



## FACILITATION METHODS

# i TALK i LISTEN

Useful in several situations, this techniques acts as an assumption destroyer. It's ideal for breaking down the behavioural norms in a group.

Whether you use this as an ice-breaker, to discover and disrupt group behavioural norms or as a session reset , this technique is designed to :

- allow participants to identify their preferred way to participate
- allow participants to identify the assumptions that accompany that preference (about themselves and others)
- to create a way for everyone to actively engage so they can participate and contribute.

# WHAT DOES I TALK I LISTEN LOOK LIKE?

## group size

Anywhere from 4-50 people is ideal.

## group mix

This activity is suitable for any group, but is ideal for one which is experiencing imbalanced power dynamics. This may be due to differences in power structures due to hierarchy in the business, or perhaps due to culture, gender, language or other factors.

## timing

You'll want 45-90 mins for this activity depending on the size of the group.

## what you need

Nothing. You don't need any specific materials for this activity other than space for the group to move about and form into two separate groups, and two lines.

## environment

This activity is best done in a real world setting, as it doesn't translate easily to a virtual environment.



# MAKING IT HAPPEN

1

Ask the group to make a decision about themselves - are they a talker or a listener?

2

Split everyone into the two groups - talkers and listeners

3

Have each group gather in separate parts of your facilitation space so they can speak together without interrupting the other group

4

Ask each group to have a discussion amongst themselves to understand the similarities and differences in the group



# MAKING IT HAPPEN

5

As discussion naturally ebbs, ask them to also think about what questions they might have for the other group also

6

Bring the groups back together in two lines facing each other



7

Ask them to line up in order from most talkative to least for each group (with the most talkative from each facing each other and so on down the line)

8

Have each group share their questions and have different people along the line answer with their perspective

9

Lastly, open the floor up to allow anyone to speak about any assumptions they might have had about the group today that have shifted or changed.

# SOME HELPFUL TIPS

**01** When you are asking people to define themselves it can help to remind them this is only for today and only in the context of this room - it's not a forever choice!!!

**02** During the group discussions, what assumptions are being uncovered about the similarities they share with people in their group 'all the talkers will be like me because...'

what is unspoken?

what are they assuming about each other?

why do they think these things are inherently true?

Are there questions needed to uncover/challenge the behaviours they are taking for granted?

**03** The purpose of lining people in their perceived 'talkative' order is to again have them question their assumptions.

Does the order make any impact on how they answer the questions asked in the next stage? And how do they feel about being the top of the line, or the bottom? Was their position self-determined or merely a result of other people's choices? These are all questions to ask to provide moments of self-reflection on their participation in these groups now and in the future.





# THANK YOU

## Interested in more on these types of methods?

Our facilitation methods come from many different places and are inspired by our reading, research and personal practice. We'd love to credit so many inspirations for this method, including Sarah Stein Greenberg who includes a wonderful example of this in practice in her Stanford d.school book "Creative Acts for Curious People." We are also inspired by IDEO, The Cynefin Company®, the Ken Blanchard Companies and many others for influencing this method.

Our work takes inspiration from these sources and many others to support Change Practitioners working in all types of projects. We regularly share our ideas so keep up with us at [www.timbsandco.com](http://www.timbsandco.com).

