



Photo: Peter Nolbrant.

Listen and talk

This is a way of helping one another to develop thoughts, ideas, solutions or visions, while also giving us new perspectives and knowledge. We also practice active listening. This method can be applied when listing thoughts and at meetings, evaluations, knowledge exchanges and vision work.

Time

20 minutes to 1 hour.

Number of participants

2 to 3 people. These small groups may be part of a very large group.

How

1. The focus or issue is important and needs to be formulated clearly.
2. It is best to begin with individual reflection on the issue, undisturbed, for a period of 5 to 20 minutes.
3. Set other thoughts aside, park them and focus on the issue.
4. Your own particular thoughts are important, and it is important to include everything you can think of. By all means make notes on what you come up with.
5. Divide yourselves up into pairs or threes, ideally teaming up with people you are less familiar with.
6. Take it in turns to talk and listen. Ten minutes is often about the right amount of time. Be silent and listen without arguing and discussing. Instead, you have to let go of your own notions, put yourself in the other person's shoes and help them to develop and clarify what they are saying. If anything is unclear, ask them questions. It does not matter if you end up sitting in silence for a short time, that can be useful as time to reflect and listen. You should not sit facing one another directly when talking and listening, sit next to one another. Walking side-by-side is a good way of going about it.
7. The person speaking can make notes if they like.



What is needed?

- A process leader is a plus, but the process can be implemented under the leadership of someone in the group.
- Pen and paper.

Things to bear in mind

- Really listening to what someone else is saying or explaining your own ideas to others is a simple and natural working method that we use on a daily basis, but it is something we can develop and become more aware of.
- This is not a presentation, there is no pressure. Each and every person speaks at a level that feels right.
- A good process is based on trust. The greater trust there is within the group, the more effective the talking and listening will be. This is a major opportunity to share perspectives, involvement and visions with others. At the same time, it means that people invest a great deal of confidence in you, and you have to be careful with that.
- It is important to have a process leader who creates security and clarity with regard to the approach.

Further reading

- L4C Learning for Change. Section: Deep listening and parking. Page 18.
<https://legacy17.org/Files/Article-related/L4C.pdf>