

Wicked Questions

Articulate the paradoxical challenges that a group must confront to succeed

Reveal	25 min
Invitation Ask: "What opposing-yet-complementary strategies do we need to pursue simultaneously in order to be successful?"	
People Ask participants to form groups of 4 to 6 people	
Space & Materials - Chairs - Paper for participants to record observations and insights - Small round tables (optional)	

What? So What? Now What? W³

Together, look back on progress to date and decide what adjustments are needed

Analyze	45 min
Invitation After a shared experience, ask three questions to reflect in a way that builds understanding and spurs coordinated action while avoiding unproductive conflict	
People Start alone, then groups of 5 to 7 people, then the whole group	
Space & Materials - Chairs for people to sit in small groups - Paper to make lists - Flip chart may be needed with a large group to collect answers - Small tables & Talking object (optional)	

Min Specs

Specify only the absolute "Must do's" & "Must not do's" for achieving a purpose

Strategize	45 min
Invitation In the context of a challenging activity, a new initiative, or a strategic bottleneck, invite participants to generate a list of all the do's and don'ts they should pay attention to in order to achieve a successful outcome (Max Specs)	
Ask participants to reduce the previous list to the absolute minimum needed to achieve their purpose (Min Specs)	
People Start alone, then small groups of 4 to 7, then the whole group	
Space & Materials - Groups of 4 to 7 chairs around small tables - Paper to record Max and Min Specs	

Heard, Seen, Respected (HSR)

Practice deeper listening and empathy with colleagues

Help	35 min
Invitation - Tell a story to a partner about a time when you felt you were not heard, seen or respected - Ask listeners to avoid any interruptions except for asking clarifying questions	
People In pairs for the storytelling, then foursomes	
Space & Materials Chairs facing each other, a few inches between knees	
String With Troika Consulting, Generative Relationships STAR, Appreciative Interviews, Helping Heuristics Conversation Cafe	

What I Need From You (WINFY)

Surface most essential needs across functions and accept or reject requests for support

Help	65 min
Invitation Invite participants to ask for what they need from others to be successful in reaching a specific goal	
People - 3-7 functional clusters (unlimited members) - One spokesperson from each cluster	
Space & Materials - Chairs for a group of 3 to 7 people to sit in a circle in the middle of the room - Paper for participants to take notes	
String With Helping Heuristics, Integrated-Autonomy, Appreciative Interviews, Ecocycle Planning	

Integrated Autonomy

Move from either-or to robust both-and solutions

Strategize	80 min
Invitation "Will our purpose be best served by increased local autonomy, customization, competition, and freedom among units/sites? Or by increased integration, standardization, and control among units/sites? Or both?"	
People Start alone, then small groups of 4, then the whole group	
Space & Materials - Chairs for people to sit in groups of 4, with or without small tables - "Integrated Autonomy Worksheet" for each participant and a large one on the wall - Paper for recording activities and action steps	

Appreciative Interviews

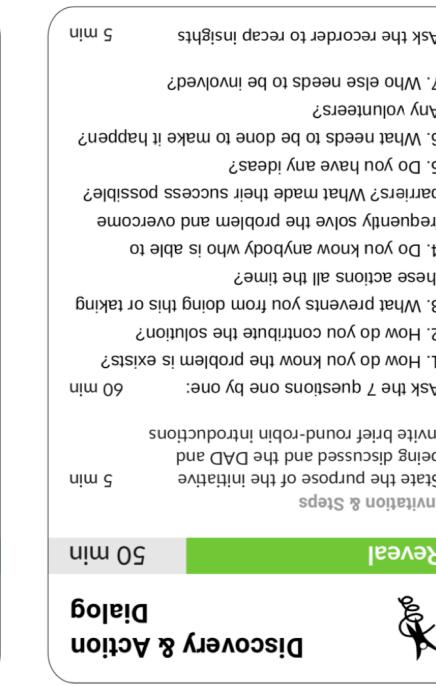
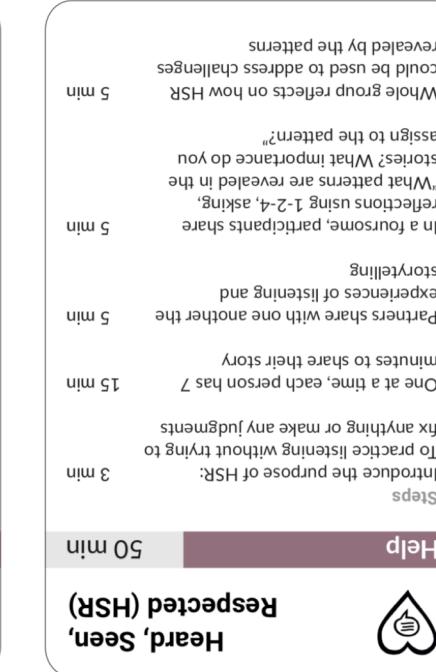
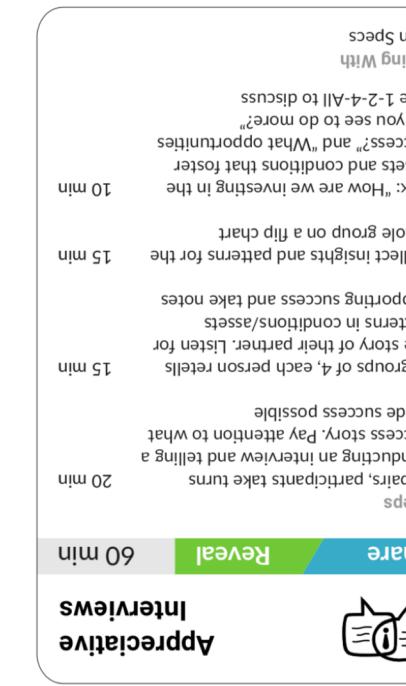
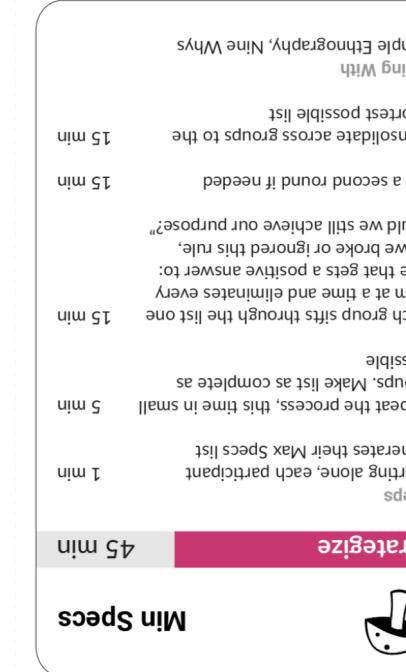
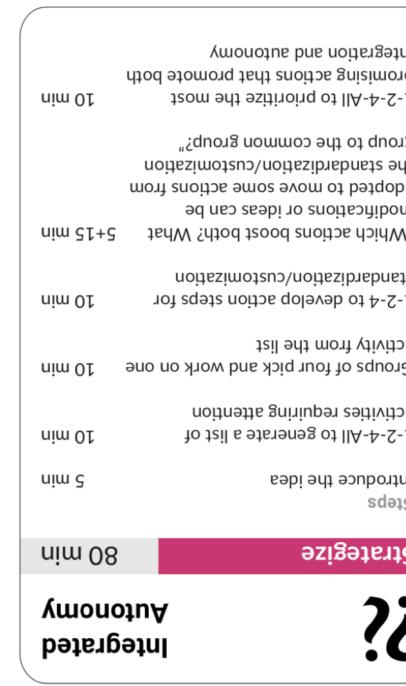
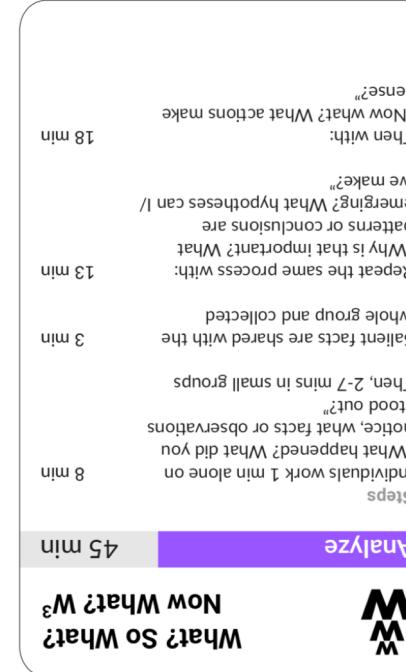
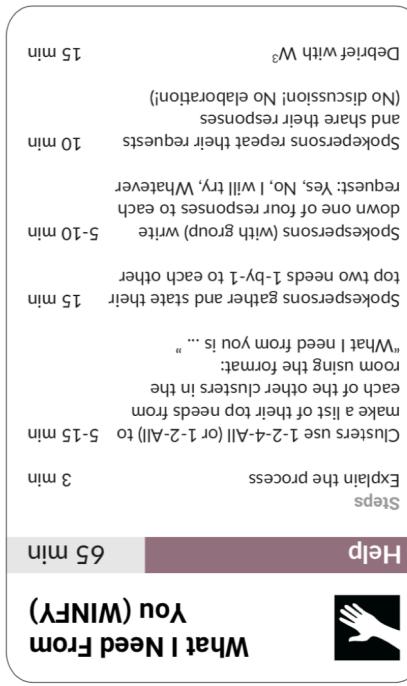
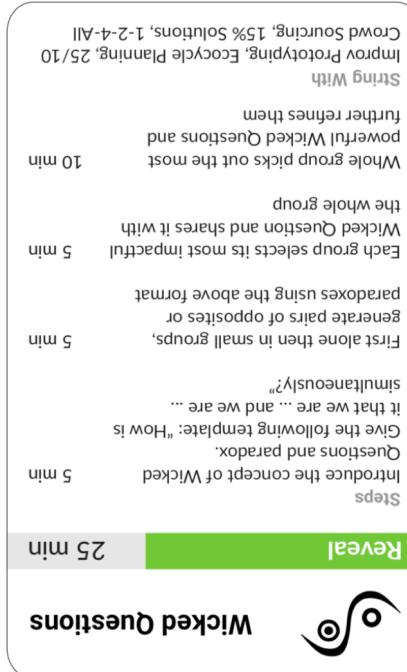
Discover & build on the root causes of success

Share	Reveal	60 min
Invitation Ask: "Please tell a story about a time when you worked on a challenge with others and you are proud of what you accomplished. What is the story and what made the success possible? Pair up preferably with someone you don't know well."		
People - Start with pairs, then groups of 4 - Encourage groups to be diverse		
Space & Materials - Chairs for people to sit in pairs face-to-face - Paper for participants to take notes		

Discovery & Action Dialog

Discover, invent and unleash local solutions to chronic problems

Reveal	50 min
People - Facilitator works with a partner to serve as a recorder - Total group size should be between 5-15 people - Diversity in roles and experience is an important asset	
Space & Materials - DADS take place in a local setting or unit - Groups may be standing or sitting around a table - Paper, flip chart or projection equipment is needed to record insights and actions	
String With Improv Prototyping	





Improv Prototyping

Develop effective solutions to chronic challenges while having serious fun

Reveal

20 min

Invitation

Identify a chronic challenge in your work, then playfully experiment, invent, and discover better ways to address the challenge by acting out the situation and possible solutions

People

- One small group of players on "the stage"
- All others, the observers, in small groups in front or around the stage

Space & Materials

Open space or stage with chairs for everyone

String With

Design StoryBoards, Shift & Share, User Experience Fishbowl



Drawing Together

Reveal insights and paths forward through non-verbal expression

Reveal

40 min

Invitation

Invite participants to tell a story about a challenge they face or a common challenge, using only five symbols and no words

People

Start alone, then in groups of 1-4 people, then the whole group

Space & Materials

- Open wall with tapestry paper or flip charts
- Water-based markers

Symbols

Circle: wholeness, Rectangle: support, Triangle: goal, Spiral: change, Star Person: relationship



Open Space Technology

Liberate inherent action and leadership in large groups

Reveal

90 min

Invitation

Invite participants to co-construct the agenda by posting sessions that they will convene on topics they are passionate about

People

- Start together in one large circle (or as many concentric circles as needed)
- Continue with groups of various sizes self-organized around agenda topics

Space & Materials

- Chairs in concentric circles in a large room
- Large blank agenda posted on wall. It should include slots for enough concurrent sessions to accommodate what is likely to emerge given the challenge and the number of participants



Critical Uncertainties

Develop strategies for successfully operating in a range of plausible yet unpredictable futures

Strategize

100 min

Invitation

Identify the most critical and uncertain "realities" in your operating environment or market. Which strategies can help?

People

Have a group large and diverse enough to break it up into four separate small groups

Space & Materials

- Four groups of chairs around tables
- Paper, Post-it notes, flip charts, or tapestry paper for each group

String With

Conversation Cafe, P2P, WINFY, Open Space Technology, Wicked Questions, Min Specs



1-2-4-All

Engage everyone simultaneously in generating questions, ideas and suggestions

Reveal

12 min

Invitation

Ask a question in response to the presentation of an issue, or about a problem to resolve or a proposal put forward

People

Start alone, then in pairs, then groups of four, then the whole group

Space & Materials

- Space for people to work face-to-face in pairs and foursomes
- Paper for participants to record observations and insights
- Chairs and tables (optional)



TRIZ

Stop counterproductive activities & behaviors to make space for innovation

Reveal

35 min

People

Ask participants to form groups of 4 to 7 people

Space & Materials

- Chairs
- Paper for participants to record observations and insights
- Small tables (optional)

String With

Ecocycle Planning, Troika Consulting, Wise Crowds, Open Space Technology



Shift & Share

Spread good ideas and make informal connections with innovators

Share

90 min

Invitation

Visit several innovators who will share something new or innovative

People

- Presenters set up their individual stations
- Whole group is split into the same number of small groups as there are presenters
- Groups stay together while they rotate through all the innovation stations

Space & Materials

- Large space where 5 to 8 stations (with chairs) can be set up far enough from each other to minimize interference
- Space for a display as needed by presenters



Helping Heuristics

Practice progressive methods for helping others, receiving and asking for help

Help

15 min

Invitation

Participants view all human interactions as offers that are either accepted or blocked

People

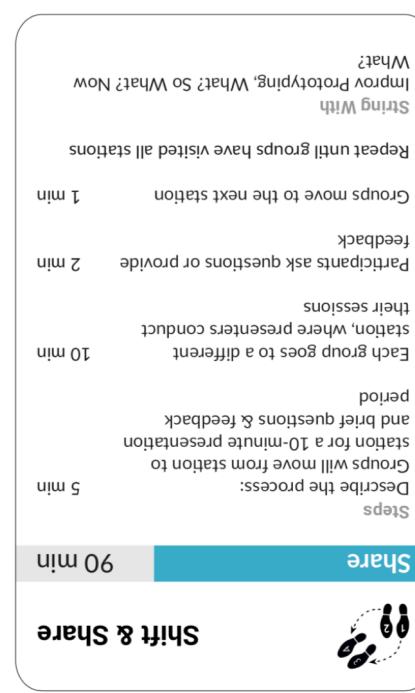
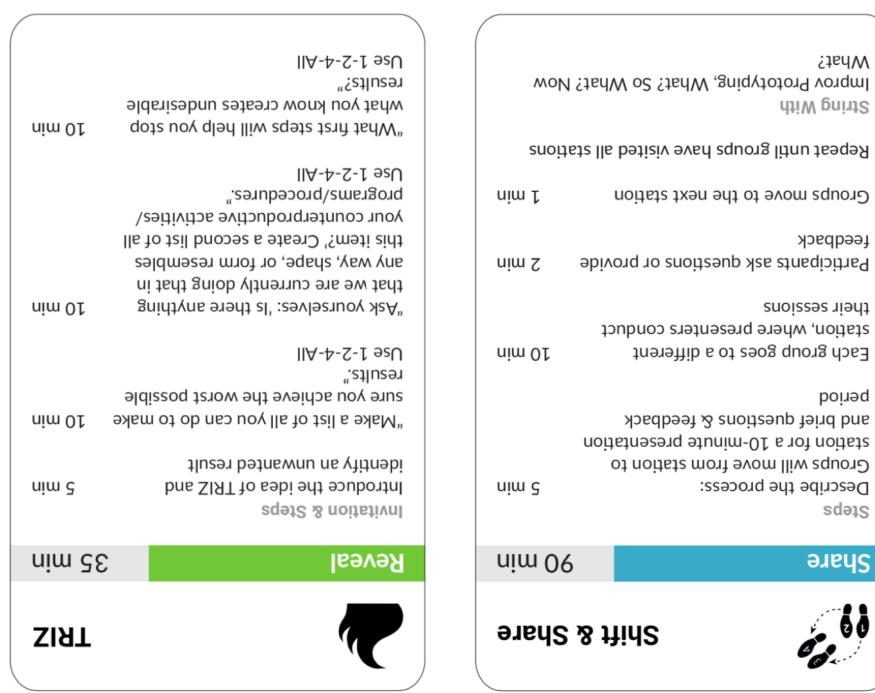
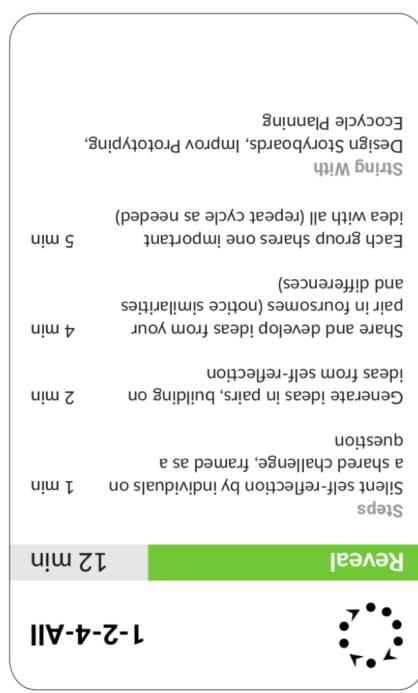
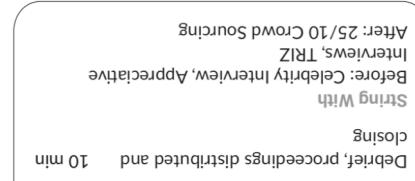
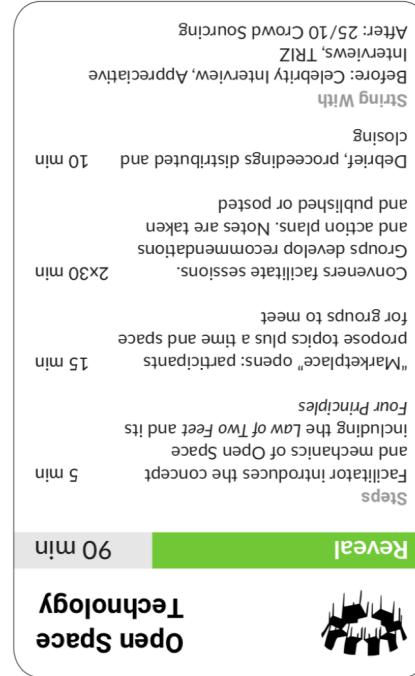
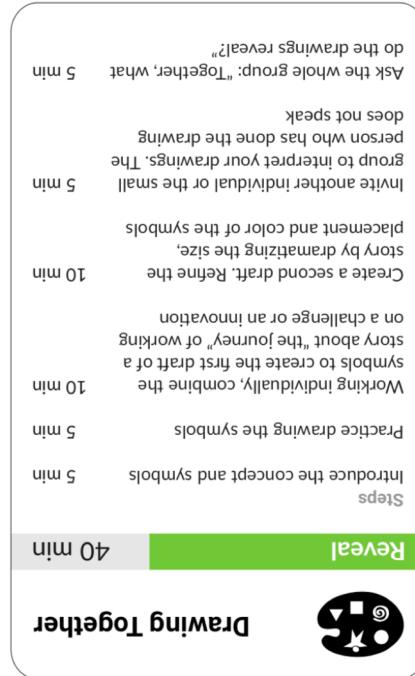
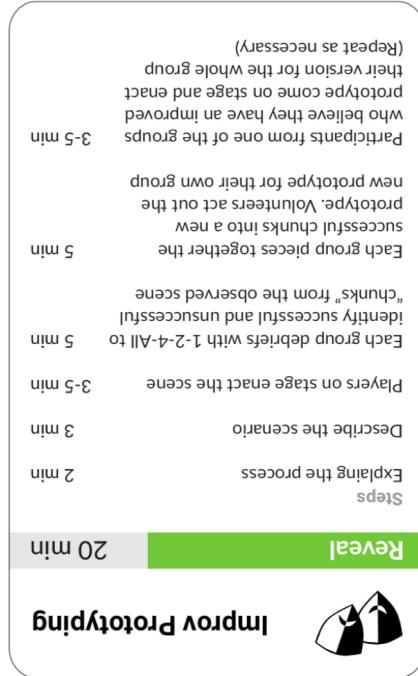
Groups of 3: two participants interacting face-to-face in the roles of client (with a challenge to share) and coach plus one observer (roles can change between rounds)

Space & Materials

Standing participants, no chairs or tables

String With

Troika Consulting, Wise Crowds, What I Need From You, Improv Prototyping, Simple Ethnography





Design Storyboards

Define step-by-step elements for bringing initiatives or meetings to productive endpoints

Plan

50 min

Invitation

Invite a design team (a representative subset of the group) to create a detailed plan, including visual cues, for how participants will interact to achieve their purpose

People

1-2-All or 1-All in rapid cycles for each step

Space & Materials

- Open wall with tapestry paper or flip charts
- Large Post-its and/or LS Cards
- Blank storyboard



Generative Relationships

Reveal and understand relationship patterns that create value or dysfunctions

Analyze

25 min

Invitation

Invite participants to assess their working group or team in terms of four attributes:
S - Separateness (diversity)
T - Tuning (listening, reflecting on challenges)
A - Action (opportunities to act on ideas)
R - Reason to work together

People

Start alone, then small groups, then the whole group

Space & Materials

- Tables for small groups of 4, with a STAR compass graphic and pens for each individual
- A STAR compass graphic on a flip-chart page for each small group & one for the whole group



Ecocycle Planning

Analyze the full portfolio of activities & relationships to identify obstacles & opportunities for progress

Analyze

Strategize

95 min

Invitation

View, organize, and prioritize current activities using four developmental phases: birth, maturity, creative destruction and renewal. Formulate action steps linked to each phase

People

1-2-4-All, small groups for action steps

Space & Materials

- Chairs in groups of 4, with or without tables
- Blank Ecocycle map worksheet for each participant & large version posted on the wall
- Post-it notes for each activity

String With

Panarchy, 1-2-4-All, WINFY, Open Space



Impromptu Networking

Rapidly share challenges and expectations, while building new connections

Share

20 min

Invitation

- Ask:
- "What big challenge do you bring to this gathering?"
 - "What do you hope to get from and give this group or community?"

People

- Ask participants to pair up
- Invite them to find strangers or colleagues in groups/functions different from their own

Space & Materials

Open space without obstructions so participants can stand in pairs and mill about to find partners



15% Solutions

Discover & focus on what each person has the freedom and resources to do now

Reveal

20 min

Invitation

In connection with their personal challenge or their group's challenge, ask:

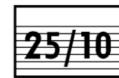
- "What is your 15 percent?"
- "Where do you have discretion and freedom to act?"
- "What can you do without more resources or authority?"

People

Start alone, then groups of 2 to 4 people

Space & Materials

Chairs for people to sit in groups



25/10 Crowd Sourcing

Rapidly generate & sift a group's most powerful actionable ideas

Reveal

30 min

Invitation

Ask:

"If you were ten times bolder, what big idea would you recommend? What first step would you take to get started?"

People

Start alone, mill around, then in pairs

Space & Materials

- Open space without chairs or tables
- Index cards (one for each participant)

String With

Open Space, Agreement-Certainty Matrix, Ecocycle Planning



Conversation Cafe

Engage everyone in making sense of profound challenges

Share

50 min

Invitation

Invite all participants to gather in small groups to listen to one another's thoughts and reflect together on a shared challenge

People

- Mixed, diverse groups of 5-7 participants
- One person to act as the host - a participant whose role is to gently intervene when another participant visibly fails to observe one of the six Conversation Cafe agreements

Space & Materials

- Groups of 5 to 7 chairs around small tables
- Talking object
- Markers and one or two pieces of flip-chart paper per table (optional)



Celebrity Interview

Reconnect the experience of leaders and experts with people closest to the challenge at hand

Share

45 min

Invitation

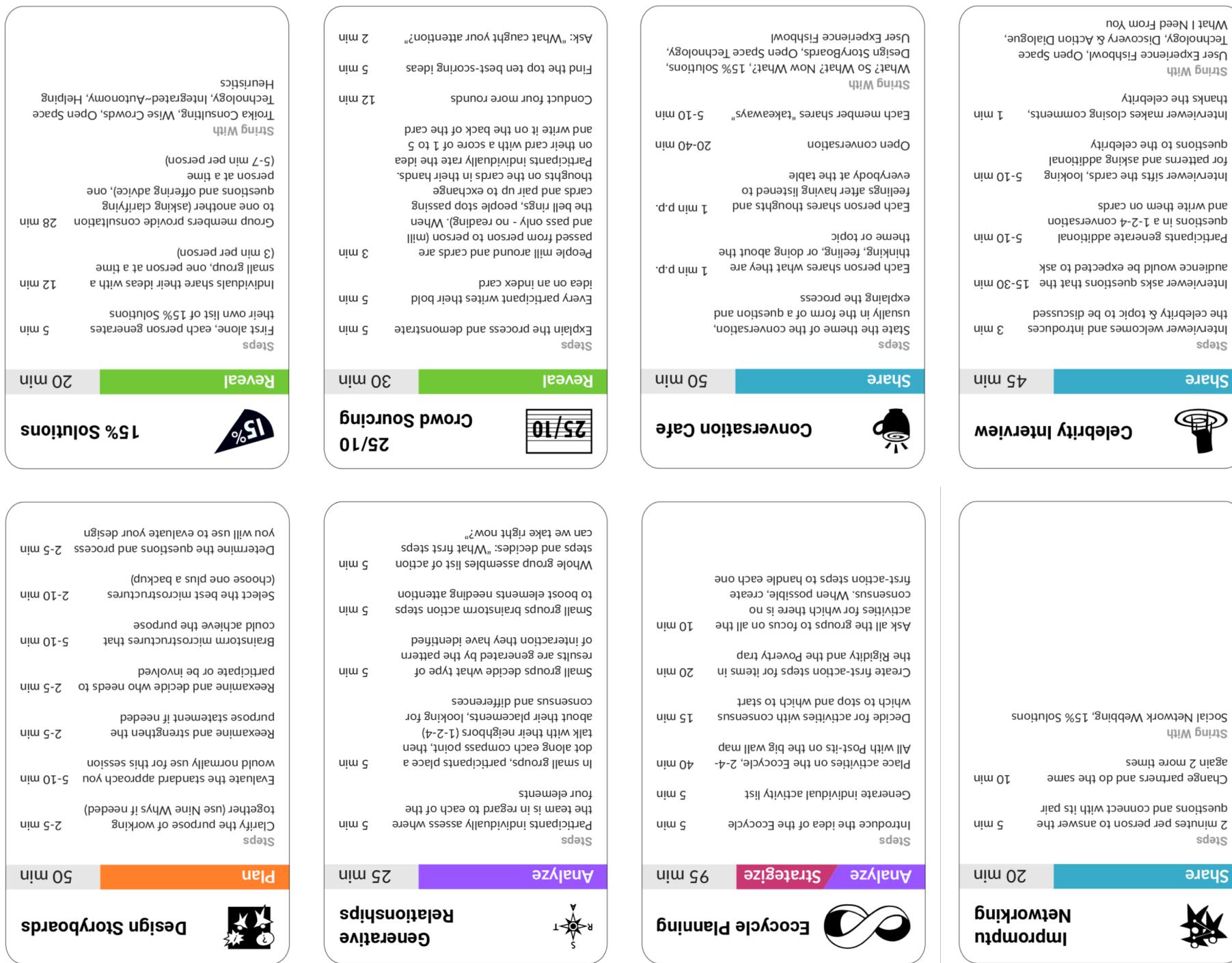
- Invite the celebrity to let go of their formal presentation or speech and answer the harder questions in a casual "talk show" format
- Invite group members to listen, see the person behind the celebrity and write down questions with colleagues

People

Whole group for the interview, 1-2-4 to generate questions

Space & Materials

- Interviewer and celebrity in the front of the room where everyone can see and hear the interaction
- Large cards to collect questions





Agreement-Certainty Matrix

Sort challenges into simple, complicated, complex and chaotic domains

Analyze

45 min

Invitation

Categorize challenges as simple, complicated, complex or chaotic & place them in the matrix

People

Start alone, groups of 4-6, whole group

Space & Materials

- Chairs for groups with or without small tables
- Long open wall with a large tapestry paper illustration of the matrix
- One blank matrix for every participant
- Post-it notes and markers for everybody

String With

Critical Uncertainties, Purpose-To-Practice, Ecocycle, Panarchy, Integrated~Autonomy



Panarchy

Understand how embedded systems interact, evolve, influence the spread of innovation and transform

Analyze

Strategize

120 min

Invitation

What is contributing to the existence of a challenge at levels above and below you?

People

1-2-4-All

Space & Materials

- Room with unobstructed flat wall
- Blank Panarchy chart handout
- Large wall-poster version of Panarchy chart
- Post-it notes for each participant
- Flip-chart pages for the Panarchy graphic

String With

Ecocycle Planning, 1-2-4-All, WINFY, Social Network Webbing, Celebrity Interview



Nine Whys

Make the purpose of your work together clear

Analyze

20 min

Invitation

Ask:

- "What do you do when working on ... (the subject matter or challenge at hand)? Please make a short list of activities."
- "Why is that important to you?"
- Keep asking, "Why? Why? Why?" up to nine times or until participants have reached the fundamental purpose for this work

People

Start with pairs, then groups of four, then the whole group

Space & Materials

- Chairs for people to sit face-to-face
- No tables or equipment needed



Troika Consulting

Get practical and imaginative help from colleagues immediately

Help

Reveal

30 min

Invitation

Invite the group to explore the questions:

- "What is your challenge?"
- "What kind of help do you need?"

People

- Ask participants to form groups of 3 people
- People with diverse backgrounds and perspectives are most helpful

Space & Materials

- Groups of 3 chairs, knee-to-knee seating preferred
- No tables



Wise Crowds

Tap the wisdom of the whole group in rapid cycles

Reveal

Help

15 min

Invitation

Ask each participant to be the "client" when their turn comes and briefly describe their challenge and ask for help
Ask the other participants to act as a group of "consultants" whose task is to help the "client" and offer advice or recommendations

People

- Groups of 4 to 5 people
- Mixed groups across functions, levels and disciplines are ideal

Space & Materials

- Groups of 4 or 5 chairs arranged around small tables or in circles without tables
- Paper for participants to take notes



User Experience Fishbowl

Share know-how gained from experience with a larger community

Share

50 min

Invitation

Ask those in the fishbowl to describe their experience - the good, the bad and the ugly - informally, concretely, and openly. Invite them to do it in conversation with each other as if the audience wasn't there. Firmly, ask them to avoid presenting to the audience

People

- One inner circle group of 3-7 people
- One outer circle with multiple small satellite groups of 3-4 people

Space & Materials

- 3-7 chairs in circle in the middle of the room
- Chairs as needed in an outer circle
- Microphones (optional)



Social Network Webbing

Map informal connections and decide how to strengthen the network to achieve a purpose

Share

Help

60 min

Invitation

Invite members of a core working group with a shared purpose to create a map of their network and decide how to expand and strengthen it

People

- 1-2-4-All to generate names of key groups
- Whole group to generate names of people in the network and construct the map

Space & Materials

- Open wall with tapestry paper or multiple flip-chart pages
- Post-it notes in at least 8 colors
- Bold-tip black pens



Simple Ethnography

Observe and record actual behaviors of users in the field

Analyze

75 min

Invitation

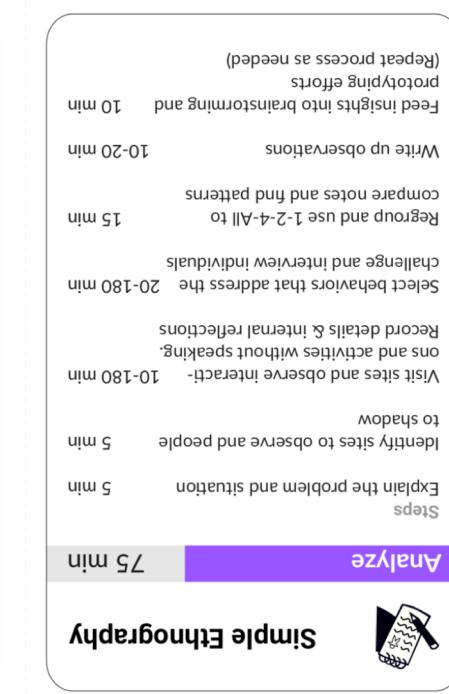
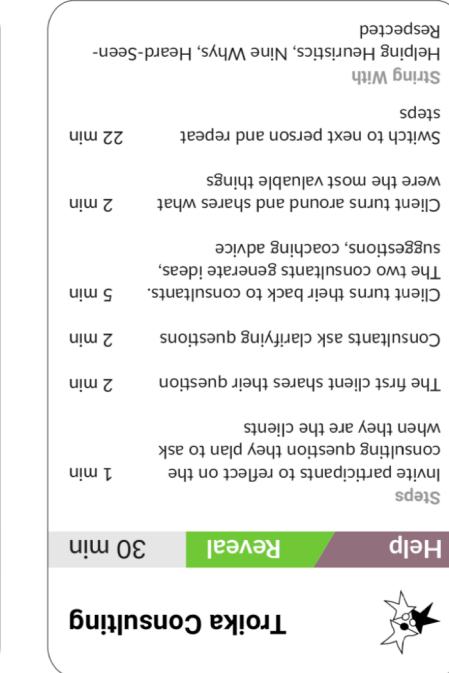
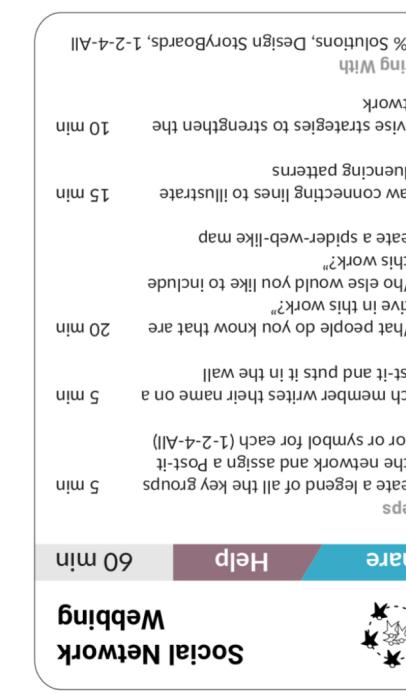
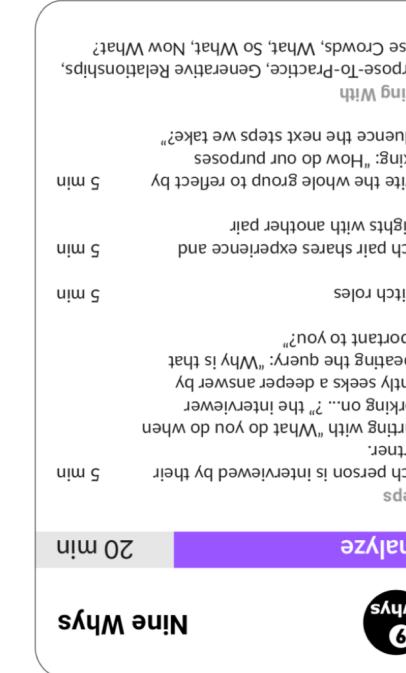
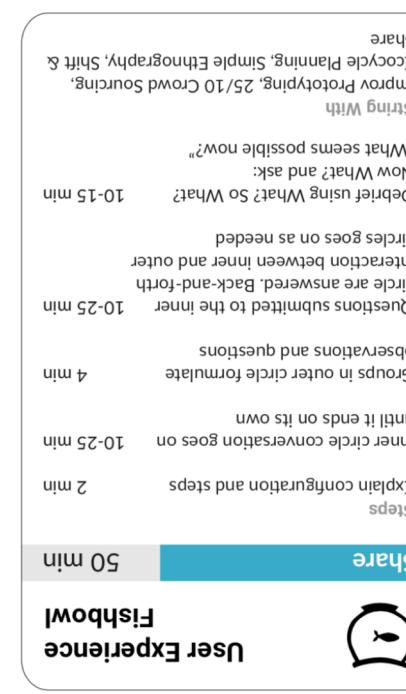
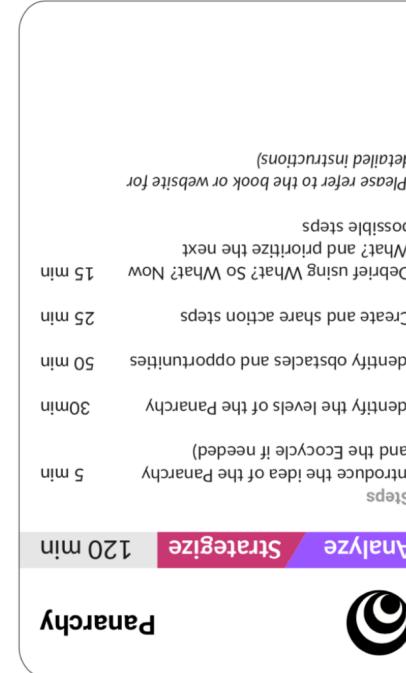
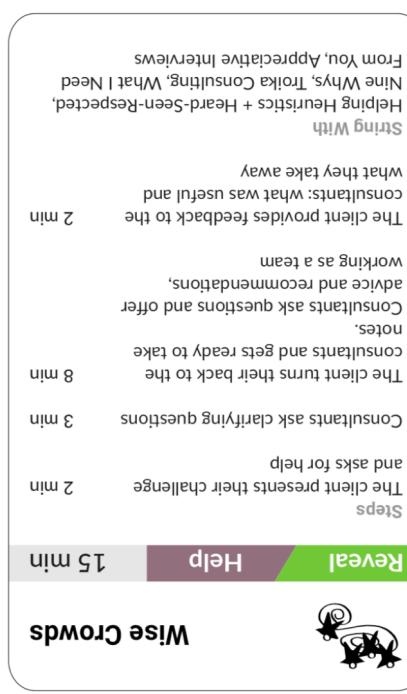
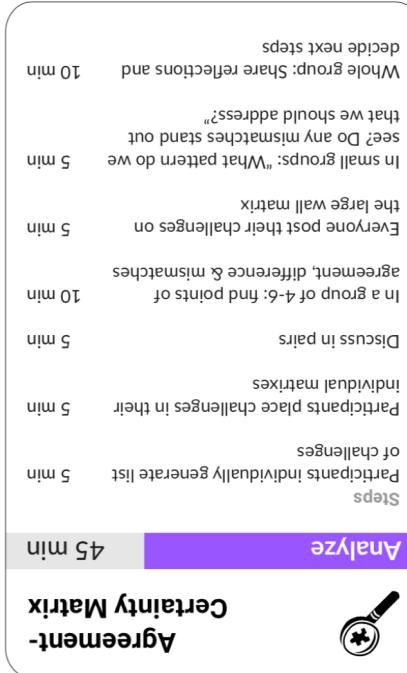
Invite participants to silently observe people with experience relevant to the challenge at hand and then follow up with interviews for more insight

People

In 1s or 2s distributed among sites being observed, whole group for debrief

Space & Materials

- Local setting (workplace, client organization, neighborhood) with a convenient space for sharing findings, photos, and videos
- Notebook, camera, video (optional)





Purpose-To-Practice (P2P)

Define the five essential elements for a resilient & enduring initiative

Plan

120 min

Invitation

Invite all or most stakeholders to participate in the design of their new initiative in order to specify its five essential elements: purpose, principles, participants, structure and practices

People

- Start with 1-2-4-All
- Whole group for finalizing each element

Space & Materials

- Chairs and small tables for people to work in groups of 4
- Large wall with poster paper for recording the P2P result for each element
- Five worksheets for each participant , one for each of the five elements

