

Helpful Models and Tips



Table for comparing groups.

Participatory Groups	Conventional Groups
Everyone participates, not just the vocal few.	The fastest thinkers and most articulate speakers get most of the air time.
People give each other room to think and get their thoughts out.	People interrupt each other on a regular basis.
Differing viewpoints are allowed to co-exist.	Differences of opinions are treated as conflict that must be "solved"
People draw each other out with supportive questions.	Questions are often perceived as challenges as if the person being questioned has done something wrong.
Each member makes effort to pay attention to the person speaking.	Unless the speaker captivates their attention, people get easily distracted.
People are able to listen to each other's ideas because they know their own ideas will also be heard.	People have difficulty listening to each other's ideas because they are busy preparing what they want to say next.
Each member speaks up on matters of controversy. Everyone knows where everyone stands.	Some members remain quiet on controversial matters and no one really knows where everyone stands.
Members can accurately represent each other's points of view, even when they do not personally agree with them.	People rarely give accurate representations of the opinions and reasoning that are at odds with their own.
People refrain from talking behind each other's backs	Because people don't feel they have permission to be direct during the meeting, people may choose to talk behind each other's backs outside the meeting.

Data sourced from Twyford Consulting, facilitation manual 2002.

Please note: these resources are a compilation of our individual and research. Every effort has been made to reference resources. Please notify Community Waikato should you identify any referencing omissions.

Even in the face of opposition from “the person in charge”, people are encouraged to stand up for their beliefs.	People with distinct, minority perspectives are commonly discouraged from speaking out.
A problem is not considered solved until everyone who will be affected by the solution understanding the reasoning.	A problem is considered solved as soon as the fastest thinkers have reached an answer. Everyone else is then expected to accept this regardless of whether they understand the logic of the decision.
When people make an agreement, it is assumed that the decision still reflects a wide range of perspectives.	When people make an agreement, it is assumed that they are all thinking the exact same thing.

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