

Training for Change (<http://www.trainingforchange.org>)

Fishbowl: "Worst meeting ever..."

GOALS

- play with the concept of meetings (relax people on this topic);
- look at the basics of having a good meeting.

TIME

30 minutes

HOW IT'S DONE

Open this session showing relaxedness and eagerness to look at an important topic: effective meetings and facilitation!

Ask: "How many people have ever been in a bad meeting?" You might get people to raise their hands. If lots of hands go up (as happens in most groups), feel free to be playful with that - humor and joking is great for this exercise.

Explain to them the task: to act out the absolute worst meeting ever. Ask for several volunteers, feel free to get some of the more playful participants in the room. Have them sit in chairs in the center of the room (this is called a "fishbowl," where other participants can watch).

If needed, set-up a brief scenario (such as a team meeting in the field). Then, let them act it out! Encourage laughter, since this is one way that participants loosen up around the topic, putting them in a learning attitude.

Cut the skit before the energy goes down or if people begin to be completely outrageous. Be flexible if people have more laughter. Encourage participants to notice what made it "the worst meeting" ("Yeah, it was pretty bad when he stood up yelled at the other others - not a lot of listening... what else made it bad?")

Then, let that same group demonstrate in the fishbowl what would make that meeting the "best meeting ever." Turn to the outsiders (those watching the fishbowl): "What made this meeting better?"

Debrief and help participants get specific. Look for both behaviors and attitudes. Invite participants to reflect on what are their challenges and how can they more often be in the "better meeting" approach.

[Meeting and Dialogue Facilitation](#) [facilitation group](#) [facilitation group](#) [meetings](#) [worst meeting ever](#)

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