

# Workshops

Engagement range	Inform/Consult/Partnership
Difficulty level	Medium
Cost	Low (up to \$1,000) Medium (\$1,000 to \$10,000)
When might you use it	To showcase product, plan, policy To communicate an issue To discover community issues To develop community capacity To develop action plan To build alliances, consensus
Number of people required to help to organise	One - three people
Time to organise	Medium (six weeks to six months)
Size of audience	Small (up to 10) Medium (11-30)
Issues/resources to think about	Venue; Catering; Staffing; Moderator/facilitator; Overhead/data projectors and screen; Audiovisual recording equipment and amplification; Artists/photographer; Props for working in groups (pens, paper, pins, etc.); Printed public information sheets; Children's requirements; Response sheets; Publicity; Furniture
Innovation level	Low to Medium

## Description

Workshops are a structured forum where people are invited to work together in a group (or groups) on a common problem or task. They are best used with smaller numbers of participants.

The goals are to resolve issues and build consensus for action, rather than provide information and answer people's questions. If the workshop is intended as a community event focusing on a community issue, the selection of participants is determined by knowledge, expertise or by selecting a cross-section of views. Alternatively, workshops can be organised to target particular groups (e.g. young people, or women).

Workshops require a facilitator who is able to engage all participants in the discussion.

## Objectives

- To bring participants together in a structured environment (that is, through large and small-group activities, discussions, and reflection) to plan, decide or overcome difficulties.

## Desired Outcome

- A report, opinions, suggestions or plans that have been collaboratively developed and agreed to by all participants, on an issue or proposal.

## Uses/Strengths

- Excellent for discussion on criteria or analysis of alternatives.
- Fosters small group or one-on-one communication.
- Offers a choice of team members to answer difficult questions.
- Builds ownership and credibility for the outcomes.
- Maximises feedback obtained from participants.

## Special Considerations/Weaknesses

- Excellent for discussion on criteria or analysis of alternatives.
- Fosters small group or one-on-one communication.
- Ability to draw on other team members to answer difficult questions.
- Builds credibility.
- Maximised feedback obtained from participants.
- Fosters public ownership in solving the problem.
- Hostile participants may resist what they may perceive as the 'divide and conquer' strategy of breaking into small groups.
- Facilitators need to know how they will use the public input before they begin the workshop.
- Several small group facilitators are usually needed.

# Step by Step Guide

## Responsibility of the organiser

1. Engage and brief facilitator. Brief to comprise:
  - Date, time and expected duration of workshop.
  - Description of target participants.
  - Relationships between participants.
  - Topic to be considered.
  - Clear definition of current situation, including decisions already made.
  - Area of topic to be covered, with the questions and problems requiring participants to be involved in and developing solutions.
2. Identify and book appropriate location (including wall space for posting notes and cards, tea/coffee area, required break-out areas), tables and chairs.
3. Arrange suitable catering.
4. Arrange transport/child care/special facilities for target participants.
5. Supply of special equipment.
6. Approve facilitators running sheet design.
7. Enable and ensure target participants attend.
8. Introduce the facilitator on the day.

## Responsibility of the facilitator

1. Collect brief from organiser
2. Ensure that participants are not expected to be 'rubber stamping' decisions already made, (other than confirming those decisions), or being expected to provide unrealistic outputs for the time available.
3. Detail design of the day, identifying what participants will be required to consider, and methodology for this to be achieved (running sheet).
4. Ensure that organiser has carried out all functional aspects as above.
5. Run the event.
6. Write up and provide organiser with proceedings within agreed timeline.