

IDEA → ACTION!

Example of a workshop plan

Idea to Action is a workshop that you can facilitate by making use of this plan and adapting it to your needs. The workshop consists of methods which invites a group to move quickly from idea to real action on an issue or theme, and have a participative and democratic process along the way.

The workshop in brief

Idea to Action! is about experiencing the feeling in your body when making the move from idea to action. We believe that experiencing with the body also helps the knowledge stay longer. What we want to create is the feeling that it can be an easy and fun step to take action for change! We do this by proposing a high tempo throughout the workshop, to create a momentum. We believe that the tempo can take away some of the anxiety of performing, among the participants. However, the high pace should not be at the expense of the democratic process in the workshop. Everyone needs to be heard and seen.

The workshop is also about showing that there are alternatives when it comes to being an active citizen. You don't need to get involved in party politics if there's another way that suits you better. The workshop can be used to showcase and try out different expressions and strategies. A method of choice can be left for participants to decide on, and no one needs to be an expert before hand. It's all about testing and being curious!

CHECK-LIST

- things to consider during the workshop as a facilitator;
 - From which stand-point do we pose questions? Should we give room for more perspectives?
 - Encourage participants without adding (too much) of your own values or judgements
 - See and encourage participants, but try not to push - everyone in a group needs to be seen, but all may not want to be in the center
 - Eye contact with participants
 - Remember to be present, positive and calm
 - Consider when to take a break or a snack
 - Keep energizers, questions or examples as a back-up reserve when needed, so you have the possibility to adapt to the situation.

EXAMPLE OF A WORKSHOP PLAN - IDEA TO ACTION!

Total time of the workshop: Around 3 hours (can be shortened or made longer depending on the available time and situation).

MATERIAL TO MAKE USE OF

- Music (if you want to set the ambience)
- Masking tape - for name tags (or any other name tag-stickers)
- Contact list (if you wish to gather participants contact info)
- Pencils of many colors
- Flip charts (as alternative to whiteboard)
- A3-sheets
- Post-its
- Mingle bingo-sheets (see below Intro → Starter Activity)
- Snacks!

+ MATERIAL AND TOOLS TO USE FOR ACTION

Fabric for banners, acrylic paint colours, brushes, broad fibre colour pencils, street crayons, fabric strips to make tie-graffiti, cameras.

BEFORE PARTICIPANTS ARRIVE:

- Write down the plan of the day on flip-chart (or alike) and put it up for participants to see.
- Prepare the material to make use for actions (cover it to make it a surprise!)
- Put forward chairs for participants, preferably in a circle
- Play some music if you want to set a relaxed mood

WHEN PARTICIPANTS ARRIVE:

- Ask participants to create their own name tag by using sticky paper or masking tape
- If you want to reach participants afterwards, ask them to fill out a contact info-list

INTRO (45 minutes)

Who are you, hosting this workshop? Tell a little about yourselves.

Talk about the purpose of the day - to explore democracy by doing something in practice, from Idea to Action. The plan is to come up with ideas and to actually implement one idea as an action.

The workshop follows some main outlined steps. It will soon be time to warm up and get to know each other a little better, before starting idea -> action. Review the plan for the day together.

Presentation round (5 minutes)

Run an initial round in the group - where participants in addition to their name can tell you anything they thought up in advance. (It can be a little anything about oneself).

If you plan to take photos or video clips during the workshop, talk about this: If someone does not want to be in photos or film clips, ask participants to approach you and say so.

Common approaches - group agreement (15 minutes)

Creating common guidelines can contribute to a safer learning environment, and can help the group work together respectfully and effectively.

Talk about how it may be helpful to create a common agreement for your time together.

Write down the question, visible to the group: "What do I need, in order to be fully involved and have a great time in this workshop?".

Explain that by expressing our needs, we give ourselves the chance to see each other, care for each other and understand when and why something feels bad.

Then give the participants a few minutes to quietly reflect for themselves on their needs. Provide paper and pencil for those who want to write / doodle. Ask them to be as concrete as possible.

After the personal reflection, encourage participants to share their needs, but point out that it is also okay to pass. There is no upper or lower limit on how many needs a participant can share.

Write down the suggestions on a large sheet of paper as they are stated. Add approaches that you find important as facilitator, if needed.

Check with the group for the need to clarify something. Ask if someone has a question, or wants to change or add something.

Finally check for agreement on the common approaches, with the whole group.

Further reading: A longer description around creating a group agreement [is available here](#)

Starter activity - an example: Mingle Bingo (15 minutes)

At the beginning of a workshop, it may be helpful to use an activity to create energy and community in the group. The activity should be chosen and adapted in regards to the size and composition of the group.

This activity is broadly used, here we call it Mingle Bingo or Democracy Bingo:

It can be used to start the conversation around topics you want to highlight in the workshop, and at the same time it lets participants get to know each other a bit more..

We have compiled [a democracy bingo-sheet](#) that can be used, but the method can obviously be adapted to the theme or focus you choose.

In the workshop:

Give each participant a bingo card and a pen.

Explain that the group has 10 - 15 minutes to mingle, introducing themselves, and talking to each other to get answers to the questions or statements. When receiving an answer, they put the person's name in the corresponding box or have the person sign the appropriate square. Each question on the sheet should be answered by a different person.

The first person to fill boxes across or down yells BINGO!

After one or more "Bingo" you can stop the activity, and ask participants to once again find a chair in the circle. Depending on the available time, you could ask for participants reflections on what they heard or learned.

IDEA (45 minutes)

Intro to the Idea -> 'Action!' part

After warming up, it's time to get into the next part of the workshop.

Pair-talk on a question like "How would my dream-local community look like?" (5 minutes)

In Watch it! we believe in acting locally to create change. Therefore, we use the local community as the theme of this example planning.

Start by asking participants about their dreams for the district / city / municipality they live in. Ask participants to talk to the one next to them, in pairs, for a few minutes.

Round & Brainstorm (10 minutes)

Do a round where all pairs may summarize what they discussed, while you write down the ideas on a flip chart or a whiteboard. Then let anyone speak their mind in a brainstorming. Encourage participants to use their imagination, and propose that all ideas are good ideas. When it feels like enough ideas have been proposed, you can read the notes aloud to summarize. In connection to this, it can be a good idea to start talking (informally) about what would need to change in order to reach the local community-dreams. Ask participants what they think.

Create groups

Divide participants into small groups to talk further - perhaps groups of 3-4 persons (depending on how many you are). Ask the groups to get together.

Have the groups choose their burning issue (10 minutes)

Propose to the groups to start by doing a round where everyone gets their say on the issue / topic they want to work on during the workshop. Instruct the groups to write down everyone's burning issue on a big paper. Then you may suggest that each person in the group marks two of the issues they feel strongest about.

Group discussion: What do we want to change? (10 minutes)

It's time to talk about what needs to change in order to achieve the dream scenario. If the group wants more urban gardening - what is needed? If the group wants more youth to get a job - how can they influence this? Let the group talk and take notes about their subjects in a few minutes.

Formulating the message (10 minutes)

To have a message that is short and sweet is good when spreading it to others. Give the groups 5 minutes to form their message. (It's not super important to crystallize a single sentence ... But it's useful to have a few formulations to choose from.)

METHOD (10 minutes)

Present the task and examples of modes of expression:

Propose to the groups that it is now time to spread the message(-s) they have formed. To begin with, they choose HOW they want to spread the message.

Our suggestion is that you have some different tools of expression available to make use of: banner material, adhesive tape, street crayons and other creative tools you can think of. Showcase the materials and check that they understand how they can be used. Propose that they may also use digital tools if available (smart phones, or tablets for photos/video etc), or any other method they would like to try (street theater, create a petition, send video clips to local politicians...).

Ask the groups to jointly decide which method(-s) they want to use and how to make use of it to have an impact.

ACTION! (60 minutes)

Taking action (40 minutes)

Encourage the participants: "Now is the time, spread your message! You have 40 minutes to create the material you need and to carry out the action. Then we'll meet back here to hear how it went."

Propose to the groups to make use of good public spaces nearby to interact with local citizens or showcase their message. You could also accompany the groups in their work and take photos and/or video clips.

Round: Feedback (10 minutes)

Sit down in a circle. Ask each group to share their experience, what message they acted on, how it went and how they feel about it, and if they got any reactions.

SHARE! (10 minutes)

Round: Who needs to know?

Start a round in the group, by stating something like: "Now, have you been spreading your messages. By doing so, you have already been part of acting for the change you

want to see. Who do you think would need to know about it, to create a bigger impact? " Write down what comes up on whiteboard or flip chart.

Open question: "Would you like to pass the message on right away?"

Ask participants if they would like to send their message to for example politicians, relevant companies or the media, right away after the workshop. If yes, decide on how to do that. You may also encourage the groups to meet after the workshop and elaborate on their message.

OUTRO (10 minutes)

Evaluation (5 minutes)

Explain that you are now approaching the end of the workshop. And you hope that their expectations for the session have been fulfilled. State that you're curious to learn what they think about the workshop and therefore want to make a small evaluation, to be able to do an even better workshop next time. Distribute two different colored post-its, send them around so everyone gets one of each color. Ask them to write about what they feel has been working well with the workshop on one color, and on the other what could be improved. When they are finished, they can put the post-its in the middle of the ring you're sitting in. Make it anonymous.

Closure round (5 min)

Ask if anyone has any question before the closing. Then run a final round - ask participants to for example describe in a single word how they feel now, after today's workshop.

Close with a thank you!

STEP-BY-STEP IN BRIEF



Idea

What do we want to change?

Method

How?

Action!

(Let's do it!)

Share!

Who needs to know?

