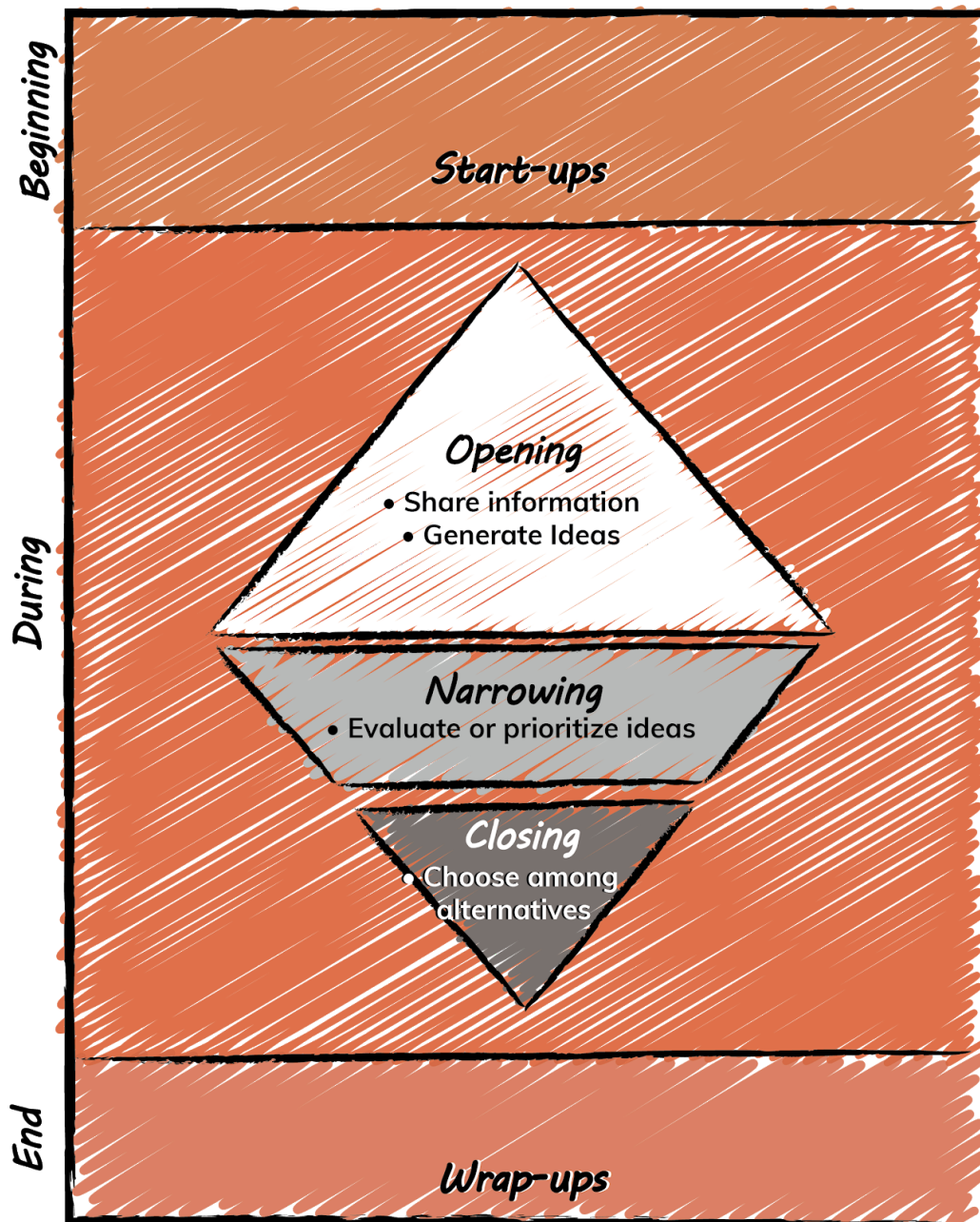


The Anatomy of an Agenda

The Big Meeting Process: Opening-Narrowing-Closing

Most meetings or multi-meeting processes carry out an overarching group process of Opening, Narrowing, and Closing that moves the group from generating ideas to making a decision. If content is straightforward and the group agrees easily, you may be able to accomplish the entire O-N-C process in one meeting. More likely, you'll be leading the group through this process over the course of several meetings.



Agenda Planning

An agenda is a plan of things to be done; it is the action plan for accomplishing desired outcomes in a meeting. Here are some tips to get started:

- ❑ Start with constraints: start time, end time, breaks, room or platform limitations.
- ❑ Breaks are usually needed every 90 minutes, depending on the rigor of the activities.
- ❑ Keep the *Meeting Purpose, Desired Outcomes*, and the flow of *Opening-Narrowing-Closing* in mind when choosing group activities (see *Common Group Processes* below).
 - ❑ Do you need the group to get informed, provide input, make a decision or build understanding with others?
 - ❑ Do you need the group to generate ideas, consolidate or prioritize them, or make a choice?
- ❑ Consider different arrangements of the group for each activity: full group, small groups, pairs, affinity groups, identity groups, diverse groups, etc.
- ❑ Think about the group. *What helps them work well together? What keeps them from working well together?* Take note of group dynamics and use processes and tools that support group performance. For example, if certain members of the group are continually disengaged when a certain topic comes up, try using *Open Space*, where members self-select which topics they want to be involved in.
- ❑ Remember your facilitation team's needs - is someone taking on too much?

Common Group Processes

<p>Open Information Sharing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Round Robin ● Presentation ● Study Circles ● Catch the [Koosh Ball] ● Questions & Answers 	<p>Open Input Gathering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Brainstorming/ Card Storming ● Charettes ● Interviews/Storytelling ● World Cafe ● Focus Groups ● Appreciative Inquiry ● Community Mapping ● Visual Preference Surveys 	<p>Open Building Understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Group Agreements ● Listening Circle ● Partner/Pair Chat ● Human Scale ● Open Space ● Participatory Theater ● Deliberative Forums ● Revolving Conversations ● Network Weaving ● Quiz games 	<p>Narrow & Close Decision Making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Decision Space ● Decision Rules ● Criteria Setting ● Alternative Generating ● Alternative Evaluating ● Majority Vote ● Unanimous Agreement ● Citizen Juries ● Gradients of Agreement
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You can find out more information on most of these group processes by visiting these sources: [EPA Public Participation Guide](#), [Pittsburgh Public Engagement Toolkit](#), [National Park Service RTCA Community Toolboxes](#), and [Sam Kaner's Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making](#). Most of these processes can be adapted for virtual settings. Be sure to assess the group size, dynamics, and timing prior to determining activities for virtual meetings. Simple, easy-to-understand activities are best when working with large groups, whether you're in-person or virtual.



SAMPLE FACILITATOR'S AGENDA

TIME	TOPIC	PURPOSE	PROCESS	LEAD	NOTES
20 min	Start-ups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome • Introductions • Group Agreements • Desired Outcomes • Agenda Review • Role Contracting 	Participants understand what we're doing, how we're doing it, and who's doing what.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Round robin • Check for understanding and agreement 	Harry	-Flip charts & markers -Hand out agendas -Ensure people with sensory impairments are seated up front
15 min	Presentation of Concept Plan	Participants understand the concept plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation and individual note taking 	Hermione	-Clicker
15 min	Questions and Answers	Participants understand the concept plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Popcorn (ask to hear from folks we've haven't yet heard from) 	Ron Hermione	-Audience microphone -Flip charts & markers
45 min	Recommendations for Changes	A list of suggestions Agreement on recommended changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorming • Check for understanding and agreement • Majority vote 	Harry	-Flip charts & markers -Sticky dots for voting
15 min	Wrap-ups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Group Memory • Next steps • Action items 	Participants understand what they accomplished and what still needs to be done	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review • Check for understanding and agreement 	Ron	-Ask people to fill up their to-go containers and take food home!
	Adjourn				



The information on a facilitator's agenda can be overwhelming and distracting for meeting participants. We recommend creating a simplified version of the agenda for meeting participants.

SAMPLE PARTICIPANT'S AGENDA			
TIME	TOPIC	PROCESS	LEAD
20 min	Start-ups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome • Introductions • Group Agreements • Desired Outcomes • Agenda Review • Role Contracting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Round robin • Check for understanding and agreement 	Harry
15 min	Presentation of Concept Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation • Individual note taking 	Hermione
15 min	Questions and Answers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Popcorn 	Ron and Hermione
45 min	Recommendations for Changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorming and brainwriting • Check for understanding and agreement • Majority vote 	Harry
15 min	Wrap-ups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Group Memory • Next steps • Action items 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review • Check for understanding and agreement 	Ron
	Adjourn		

