

Lucid Facilitator's Guide

ACCESSING THE WISDOM OF YOUR GROUP

This meeting format creates a way for an individual facing a challenging situation or working to develop a new idea to gain new perspective and learn from colleagues.

Use this template to help you guide the discussion.

Best For



People facing a complex situation or new idea

10 or fewer people

Teams with varied levels of experience.

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INTRODUCTION

When we have a challenging situation before us, or when we struggle to pull a new idea into focus, we often seem to think we have to wade through all this complexity on our own.

It seems we've lost our ability to utilize the wisdom of our groups and our colleagues. We tend to worry more about what others think of us than being open, honest and vulnerable. Our desire for comfort shuts down our intentions to get better.

Yet, **there is something about the power of groups that arises when people who care talk about things that matter.**

We end up feeling like we belong to a group of friends. We erase this sense of being alone. We develop a community of understanding. We get thinking that comes from the group conversation rather than from an individual. We learn from the experience of others. And the sense of connection as a group builds.

People who have taken part in groups who set aside time on the agenda to work on individual member problems say they have found a number of **valuable benefits** from their participation, including:

- An opportunity to **build a network** of friends and colleagues
- A **faster learning curve** when beginning a new job
- Having a **place to raise questions** about everyday issues
- **Access to learning** without a large block of time away from the job
- **Awareness of what is happening** in other functions and departments
- A **sense of renewal** that comes with personal growth.

A Process for Accessing the Wisdom of Your Group

One group member (the situation “Owner”) asks colleagues for help thinking through a troubling situation, or with developing an idea.

This process is useful for several reasons:

- A problem is always less bothersome when you get it out of your head.
- Explaining what happened to other people helps you gain clarity.
- Getting other perspectives usually leads to new thinking.

At the heart of this design is the freedom to just listen—to not defend, or explain, or in any way resist the comments or ideas of colleagues.

No one is trying to convince you of anything.

You don't have to respond to anything.

You just get to observe and reflect as you listen to the thinking of the group.

THE AGENDA

ABOUT

A reflective exercise designed to get your group's thinking on a situation you are facing.

PREP

The owner needs to come ready to describe the situation succinctly. Plan to spend 5 minutes or less sharing information with the group before discussion begins.

- ① Introduction
- ② Clarifying Questions
- ③ Group Discussion Part 1
- ④ Process Check
- ⑤ Group Discussion Part 2
- ⑥ Closing and Reactions

STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS



Good News!

The online agenda includes all the instructions you need to run this meeting.

For those of you running this meeting face to face, you'll find full instructions for leading each step of the discussion on the next page.

A Note about Taking Notes

Usually we recommend taking shared notes that everyone can see, and sending out a meeting record afterwards. For this meeting, however, and for any time the group comes to help with a situation faced by an individual, a shared meeting record isn't required.

Where you see instructions to "take notes" in this meeting, you and your group can choose to take shared notes, or to simply write notes independently for personal reference.

After the meeting, it is up to the person requesting input to decide what meeting record they share, if any.

During the meeting

1

Introduction (5-8 minutes)

The Owner (or colleague requesting input) shares his/her idea, dilemma, or situation. The Group (everyone else) listens and takes notes during this step.

2

Clarifying Questions (5 minutes)

The Group asks brief, specific, and relevant questions of the Owner.

3

Group Discussion Part 1 (15 minutes)

Once the Group has a sense they understand and are clear about the situation, they have a discussion without the participation of the Owner. The Group shares reactions, ideas, and perspectives while the Owner listens and takes notes.

4

Process check (3 minutes)

The Owner makes suggestions about where he or she still needs the thinking of the Group.

5

Group Discussion Part 2 (10 minutes)

Same as Part 1. The Group continues to think together.

6

Closing and Reactions (6 minutes)

The Owner thanks the Group and shares the value he or she is taking away from the conversation.

Then, the Group has an opportunity to share observations, insights and value they received from participating.

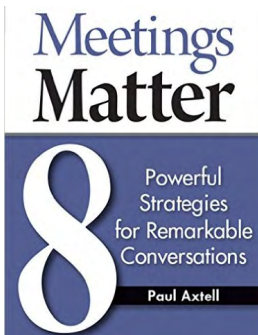
RESOURCES FOR ACHIEVING MEETING MASTERY



On the Web

Ask Paul: Paul Axtell's Blog

<http://paulaxtell.com/blog/>



Books

Paul Axtell,
“Meetings Matter: 8 Powerful Strategies for Remarkable Conversations” 2015

<http://paulaxtell.com/books/meetings-matter/>

Related Templates

A Protocol for Clearing Questions and Responding to Complaints

<http://www.lucidmeetings.com/templates/paul-clearing-protocol>

Gathering Productive Feedback

<http://www.lucidmeetings.com/templates/rick-gathering-feedback>



On the Lucid Meetings Blog

Stronger Together:
Accessing the Wisdom of Your Group

<http://blog.lucidmeetings.com/blog/accessing-the-wisdom-of-your-group>

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

This template was designed by Paul Axtell.

Paul Axtell provides consulting and personal effectiveness training to a wide variety of clients, from Fortune 500 companies and universities to nonprofit organizations and government agencies. A large focus of his work is how to run effective and productive meetings—to turn them from dreaded calendar items into vital, productive sessions with measurable results.



He is the author of the award-winning book *Meetings Matter: 8 Powerful Strategies for Remarkable Conversations, Being Remarkable, and Ten Powerful Things to Say to Your Kids: Creating the Relationship You Want with the Most Important People in Your Life*, which applies the concepts of his work to the special relationships between parents and children of all ages.

Learn more at PaulAxtell.com

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