

Turning Expert Input Into Conversation

A toolkit for interactive workshop design

Discover creative, engaging ways to turn expert input into shared learning.

Expert input alone rarely leads to change. Real learning happens when participants engage, connect ideas to their own experience, and co-create new insights. Choose methods that allow to surface the wisdom already in the room and turn knowledge into action.

Visual & Co-Creative Formats

Collaborative documentation and spatial engagement

- **Flipchart Chat - Wallpaper Conversations:** The expert leads a live discussion on flipcharts or walls, capturing key words and ideas; participants respond, add comments, and ask questions as the conversation unfolds.
- **Co-Created Visual Inputs:** Joint mind maps, drawings, or visual notes on walls or pinboards to support shared understanding.
- **Walk Around the Model:** The expert creates a model on the floor, using drawings or post-its. Participants explore it, add their own contributions, thoughts, and questions, and finally position themselves within the model for further reflection in pairs.

Questioning & Inquiry-Led Formats

Participant-generated questions drive the expert engagement

- **Question Storming (not Brainstorming):** Generate only questions for the expert—no answers, no solutions.
- **Master Class:** The session starts with participants asking questions; the expert responds through dialogue, not a formal presentation or keynote.
- **25/10 Crowd Sourcing:** Participants rapidly generate and collectively score inspiring questions for the guest speaker.

Reflection & Sense-Making Formats

Individual and collective processing of ideas

- **Pause in the Talk - Silent Conversation:** A deliberate interruption with 1–2 minutes of silence and a short noticing prompt, followed by optional journaling or written dialogue to support quiet reflection.
- **Harvest Circle:** Go around the group, with each participant sharing a takeaway, either as a single sentence or longer, depending on group size and time. It's a moment to reflect and capture what they're taking from the session.
- **1–2–4–All:** Participants first reflect silently on what they've heard and what it means in their context. They then discuss in pairs, groups of four, and finally with everyone. This structure ensures all voices are heard and ideas build collectively.
- **Gallery Walk Interruption:** The session pauses to collectively capture insights, questions, or quotes on the walls. Participants walk around, discuss with neighbours, add notes, and mark what resonates, followed by a final reaction from the expert.

Conversational & Dialogue Formats

Interactive exchanges between experts and participants

- **Input + Buzz Groups:** Short input (5–7 min) interrupted by pair/trio conversations around one question: What stands out? What do you question? What's emerging?
- **Interactive Panel -User Experience Fishbowl:** A small group shares lived experience while others listen; followed by small-group conversations to generate questions or reflections.
- **Interview Formats** (e.g. Celebrity Interview / Talk Show): A facilitated interview with an expert or leader to surface personal narratives and lived practice; can include audience questions or Appreciative Inquiry elements.
- **Knowledge Café:** One or two short inputs (max. 10 min each), followed by open, self-hosted table conversations.
- **World Café:** Three rounds of small-table conversations with visual harvesting and group remixing; experts join conversations and may share closing insights.
- **Marketplace - Shift & Share:** Multiple short inputs or conversations take place simultaneously at different stations. Participants move freely between stations, exploring and engaging with the topics that interest them most.

Take these formats, make them yours, to design engaging and dynamic, workshops that inspire ideas and create clarity and connection.

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