

0. GETTING TO A PROPOSAL

Listening to the centre

Everybody is invited to share views, values, thoughts, etc.. about the topic. This is a space for back and forth discussion and collaborative process to help crafting a proposal.

Crafting a proposal

Drawing up a topic

It is advisable to make a very simple proposal to begin with. It will evolve with collective intelligence through the decision by consent process.

After listening to the centre, the facilitator ask for someone to formulate a proposal. Alternatively, he/she can ask the circle members to set up an improvement group to work on a written proposal.

Bringing forward a proposal

A circle member makes a proposal as a proposer.

Only one proposal is dealt with at a time.

Criteria for a valid proposal

- it takes into account points shared when speaking and listening to the centre
- it is clear and understandable by each circle member
- all circle members agree to start with it as a basis for further work
- do not belong anymore to the proposer once it has been brought forward and clarified

1. CLARIFYING QUESTIONS

Is it clear enough ? Do I fully understand ?

Anyone can ask clarifying questions to better understand the proposal. The proposer answers the questions and clarifies the intent of the proposal. The objective is to remove any doubt or possible misinterpretation about the proposal. The proposer does not answer questions starting with "Why". Reactions and opinions are not expressed during this round (but in phase 2).

2. REACTION ROUND

Does the proposal contribute to my needs, or the needs of the project through the organisation ?

Each participant shares reactions (impressions, feelings,...) about the proposal, one person at a time. It is a perfect phase for providing different perspectives and suggesting improvements to the proposal, so that the proposer can integrate those changes in phase 3 if he/she wants to.

The proposer tries to get a sense of what is emerging from the centre.

3. AMENDING

After the reaction round, the proposer is invited to either :

- **re-clarify** the proposal or the intent of the proposal,
- **make amendments** to the proposal : he/she can modify the proposal,
- **withdraw** the proposal, if it turns out to be not relevant.

If the proposal is withdrawn, go back to phase 0 with a new proposal.

4. OBJECTION ROUND

An objection is not a preference, nor another perspective / proposal.

It is what I believe would either not respect my limits or jeopardise our organisation / project.

One at a time, the facilitator asks each participant if they have objections to adopting the proposal.

If there is no objection raised, the proposal is adopted. Go directly to the celebration phase.

If there is one or several objections raised, the facilitator addresses them one after the other.

The facilitator concentrates on the formulation of the objections. He/she writes them on a board along with the name of the objectors.

To raise an objection is like offering something personal and it benefits the group.

An objection is a real gift to the group. The group can then go further exploring other parts of the proposal not discussed so far.

TESTING THE OBJECTIONS

First, the facilitator discards an objection if it cancels out the proposal. If so, go back to phase 0.

The facilitator cannot decide if the objection is reasonable or not. He/she can only ask questions to help the objector to present reasonable arguments.

An objection is reasonable if :

- it leads to an improvement through collective intelligence within the circle
- it cancels out the proposal, making it irrelevant (we save time and start with a new proposal)
- it is clearly well-argued
- it does not hide, consciously or unconsciously, a preference or another proposal.

Questions the facilitator may ask :

- "What are the arguments ?"
- "Is it a preference ?"
- "What will prevent me from being efficient when applying the proposal ?"
- "If the proposal is adopted, will it jeopardise the group / the project ?"
- "Can I live with this proposal ?"

5. IMPROVEMENTS

The facilitator addresses objections one at a time. Objections stated to the centre belong now to the group. This is a space for back and forth discussion and collaborative process to help resolving the objection.

The facilitator checks now and then if the objection is resolved for the objector or not. If a discussed solution may resolve an objection, the person who raised it informs the group.

Once all objections are resolved, the facilitator moves back to the objection round to check for new objections.

When there is no objection left, the proposal is adopted by mutual consent.



CELEBRATION

To celebrate the decision by consent

To pat each other for this milestone reached together. The group chooses the best way to celebrate (applause, meal, party...)