

# COMMUNICATION TYPES

## GROUP PATTERNS AND HOW TO WORK WITH THEM

### ***The Distractor***

When a participant introduces jokes or disruptive behavior, it can shift the group's energy away from the task at hand and make it harder for others to stay engaged.

While humor can be a tool for connection, if used to deflect or dominate, it can erode focus and emotional safety. As a facilitator, the key is to respond with curiosity rather than control—pause, redirect with warmth, and if needed, remind the group of shared agreements.

### ***The Observer***

Gently invite these participants to share their thoughts by asking open-ended questions that encourage deeper reflection and engagement. Additionally, consider providing opportunities for smaller group discussions, as these settings often foster a sense of safety and comfort, allowing quieter individuals to express their ideas more freely.

### ***The Dominator***

Encourage these individuals to step back and create space for others to contribute by actively inviting quieter members to share their insights. Utilize techniques such as structured turn-taking, where each participant has a designated opportunity to speak, or direct facilitation, where you guide the conversation to ensure that everyone has a chance to voice their thoughts.

### ***The Tense Energy***

Tense energy in a group often signals unspoken conflict, emotional discomfort, or fear of judgment—and while it may not surface directly, it can quietly erode group cohesion and safety. As a facilitator, your job isn't to ignore it, but to gently acknowledge and redirect it. This might mean pausing for a grounding breath, naming the energy with care, or shifting into a lower-pressure activity that allows space to reset.

### ***The Side Talker***

Small, private conversations—often called “side talk”—can disrupt the flow of a group by pulling attention away from the main discussion and creating a sense of disconnection or exclusion. While they're usually not meant to be disrespectful, they can signal boredom, confusion, or a need for connection. This might mean moving closer to the conversation, pausing with calm presence, or re-engaging the group with a question or reminder of the shared focus.