



## Participatory Methodology

***When learners are active in the learning, they are more likely to stay focused on the topic at hand and less likely to be distracted with non-relevant ideas. They are also more likely to process information in a way that helps with retention and applicability. When using participatory methods, keep the instructions as clear as possible so people can benefit from active learning without confusion about process. Try these techniques in order to keep the learning environment dynamic:***

Case studies – use examples that the individuals or small groups can discuss and dissect. This processing helps them reflect on their new knowledge in real-world context.

Questions and personal reflection – have students answer questions posed by the instructor and draw upon personal experiences or put into context in their current context.

Role playing – create a mock scenario and assign participants different roles so they can try using their new techniques or knowledge. Debrief through discussion so people can learn from each other's experience.

Brainstorming – ask questions to small or large groups and have them generate ideas or solutions together.

Group work – provide opportunities for the larger group to break up into smaller teams in order to have more time to engage in learning. You can assign them discussions to have or a task to do such as creating examples together.

Storytelling – participants can learn from both looking in their history for a relevant story to the new content shared as well as hearing other people share their experiences through storytelling. Always encourage participants to share in a useful way through asking direct questions that draw out relevant experience or challenge learners to see their experiences in a new way.

Debates – assign participants to different sides to a scenario and have them debate the topic in order to generate ideas and dig deeper into new concepts.

Producing new content – have participants take information shared during training and then generate something new with it. You could ask them to produce instructions or a new model that illustrates their learning. You might ask people to come up with creative ways to remember a new process introduced. You could also ask participants to do something creative like making a song, key messages or poster based on their new learning.

Personal reflection – allow participants to do a reflective worksheet applying new knowledge to their personal context. You could also ask them to create a plan for themselves.

Lectures – if you plan to share a lot of knowledge through a lecture format, increase participation by inserting questions for the participants to consider or small tasks throughout that allow them to engage (raising their hands, jotting down personal ideas, calling for examples).

Problem-solving activities – either through asking for a real world example from the participants in the room or by providing a problem example, get participants to seek solutions to a problem. Master-minding is a technique where a group puts a very specific question on the table and provides as many solutions as possible in a set amount of time.

Games – consider adding a little energy into a learning program by playing some games throughout. “Choose your corner” is a game where the facilitator would ask participants questions and they would go to different corners of the room (physically move) to represent their vote or response to each. The facilitator can debrief each small round by asking people to share why they responded the way they did. Creating a spectrum to represent everything from “strongly agree” on one side of the room to “strongly disagree” on the other is a variation on this and still allows for movement.

Open space time – after a certain amount of information has been shared, invite participants to break themselves into groups based on topics they set for themselves. They can suggest ideas and see who else wants to dig deeper into the particular sub-topic.

World café – the room is divided into different themed discussions at each table. One person stays at the table as the facilitator and everyone else rotates to different tables. When arriving at a table, the facilitator introduces the question and summarizes the key ideas that have been shared thus far. The new group will build on the ideas and/or refine them.

Spectrum - an open space is used as the “spectrum” are with the opposite ends of the space being different options. For example, one side of the room is strongly agree and the other side is strongly disagree. The space in the middle represents the spectrum of opinions. Create statements that fit in the

Story Maps - give participants large flip chart paper and markers and ask them to draw a map of how they got somewhere. For example, how did you get here today? What were the major events or road signs that you passed on the way?

Pair & Share - get everyone to share their thoughts on a topic by pairing with a person. People can report out to larger group if time allows.

Vote from your Seat - give participants the opportunity to quickly and quietly participate in a discussion by voting without moving.

Dot Storm - after you've compiled a list of ideas, you can easily see which ideas are the most popular by giving people sticky dots (or a marker). Each person gets a certain number of dots (usually 2-4) to place beside the ideas that resonate the most with them.

Timeline - ask participants to think of times in their lives when they experienced or witnessed something (for example- sexism). Give them 3-5 sticky notes to write one sentence explaining the memory and writing their age when it happened. Participants place the notes in order by the age on the timeline. Facilitator reads the memories and stories aloud for impact. What are the themes that emerge?

Passport - participants get a "passport" at the beginning of the event. For each place they visit, they get a stamp. Participants need a certain number of stamps to complete the activity.

Button groups - create buttons with different colors or symbols. Give to participants and have those buttons help create groups in activities.

Tallest to smallest as an animal - no talking! This is a great way to get people moving and practicing nonverbal communication.

Alphabet names - participants organize themselves alphabetically.

Power Circles - everyone gets into a circle. The facilitator reads a list of statements. If someone would like to identify with that statement, they take a big step into the circle. Ask people to notice who is in the room, but also who is not.

Treasure, Tinker, Trash - as a closing activity, ask people what they would treasure about the event, what they would like to change about the event and what they won't use.

Cross the Line- Privilege Walk - everyone starts in a line facing the facilitator. Participants can close their eyes or be blindfolded. The facilitator reads off a list of statements and participants either step forward if they experienced the

privilege or step back if they didn't. At the end of the activity, people look around to see where people ended up. Reflect on the differences.

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