



Introduction to shared governance





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Duration: 4½ hours

Materials: flip chart or board; sheets of paper and rolls of adhesive tape; markers and pens.

Roles: a facilitator and a note-taker (who may be a pupil).



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Sociocracy offers a systemic approach to organisational questions, addressing the sensitive issue of sharing power and responsibilities.

Condition: participants need to share an objective they want to achieve together.





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Module 0 – Introduction

Duration: 30 minutes

Materials: a poster presenting the safe participation framework.

Process:

1. The facilitator introduces the workshop, its objectives and its stages.
2. In a round, participants share their expectations and concerns.
3. The facilitator presents the safe participation framework.



Duration: 20 minutes

Materials: five A4 sheets per participant and a roll of adhesive tape.

Process:

Participants build a structure while pursuing different objectives. They must collaborate by pooling their resources (the sheets) and using a shared resource (the tape), without speaking to one another. (10 minutes)

Split the participants into two groups. Each group must ensure that the construction meets an objective. The two groups may have the same objective, or different ones.

Debrief the process and participants' feelings. Discuss the importance of having a shared objective and/or ways to collaborate. (10 minutes)



Duration: 20 minutes

Materials: one sheet of paper and a pen per participant; the educational material in the appendix.

Process:

The facilitator presents five privileges. Participants rate themselves according to how they perceive their situation: 5 if they feel privileged, 0 if they do not.

Their individual self-assessments remain secret.

The facilitator then asks how many participants gave themselves a score of 3 or above.

Offer a round of discussion to reflect on the exercise.



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Module 3 – Non-verbal communication

Duration: 15 minutes

Materials: none.

Process:

Divide participants into two groups and form pairs. Group 2 leaves the room while the facilitator briefs group 1; the facilitator then joins group 2 to give them their instructions.

The storyteller recounts a personal experience, chosen to suit the participants' age.

The listener listens for two minutes while showing disinterest through non-verbal communication.

Debrief: return to the circle. The facilitator explains both sets of instructions, then participants describe how they experienced the exercise.

Examples: an experience of feeling listened to; the last time something exciting happened; the last book I enjoyed.



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Module 3.1 – The whispering game

Duration: 15 minutes

Materials: a short story appropriate to the participants' age.

Process:

Participants stand in a line. The facilitator takes two people outside the room and gives one of them a story to read to the other. On returning, the listener retells the story from memory to the first person in the line. That person tells the next, and so on. The last person tells everyone the version they received.

Debrief: participants describe their experience.

Example sentence:

A rorqual whale in a shark tank loves coconuts. It crunches them like sweets, especially when they are the colour of red roses with thorny stems, or when it is feeling blue.



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Module 4 – Active listening

Duration: 10 minutes

Materials: a handout presenting attitudes associated with active listening.

Process:

Divide participants into two groups and form pairs. Participant 1 listens carefully to participant 2, asks questions to check understanding and prompts them to connect different things they have said. Make eye contact if possible.

Offer a round in which everyone can describe their experience.

Examples: I did not feel I belonged when... The last time something annoyed me was... The last time I felt offended was...



Duration: 30 minutes

Materials: a board or flip chart.

Process:

Participants sit in a circle. In a round, everyone names their favourite dish, or the dish they would like for the next meal. The facilitator writes each suggestion on the board.

Erase half the suggestions — those with the fewest votes — with a dramatic flourish, and invite participants to vote. Repeat until only one suggestion remains.

Debrief: do participants accept the chosen suggestion? What are the shortcomings of this decision-making method? Is consensus easy to reach? Is it desirable?

Note: an alternative is to allow a blank vote.



Duration: 45 minutes

Materials: a board or flip chart.

Imaginary situation: a group must decide together where to spend its next holiday.

The facilitator first sets an objective to narrow the choices: rest, sport, partying, a low environmental impact, discovering a culture, etc.

Explain the decision-making process, its stages and the difference between a preference, an acceptable proposal and an unacceptable proposal.

In a first round, participants in the circle name a preferred destination compatible with the objective, plus a second choice. They explain why they favour their first choice.

The facilitator writes all proposals on the board. Participants then classify them into three categories.



1. Preferred proposals.
2. Proposals that are not preferred but are acceptable.
3. Unacceptable proposals.

In a round, participants identify proposals they find unacceptable and explain why. These are erased from the board.

A vote removes the least attractive proposals from the remaining acceptable options. Continue until one proposal remains.

In a further round, participants confirm their consent or raise objections or amendments.

If there are objections or amendments, invite the participants concerned to propose a change that addresses and resolves the objection.

Once adopted, the group celebrates the proposal. Offer a final round to reflect on the process.



Process:

Form groups of four. Half list the advantages of an organisation with a vertical hierarchy; the other half list its disadvantages.

After 15 minutes, bring everyone together. Each group's spokesperson presents its list, which the facilitator records on the board.

Next, the teams that listed the disadvantages of vertical organisation list the advantages of horizontal organisation. The teams that listed the advantages of vertical organisation also list the advantages of horizontal organisation.

After 15 minutes, bring everyone together again. Each spokesperson presents the group's list for the board.

Debrief: in a circle, discuss the advantages and disadvantages of horizontal organisation, then ask participants which form of organisation they prefer: vertical or horizontal.



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Module 8 – Closing

Duration: 30 minutes

The facilitator invites participants to reflect on the workshop by answering these questions:

Which activity did I enjoy most?

What did I learn?

Which activity made me think the most?

Did the workshop make me want to explore the questions it raised further?