositions.

**Sixth step** : Together, identify two or three big themes that spring from the generated ideas. These themes can be more deeply analyzed at another time.

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