collective action toolkit

groups
make
change

frog

HELLO! THIS TOOLKIT IS FOR PEOPLE WHO WANT TO WORK WITH GROUPS IN THEIR COMMUNITY TO:

solve problems

No matter what size of problem you're looking to solve, the activities here can help your group investigate and generate solutions for community problems. For example: you might be motivated to help people around you get access to healthier food, reduce how many people are becoming sick because of an infectious disease, construct a new building, or start a small business.

build new skills

Gain important life skills with your group and understand how to best put them to use. For example: critical thinking, listening to others, asking better questions, generating ideas, active collaboration, creating better stories, and inspiring and sustaining collective action.
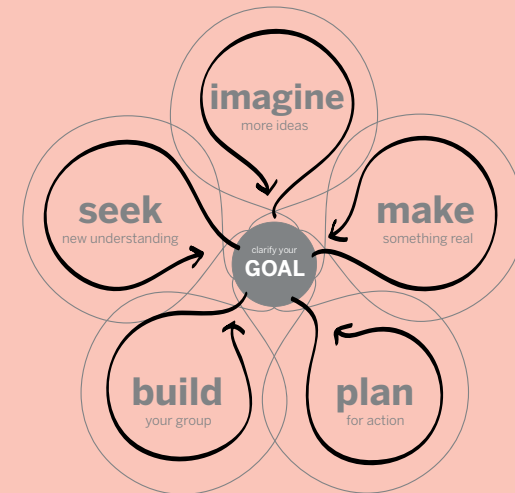
gain knowledge

By pooling what you know and who you know, you can better support each other in your group and beyond. For example: with your group, you can gain perspective on a community problem or need, as well as reach out to more people that could support those solutions.

all you need is a group and a goal

The Collective Action Toolkit was created to help community leaders bring together groups to solve shared problems and act on them. It consists of an **action map** and activities arranged into **six activity areas.** The action map that follows will help you understand what activity options you have for when your group meets.

how to use this toolkit

It all starts with the action map. At the center of the action map is your **shared goal.** You want to make these goals real. This is where your group begins.

imagine
more ideas

seek
new understanding

clarify your
GOAL

make
something real

build
your group

plan
for action

There are six activity areas that a team can move through in pursuit of their goal. The areas around your goal inspire how you move through the process of taking action. Each time you do an activity, you'll learn something valuable that helps you better understand your goals and how to act to reach them.

Goals change over time, based on how we learn and grow as people. So while you will start your group by setting a shared goal, your group will continuously return to the center of the action map to take stock of what you've accomplished and look ahead to what still needs to be done to reach your goal.

imagine
more ideas

seek
new understanding

make
something real

clarify your
GOAL

build
your group
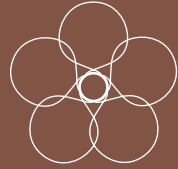
plan
for action

learning card

Record what your group discovers and map your progress as you use this Toolkit.

what we did
activity names in the order we completed them

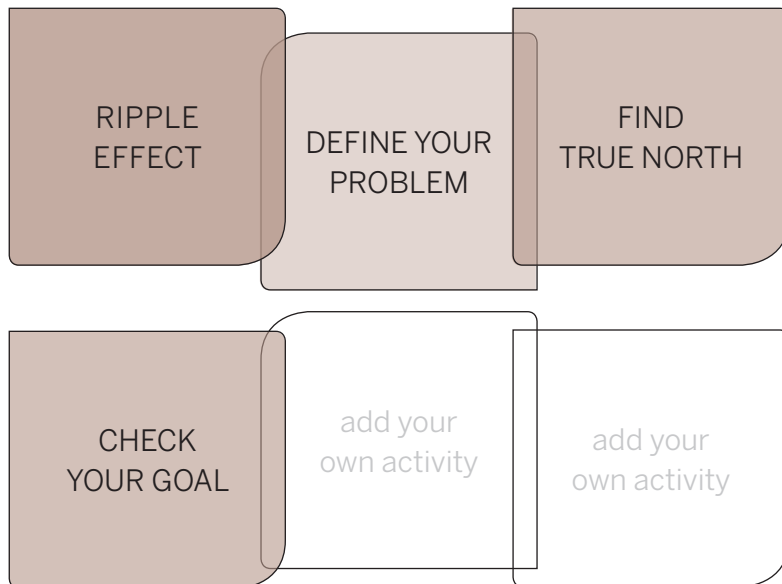**what we learned**
key ahas! from the activities we did

what we're going to do next
try another activity, clarify our goal, revisit our approach

cut along line

clarify your goal

Agree on the problem you're trying to solve and what goals you want to achieve by working together. This activity area is critical to your team's success, as your goals may change depending on what your group learns.

clarify activities

RIPPLE EFFECT	DEFINE YOUR PROBLEM	FIND TRUE NORTH
CHECK YOUR GOAL	add your own activity	add your own activity

keep a visual record of how your goal evolves
Continue to remind your group of their goal and how they're moving towards it. Hang things up on the walls, keep stacks of paper with old sketches, and photograph your time together. They will serve as both a record of your progress and an inspiration for future work.

stock up on the right supplies
While most activities in this toolkit require no more than a pencil and paper, there are suggestions for extra supplies that may come in handy and help your group use your time more effectively.

be aware of your shared values
Openly discuss with your group what's important to you and how you like to work, so there aren't big surprises when you take on big challenges.

make sure you're having fun
Even if you get serious in the activity you're doing, remember to laugh and celebrate when you're done. You're accomplishing great things!

suggested sequences

Define your goal when your group meets for the first time:

Ripple Effect → Find True North
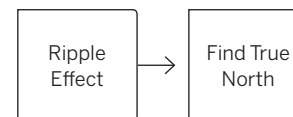
Revisit this area as you travel from one activity area to the next, so your team stays aligned.

fold along line

ripple effect

Decide what kind of impact you want your group to have—from improving the lives of individuals in your community to changing your country or the world.
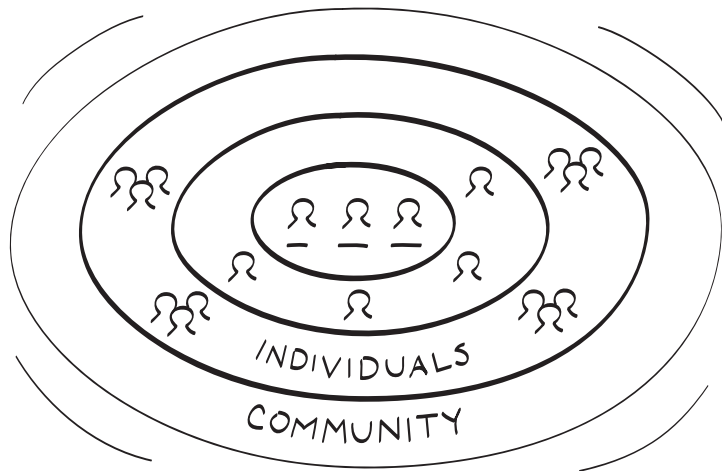
INDIVIDUALS
COMMUNITY

time
30 min. for a team of
3 people, add 5 mins.
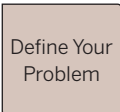each additional team

roles
Participants, 1 recorder,
1 facilitator

materials
Printer-size paper
(8.5" x 11") or larger, pens
Optional: camera, markers

where to next?

Try another Clarify activity like 'Define Your Problem' to better understand the problem you want to solve.

Define Your
Problem

1. Divide your group into teams of three people. Hand each team a piece of paper and ask them to write a question they're trying to work through at the top. Then draw a circle in the center of the page that contains the names of the group members.
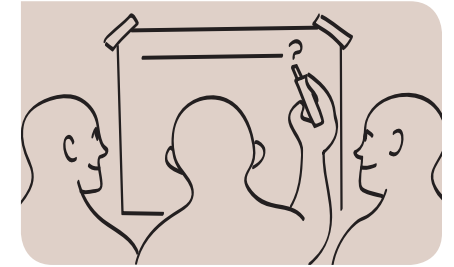
2. Have each team write around the first circle the effect they'd like to have on close friends or family. Draw a larger circle around these names and label it 'individuals'.
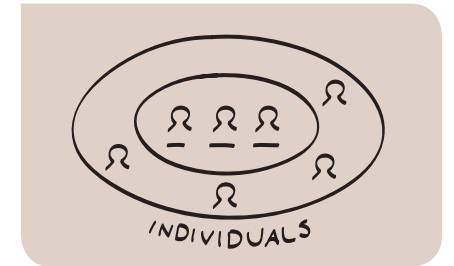
3. Write the effects the team would like to have on their community *around* the individuals circle. Draw a larger circle around these newly added affects and label it 'community.' Continue the exercise for the effects the team wants to have on their country, nation, and world.

4. Ask everybody to post their Ripple Effects on the wall and talk about their similarities and differences. Choose a circle to focus on and the effects you'd like to see. Write these on a clean sheet of paper with when you'd like to see this happen. Put this sheet on the wall so the team can use it later.

fold along line
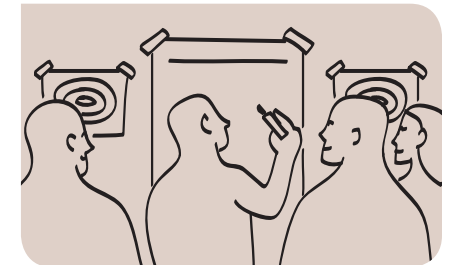
define your problem

Define the problem your group wants to tackle and establish key questions to answer along the way.
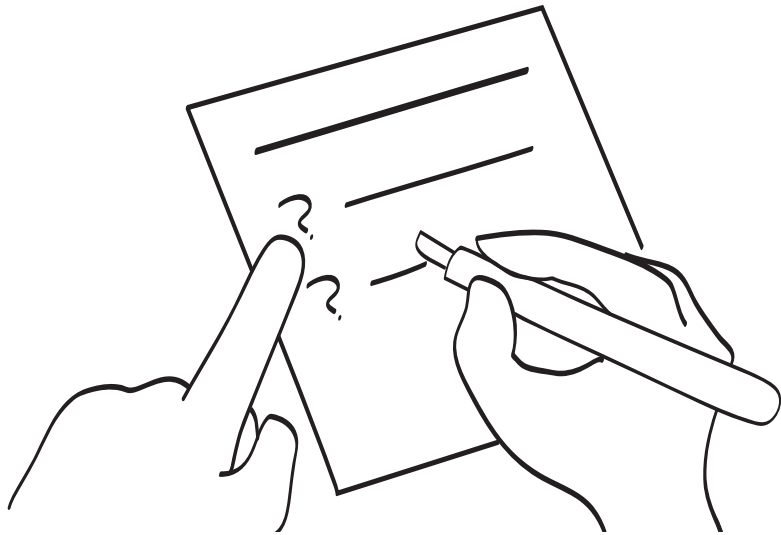
time
45 min. for a team of
3 people, add 5 mins.
each additional team

roles
Participants, 1 recorder,
1 facilitator

materials
Printer-size paper (8.5"
x 11") or larger, pens
Optional: camera, markers

where to next?

Try another Clarify activity like 'Ripple Effect' to see what impact you'd like to have with this project.

Ripple
Effect

1. Divide your group into teams of three people. Hand each team a piece of paper and ask them to write the most important problem their group is trying to solve, plus one to three key questions the team needs to answer to tackle this issue.
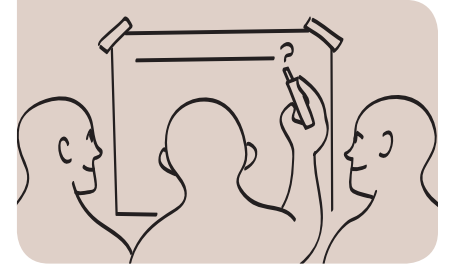
2. Give each team 10 minutes to make a skit that illustrates their problem. Teams can use whatever props they can find where they meet.
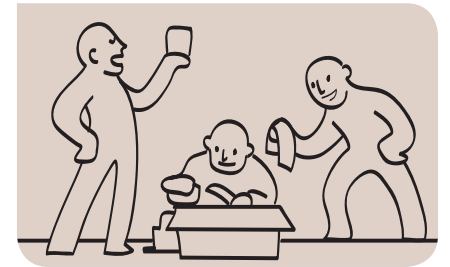
3. Have each team perform their skit. After each performance, have the audience guess the problem they tried to illustrate. Ask each team to read aloud and post their problem and question sheet.
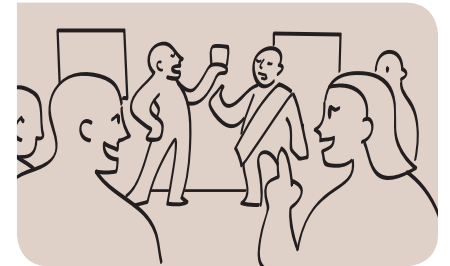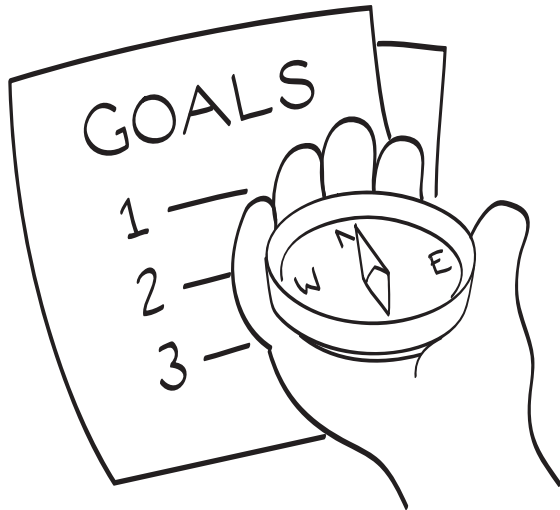
4. After every team has gone, ask everyone to put a star next to the problem they feel is most important. Discuss the problems that received the most stars and come to an agreement on the problem and key questions the project needs to address.

fold along line

find true north

As a group, come to agreement on the goals you want to achieve—and when you want to achieve them.

time
45 min. with a team of 5 people, add 3 mins. for each additional person
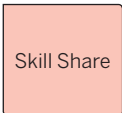
roles
Participants, 1 recorder, 1 facilitator

materials
Printer-size paper (8.5" x 11") or larger, pens
Optional: camera, markers

where to next?

Try Build Your Group activities like 'Skill Share' to identify resources you'll need to reach your goals.

Skill Share

1. Stand in a circle. Have each person stand in the middle of the circle, one at a time, and say out loud what they want to achieve with this project. Record these on a large piece of paper.

2. Once everyone in your group has spoken, give everyone a pen and ask them to put a star next to their first, second, and third choices for possible project goals.
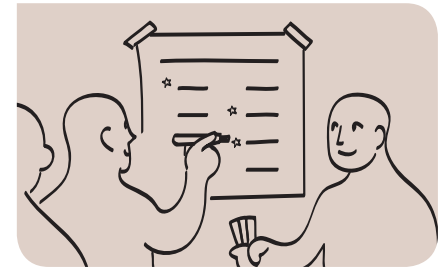
3. Look at the statements that didn't receive any stars and talk about why no one voted for them. Record any key ideas from discussing them and then cross out these statements on the piece of paper. Feel free to combine or edit people's sentences to better capture their ideas.
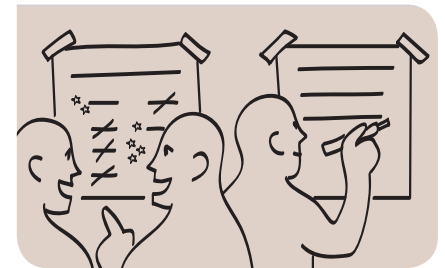
4. Count the stars that were given to each statement. The statement with the most stars is your primary goal, the second-most stars your secondary goal, and so forth. Write your goals on another sheet of paper. Then work with your group to establish the timeframe for achieving these goals.

When you're done: Put your goals and timeframe up on the wall for people to see when they come to your group meeting.

fold along line

check your goal

See if anything has changed about the goals you want your group to achieve.
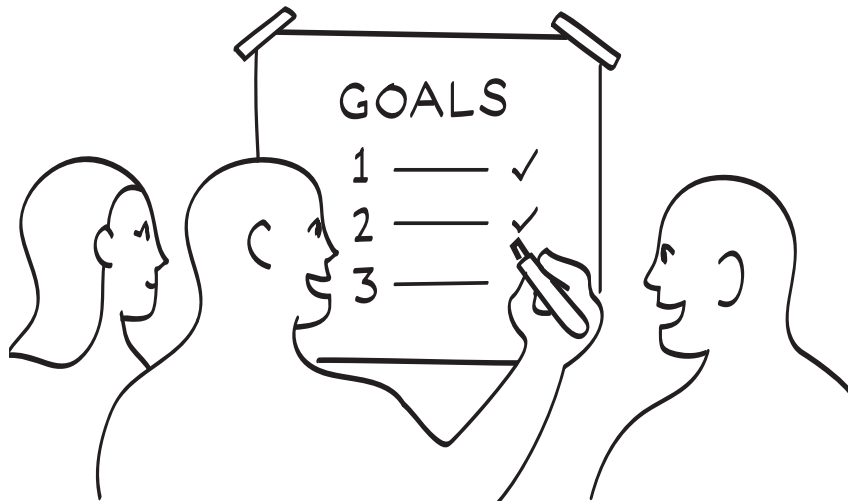
time
45 min. with a team of
5 people, add 3 mins. for each
additional person

roles
Participants, 1 recorder,
1 facilitator

materials
Printer-size paper (8.5"
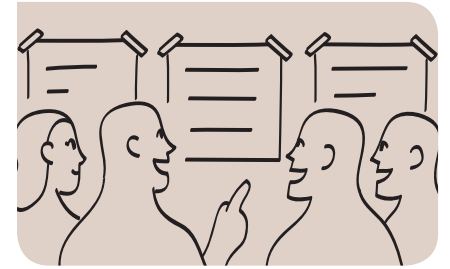x 11") or larger, pens
Optional: camera, markers

where to next?

Try Build Your Group activities like 'Skill Share' to identify resources you'll need to reach your goals.

Skill Share

1 Take a minute to look at the output of all the activities you've done and reflect on what your group has learned.

2 Fill out a Learning Card or write on a sheet of paper what your group did: activity names in the order you completed them, as well as what your group learned: big takeaways from the activities you did.

3 Compare what you learned with the goals your group had agreed upon. If your goal still holds true, continue on to another activity. Write this next step at the bottom of the Learning Card or piece of paper.

4 If the group feels like their goal has changed, write why you think your goal may be different at the bottom of the Learning Card or piece of paper. Then go through one or all of the other Clarify Your Goal activities to find your team's new shared goal. Put this new goal up on the wall for people to see when you meet.
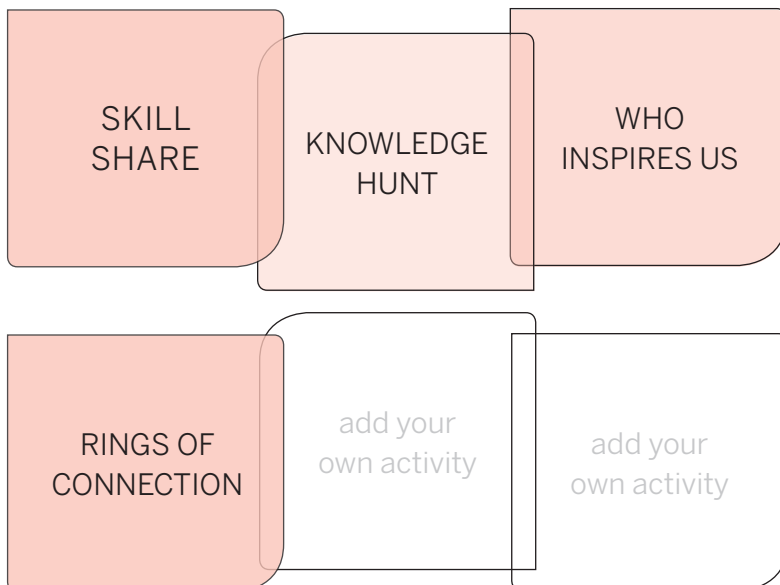
fold along line

build your group
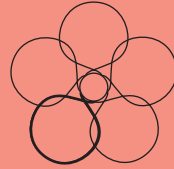
Bring together people in your community, identifying their unique strengths and their commitment to your cause. These activities will help your group members better understand each other and recruit members that want to help you reach your shared goals.

build activities

SKILL SHARE	KNOWLEDGE HUNT	WHO INSPIRES US
RINGS OF CONNECTION	add your own activity	add your own activity

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

respect people's uniqueness
Encourage different points of view. Part of the joy of spending time with other people is celebrating their differences as much as their similarities.

be mindful of their time
Spending time with your group can be fun and rewarding. But as a leader, set healthy boundaries for meetings and how their time is respected.

provide constructive feedback
Build on each other's input. Say "yes, and…" rather than "yes, but…" Free exchange of ideas thrives on this kind of feedback.

make conversation visible
Designate someone from your group to capture information and ideas that come up in your group meetings. Then share them with back with your group to fuel inspiration.
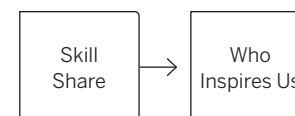
ask what to improve
Ask your group what went well and what could be made even better for the next time you get together. Everyone in the group will feel like they've been heard.

## suggested sequences

To grow your team:

Skill Share → Knowledge Fest → Rings of Connection
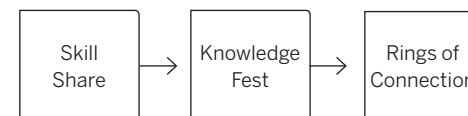
To quickly get to know your teammates:

Skill Share → Who Inspires Us

Try any activity you like until your team feels good about it. Then we recommend trying the above sequences.

skill share

Encourage your group members to share their unique skills—and determine what skills they may need to reach their goals.
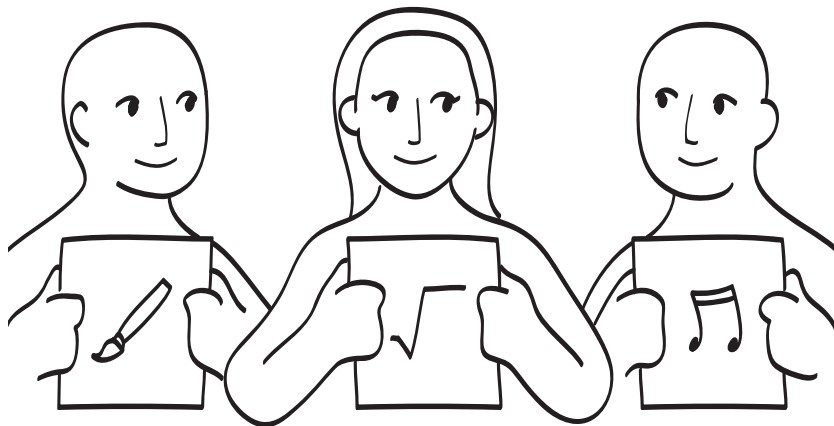
time
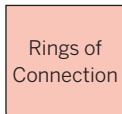45 min. with a team of 5 people

roles
Participants, 1 facilitator, 1 recorder

materials
Printer-size paper (8.5" x 11"), pens, camera
*optional: stickers, photos, markers, colored paper*

where to next?

Try another Build Activity like 'Rings of Connection' to determine who your group members might know who have desired skills.

Rings of Connection

1 Hand out two sheets of paper per group member. On the first sheet, have each person write:
  • The name they'd like the other group members to call them
  • The skills and talents they have and believe are relevant
  • One recent accomplishment
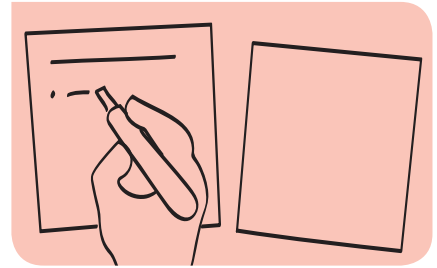
2 On the second sheet of paper, ask each person to create something that expresses who they are and what they like. For example, they could create a drawing or a collage. But group members don't *have* to use the paper. They could also make a skit, a dance, sing a song about themselves, and so forth.

3 Ask each group member to share their first page and whatever they made on the second page. Take notes about what they share, and consider taking pictures as they present so everyone in the group has a record of who each person is for future group members.
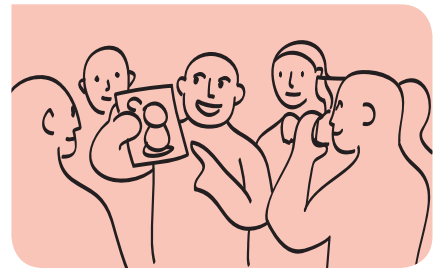
4 Once everybody has shared, ask people to put up their two sheets of paper on the wall. Lead a discussion with the group and capture on a large piece of paper:
  • The types of skills your team has a lot of
  • The skills your team still needs
  Keep this visible where you meet, so group members are reminded of these skills.

fold along line

knowledge hunt

Find out what your team already knows about challenges you're interested in solving together— and what you'd like to learn.
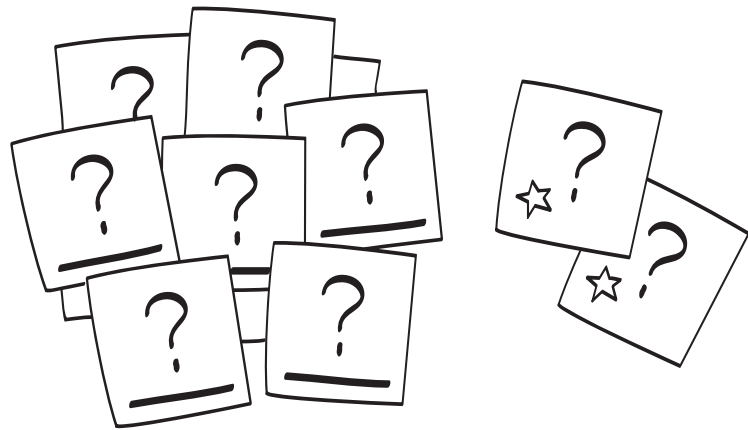
time
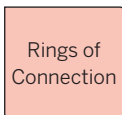45 min. with a team of 5–10 people

roles
Participants, 1 facilitator, 1 recorder

materials
Printer-size paper (8.5" x 11"), pens
*optional: tape, pins, camera, markers*

where to next?

Try another Build Activity like 'Rings of Connection' to determine who your group members might know who can help you with the information you need.

Rings of Connection

1. Give each group member a piece of paper. Ask them to write down a question, either big or small, that is relevant to the specific problem the group is interested in solving together. Make sure there's only one question on each sheet of paper.
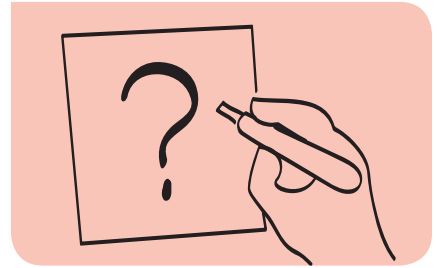
2. After everyone has written down a question, pin or tape all the questions up. If you don't have enough wall space, you can spread them out on the floor.
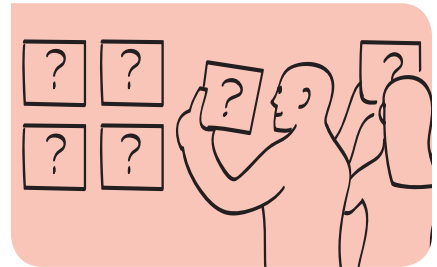
3. Have each group member walk around the room and respond to as many questions as they can by writing their answers directly on the pieces of paper. If someone thinks of another question to ask, have them write the question on a new piece of paper and pin it up with the others.
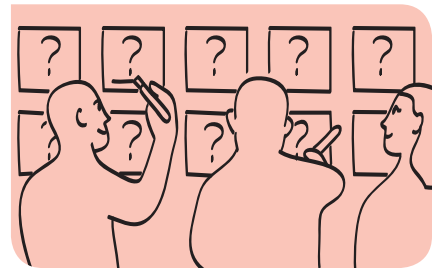
4. Read all the questions and responses aloud to the group. As you read through them, identify which questions the group feels they still need answers to by putting a check mark or star next to them. Make a list of these unanswered questions and what group members can do next to answer them.

fold along line

who inspires us

Identify people in your community and beyond that inspire your group and could help you solve your group's challenges.
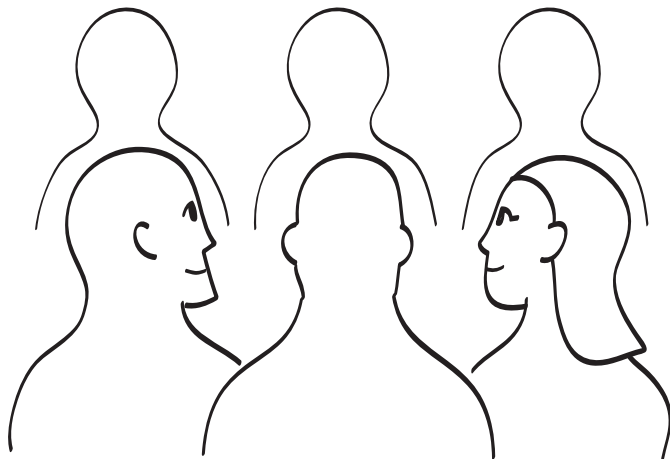
time
40 min. for a group of 5 people

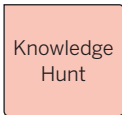**roles**
Participants, 1 facilitator, 1 recorder

materials
Printer-size paper (8.5" x 11"), pens
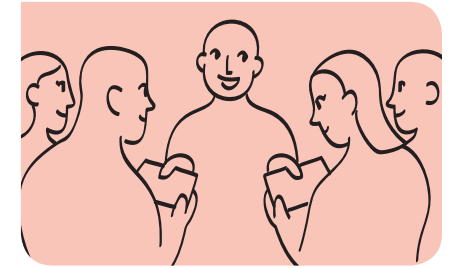*optional: stickers, photos, markers, post-its*

where to next?

Try another Build Activity like 'Knowledge Fest' to help your team answer questions that stand in the way of moving forward.
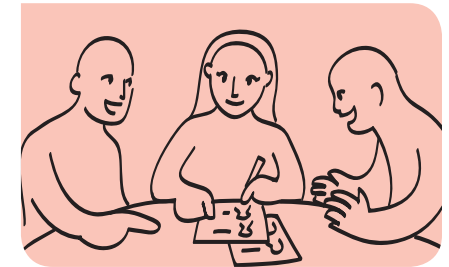
Knowledge Hunt

1. Divide your group into two teams and give them a piece of paper.

2. Ask each team to write down the names of as many people as possible who could help them solve a problem. These people could be famous, infamous, personal family, friends, and other connections. Note the reasons why group members chose each person.

3. Give each team five minutes to share their list with the other group. As the teams share, have someone write down all of the names and reasons why each person was chosen on a sheet of paper everyone can see.
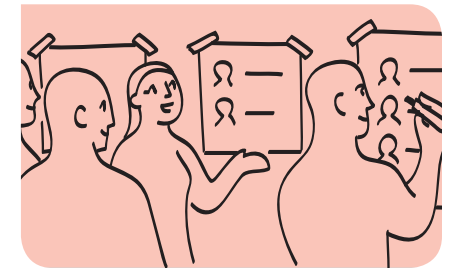
4. Next, have the entire group look at the names on the list and talk about what all these people have in common. Write down these commonalities and any other interesting discussion points for everyone to see. Put these notes on the wall so everyone can remember who inspires them and who could help them in the future.
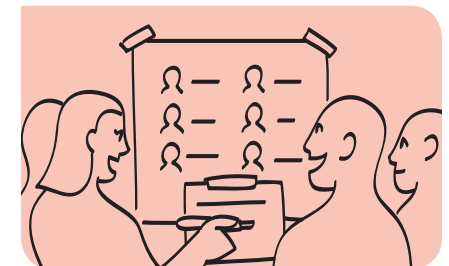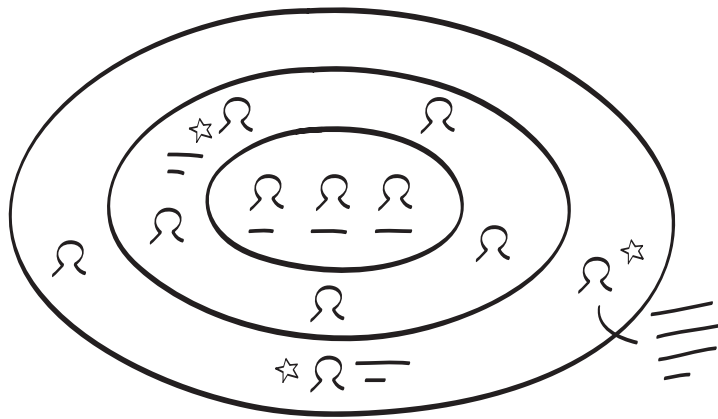
When you're done in this activity area: Try moving to the Seek New Understanding activity area to try 'Interviewing 101' and meet some of these people.

Don't forget to fill out a Learning Card when you transition to another activity area.

fold along line

rings of connection

Discover which people in your community can help your team with specific challenges

time
30 min. for a team of 3 people, add 5 mins. each additional team

roles
Participants, 1 facilitator

materials
Printer-size paper (8.5" x 11"), pens
*optional: stickers, photos, markers, post-its*

where to next?

Try moving to Seek New Understanding activities like "Interviewing 101" to start talking with some of the people you've identified. Don't forget to fill out a Learning Card when you transition to another activity area.

Interviewing 101

1 Divide your group into teams of three people. Hand each team a piece of paper and ask them to write a question they're trying to work through at the top of the page. Then draw a circle in the center of the page that contains the names of the team members.
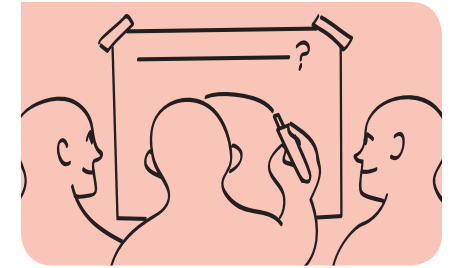
2 Have each team write around the first circle the names of people they'd reach out to first for help. These could be trusted friends and family members. Draw a larger circle around these names.
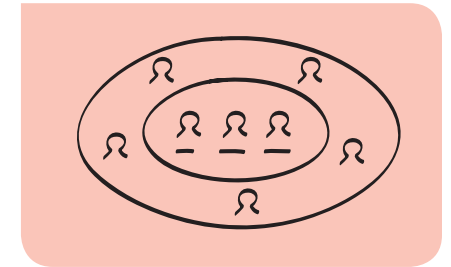
3 Write the names of the people the team would reach out to *next* if those people in the second circle weren't available. Draw a larger circle around these newly added names. Then have each team look at their initial question and review their network of relationships.
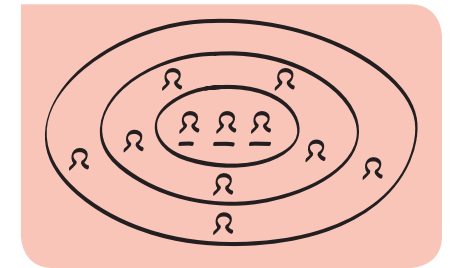
4 Ask team members to place a star next to the people they'd talk to that could help them answer the question. Write down what the team would learn by speaking to them. When all of the teams are done, put your diagrams up on the wall so the rest of the group can see them. Repeat as necessary for other questions you need to answer.
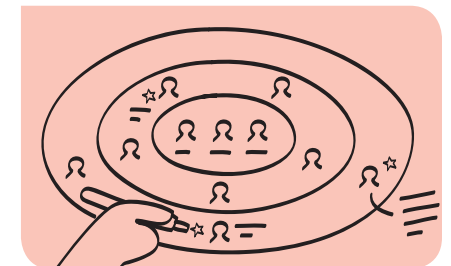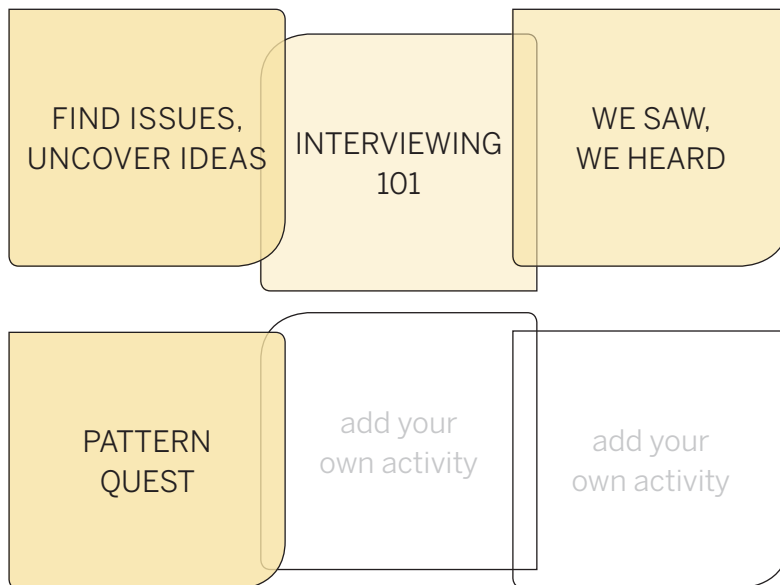
Try doing this activity with materials or meeting spaces you might need instead of people.

fold along line

seek new understanding
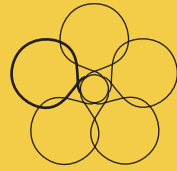
Reach out to people in your community and gain their perspective on issues that matter to them. Ask the right kinds of questions and explore how people in your community live their lives. Discover their unmet needs and better inform and inspire your group to help.

seek activities

FIND ISSUES, UNCOVER IDEAS	INTERVIEWING 101	WE SAW, WE HEARD
PATTERN QUEST	add your own activity	add your own activity

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

start where they live
Talk with people in your community. They may know more than you realize and give you perspective on how to deal with issues.

look for difficulties or obstacles
They could be problems your group can solve. Note what little things you could help with immediately, or big issues that haven't been addressed.

watch what people do
It's great to listen to what people say when you talk with them, but it adds so much more to watch what they do in real life. What do you notice?

pretend you don't know
When meeting with other people, ask open-ended questions, even if you think you may already know how they'll answer. You might be surprised.

capture your thoughts
Take notes about what you talk about, so you can reflect on what happened. Words, drawings, photographs, and video can come in handy.

look for patterns
Once you talk to several people, you may see and hear some of the same things come up. Note these patterns, as they can help you identify issues and possible solutions.

suggested sequences

Quick exploration

Find Issues, Uncover Needs → Pattern Quest

Always use the activity "Pattern Quest" before leaving this area.

Go in to the community

Interviewing 101 → We Saw, We Heard → Pattern Quest

fold along line

find issues, uncover needs

Better understand the problems people face in your community and consider what your group can do collectively to help.
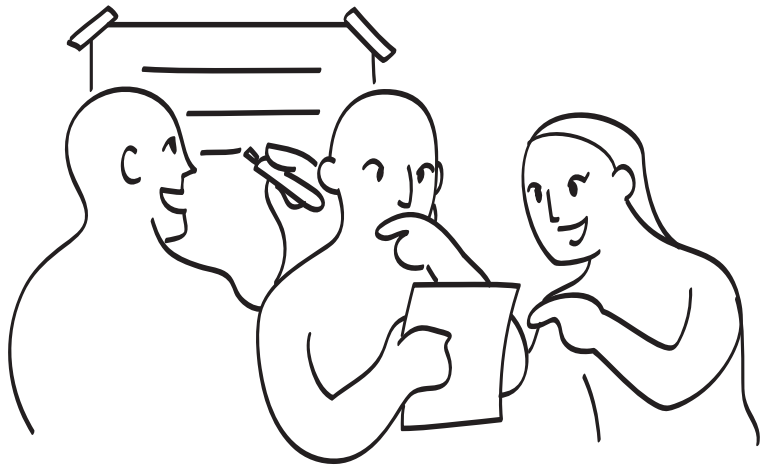
time
1 hr. 45 min.

roles
Participants, 1 facilitator and timekeeper

materials
Printer-size paper (8.5" x 11"), large paper, pens, a watch
*optional: camera, markers*

where to next?

Try another Seek activity like 'Pattern Quest' to compare what your teammates found in their community explorations.

Pattern Quest

1. Split the group into two teams. Hand out paper and pens to each team. Give both teams 10 minutes to come up with as many brief skits as they can that illustrate issues they want to address in their community. It helps when individual team members quickly write down potential skit ideas before creating the skits.
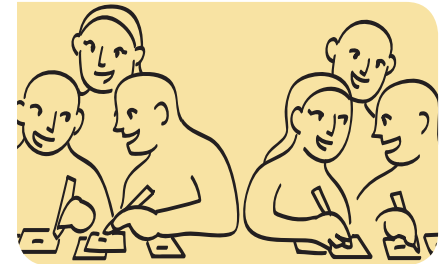
2. Flip a coin to see which team will act out their skits first. The winning team will be the actors first, the losing team will be the recorders first. As one team performs, the other team draws or writes down what they have learned from the performance and potential solutions for the issues that were discussed.

3. Once both teams have performed, each group should draw or write down ideas about how to change the other group's issues for the better. Bring everyone back into the larger group so the members from each team can share their possible solutions. Have one person record these solutions on a large piece of paper.
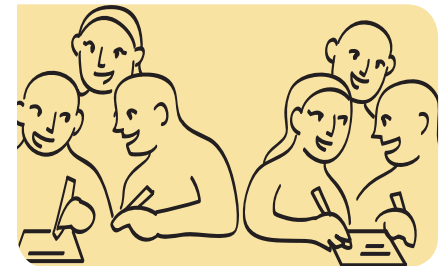
4. As a group, take a look at the solutions you had all generated. Write down next to them what resources and support people in your community might need to make those solutions real.

When you're done in this activity area:
Try moving to Imagine More Ideas to act on something you found in your skits that inspired a potential solution.

Don't forget to fill out a Learning Card when you transition to another activity area.

fold along line

interviewing 101

Plan an interview from start to finish, then go into your community and talk with people about issues that matter to them.
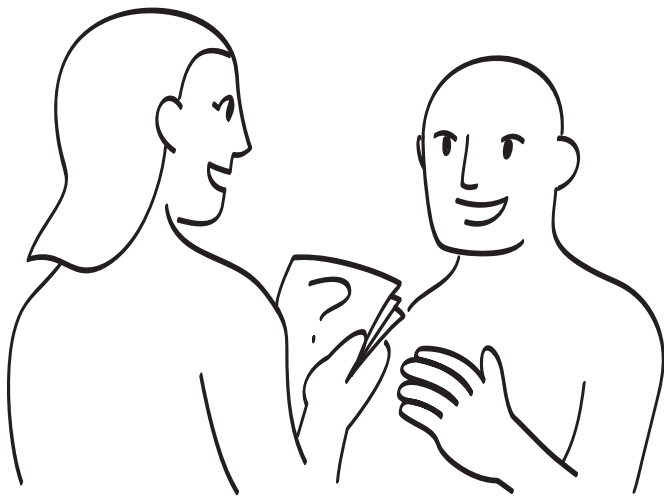
time
1 hr. for a group of 10

roles
Participants, 1 facilitator, 1 recorder

materials
Printer-size paper (8.5" x 11") or larger, pens
optional: camera, markers

where to next?

Try another Seek activity like 'We Saw, We Heard' to share what you discovered in your interviews.

We Saw, We Heard

1. Ask your individual group members to write a list of people that struggle with issues related to the goal you want to achieve. Write down:
   • Why you would want to talk with them
   • What you would learn by talking to them
   • Where you would want to meet with them
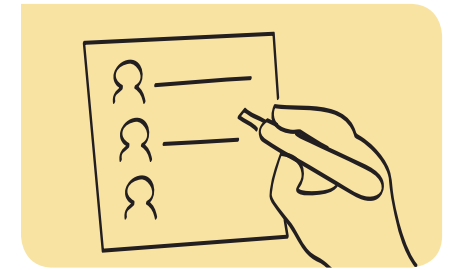
2. Divide your entire group into pairs. Ask the people in each pair to read out loud each list and select one of the people they would like to interview. Ask the pair to write down at least five questions they'd like to ask that person at their interview. Encourage each team to ask follow-up questions like "Why?" to provide suprising insight.

3. Each pair will roleplay the interview. The teammate who is being asked questions will provide feedback about whether the questions make sense and suggest additional questions to ask. The pair will update the interview questions accordingly.
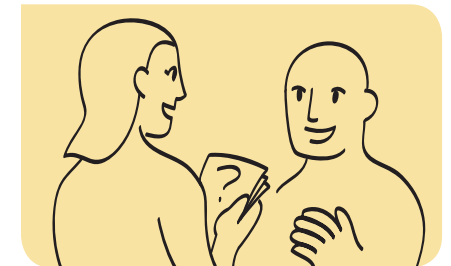
4. Bring the entire group back together. Ask each pair to roleplay their interview again, soliciting feedback from the whole group. Then task group members to do their interviews when they leave the group meeting, encouraging them to take good notes at each interview to share with the rest of the group.
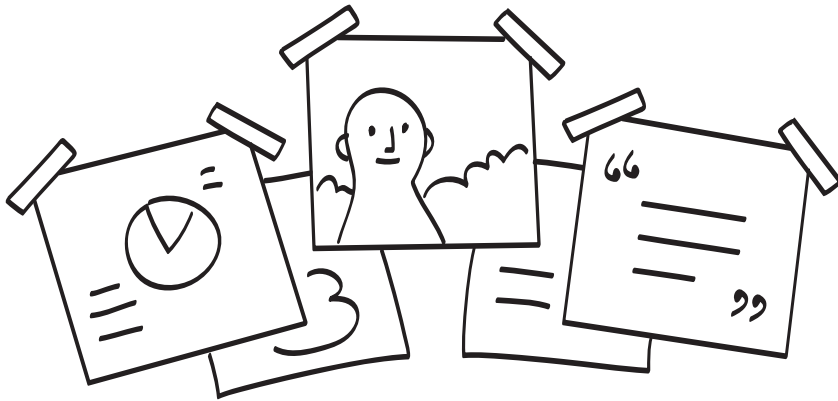
When you're done in this activity area:
Try moving to Imagine More Ideas to act on something in your interviews that inspired a potential solution.

Don't forget to fill out a Learning Card when you transition to another activity area.

fold along line

we saw, we heard

Share what group members discovered from their interviews with community members, then identify important themes to consider across the interviews.

1 After your group members have interviewed at least five people in the community that they had identified, bring your group together and give each person five minutes to write out the three most interesting answers they'd received in their interviews.
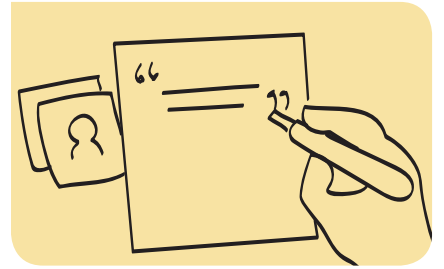
2 Have each group member act out their three most interesting answers for the group, pretending to be the person they'd interviewed by emulating how they speak and their body language. If group members want to, they can also share a one-sentence description of why each answer was so interesting to them after each answer.
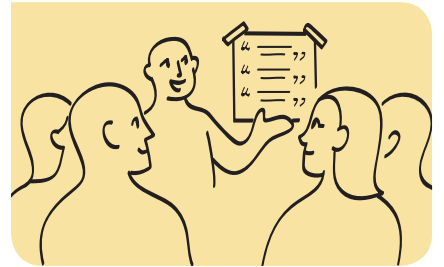
3 People in the group who aren't acting out answers are required to draw, sketch, write, or make collages that represent the needs of each person that had been interviewed by a group member.

4 After every group member shares the answers from their interview, ask everyone to post what they had recorded on the wall. Then have a discussion about what people heard: what stood out to them, the similarities and differences between what group members had created, and so forth.

time
45 min. for a group of 10

roles
Participants, 1 facilitator, multiple recorders

materials
Printer-size paper (8.5" x 11") or larger, pens
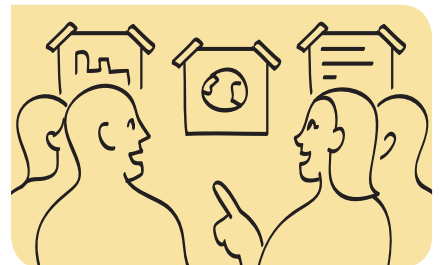*optional: camera, markers*

where to next?

Try another Seek activity like 'Pattern Quest' to find similarities across interviews

Pattern Quest

When you're done in this activity area: Try moving to Imagine More Ideas to act on something in your interviews that inspired a potential solution.

Don't forget to fill out a Learning Card when you transition to another activity area.

fold along line

pattern quest

Dive deeper into what group members discovered in their interviews, identifying the deeper reasons behind issues people struggle with in your community.

time
1 hr.

roles
Participants, 1 facilitator and timekeeper

materials
Printer-size paper (8.5" x 11"), large paper, pens, a watch
optional: camera, markers

where to next?

Move to the Imagine More Ideas activity area to act on a topic that emerges from this activity.

Jam
Session

1 Ask each person in your group to bring to your meeting the notes they took while interviewing people in their community, plus any reflections they had on those notes based on what they'd discovered to date in their group meetings. Have them post their notes around a room. Spend about te n minutes reading through everyone's notes.
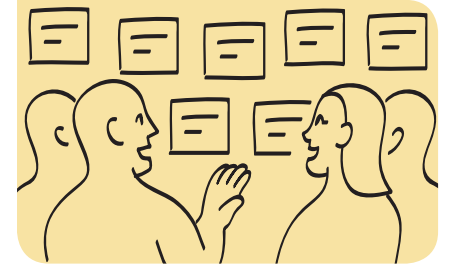
2 Have a discussion about what people think are the most important topics the entire team has learned about by going out and talking to people in their community. One person should listen and write each of these topics on separate sheets of paper. When everyone has shared their perspectives, post these topics sheets on the wall.

3 Divide up your group so there are at least two people assigned to each topic. Give each group 15 minutes to locate notes or generate sketches representing things from the interview notes that best express their topic. Hand write those quotes or stories on the topic sheet.
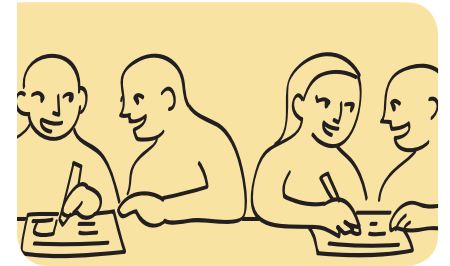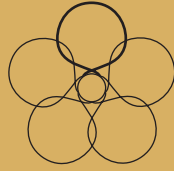
4 Finish by reviewing the information on each topic sheet as a group. Ask the group:
  • Is there anything you learned from your interviews that should be added to the topic sheet?
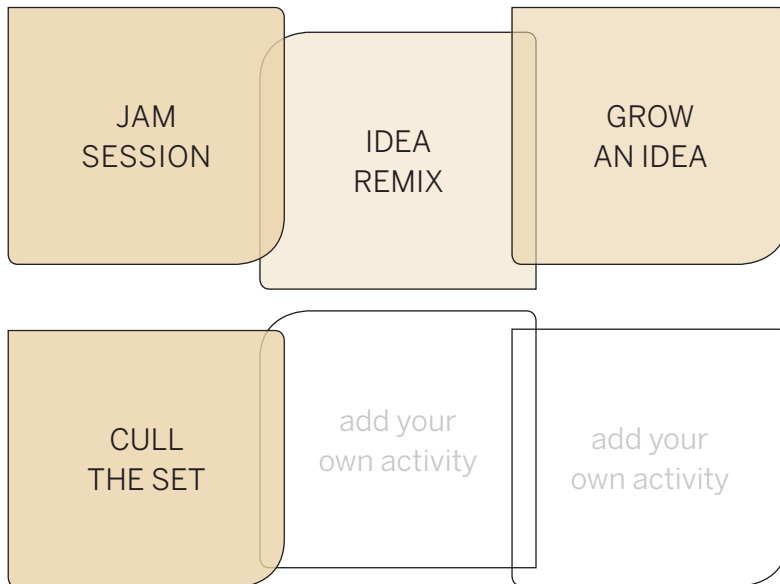 • Is there something you captured here that should be on another topic sheet?
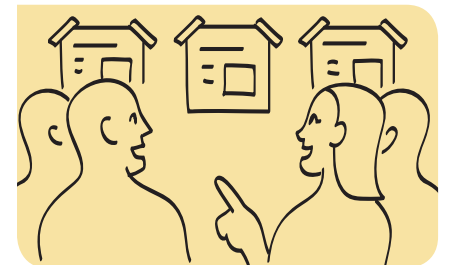
Don't forget to fill out a Learning Card when you transition to another activity area.

imagine
more ideas

Create new solutions for the problems you want to solve. This activity area will help your group imagine more ideas and then decide what makes some of them more actionable than others.

imagine activities

JAM SESSION	IDEA REMIX	GROW AN IDEA
CULL THE SET	add your own activity	add your own activity

suggested sequences

To generate lots of ideas quickly:

Jam Session → Grow an Idea → Cull the Set

Always use the activity "Cull the Set" before leaving this area.

fold along line

jam session

Create as many ideas as possible with your group, exploring a range of different solutions and building on each other's ideas in a supportive manner.
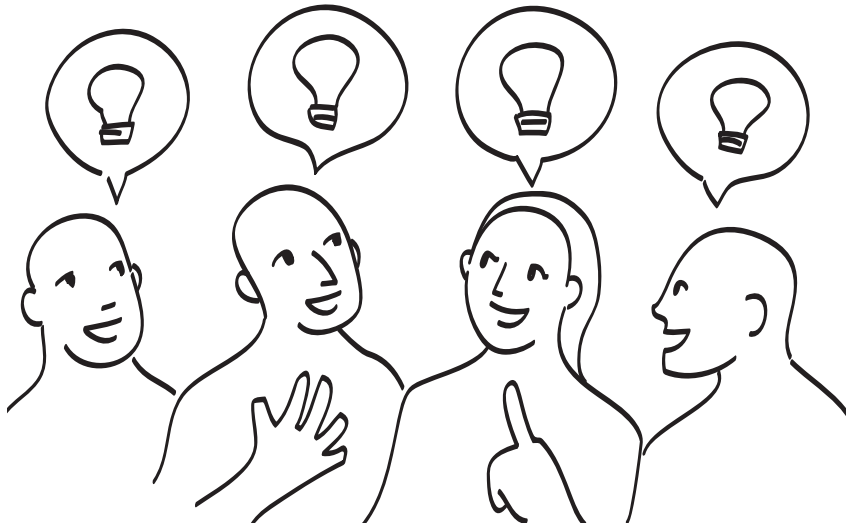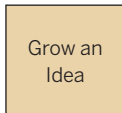
time
45 min.

roles
Participants, 1 facilitator

materials
Printer-size paper (8.5" x 11")
or larger and smaller
sheets, pens
optional: camera, markers

where to next?

Try another Imagine activity like 'Grow an Idea' to bring one of these starred concepts into another round of ideation.

Grow an Idea

1 Look at all of your group's ideas that you've captured to date. Identify a topic the team would like to explore. A good topic will be directly related to your goal, and will inspire your group to immediately generate ideas.
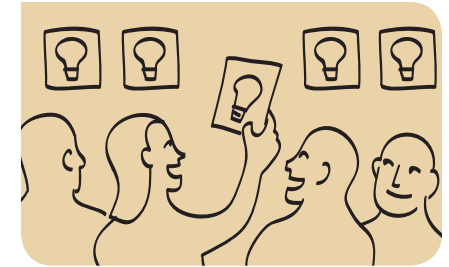
2 Have the activity facilitator put a piece of paper on the wall and draw a large arrow on it. On one end of the arrow, write "Easy." On the other end, write "Impossible."
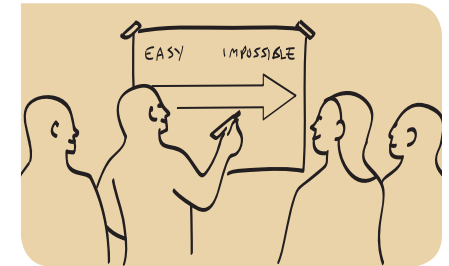
3 Divide group into two teams. For 20–25 minutes, ask each team to write or sketch ideas related to the topic on individual pieces of paper. Create a range of ideas that are possible, impossible and anything in between. Be sure to give each idea a title.
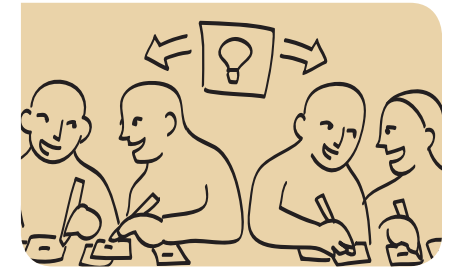
4 When both teams are done, share the title and a one-sentence description of each idea with the group. Have the presenter to pin the idea where it belongs on the Easy to Impossible arrow. When everyone has presented, ask them to put a star next to the idea they're most excited about. Ideas with the most stars can be pursued.
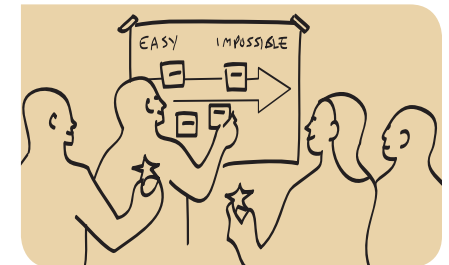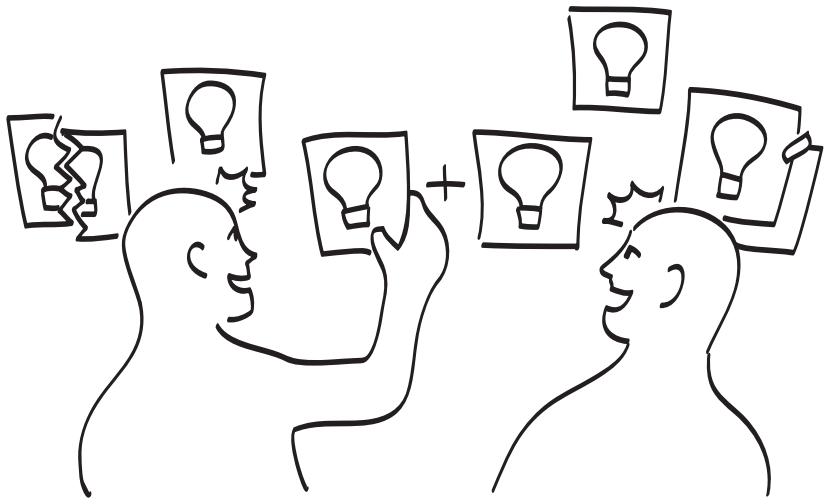
When you're done: Try out some Make Something Real activities to bring your ideas to life!

Don't forget to fill out a Learning Card when you transition to another activity area.

idea remix

Take ideas your group already has, whether good or bad, and combine them in different ways to generate new ones.
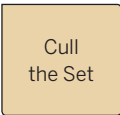
time
1 hr.

roles
Participants, 1 facilitator

materials
Printer-size paper (8.5" x 11") or larger, pens
*optional: camera, markers*

where to next?

Try another Imagine activity like 'Cull the Set' to identify key ideas the team wants to pursue.

Cull
the Set

1. Grab your ideas from an earlier activity. Divide your group into teams of two and give them two random ideas. Have each team combine them in different ways. (For example: garden hose + cell phone = remote-controlled sprinkler system!) Title and sketch each new idea on an individual slips of paper.
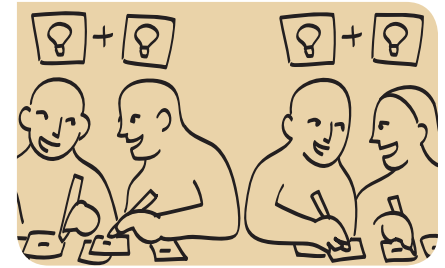
2. After 20 minutes of coming up with new ideas, ask the teams to post all their ideas in a place where everyone can see them. Ask each team to share their two top ideas.
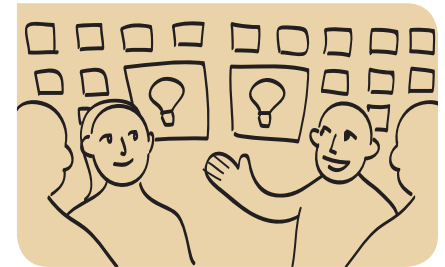
3. Have each team select one of the shared ideas and create new ones on based on a random constraint: must be silver-colored, people must use this idea every hour, and so forth. Each team should spend twenty minutes writing or sketching new ideas and their titles on separate pieces of paper.
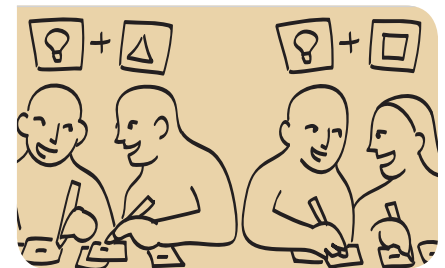
4. Each team shares their three favorite ideas and put them on the wall. Have everybody walk around and look at the last round of ideas. Discuss which ideas are similar and why. Put similar ideas next to each other. Talk about which ideas were the most surprising and why. Ideas that generate the most conversation should be pursued next!

When you're done: Try out some Make Something Real activities to bring your ideas to life!

Don't forget to fill out a Learning Card when you transition to another activity area.

fold along line

grow an idea

Build off the unique strengths of each other's ideas to create even better ones.

time
1 hr.

roles
Participants, 1 facilitator

materials
Printer-size paper (8.5" x 11")
or larger, pens
optional: camera, markers

where to next?

Try another Imagine activity like 'Cull the Set' to identify key ideas the team wants to pursue.
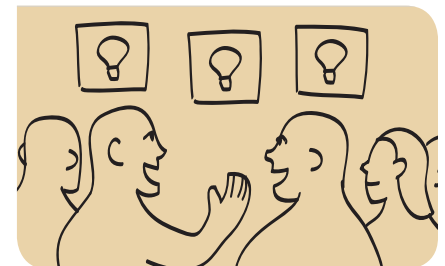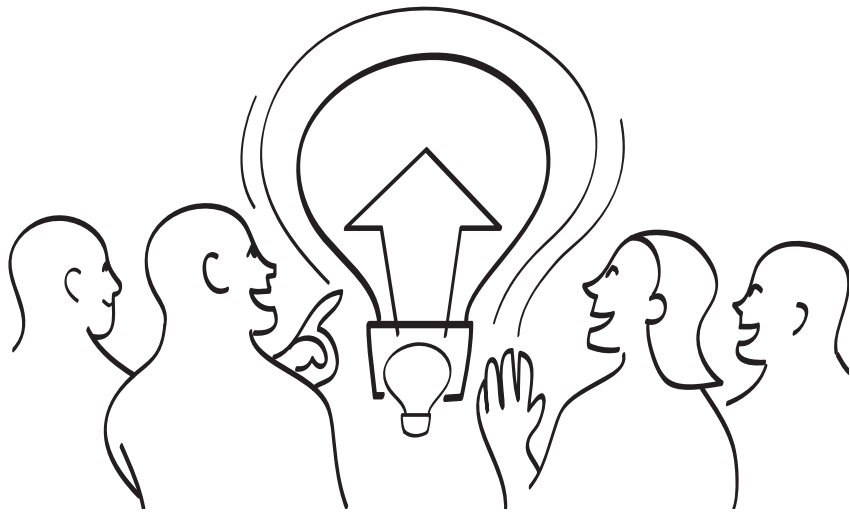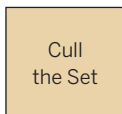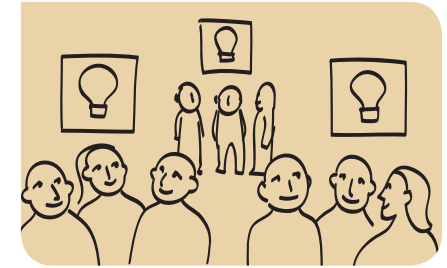
Cull
the Set

1   Collect all ideas people have made so far. Divide the group into teams of three and have them select an idea they think is interesting—in other words, an idea that makes them immediately think of at least two other related ideas. (Note: This works best if every idea you generate is on a separate sheet or half-sheet of paper.)

2   Have each team look at the selected idea and answer the following questions:
   • What problem is this idea solving?
   • Who could use this idea?
   • Where will this idea be used?
   • When can this idea be used?
   • How can we make this idea better?
   • What do you need to make it real?
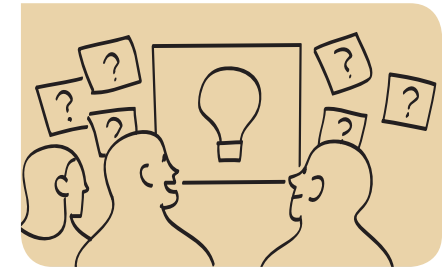
3   Have each team use their answers to the above questions to imagine more ideas for at least twenty minutes. Have them write each new idea and its title on new sheets of paper.
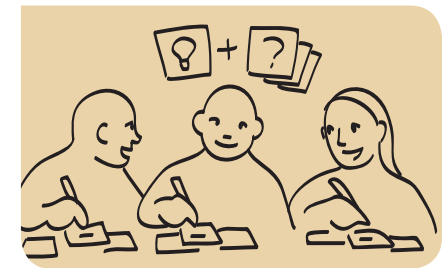
4   Have each team place their top three ideas in a location everyone can see. Let each team present their ideas. After everyone has shared, invite everyone to put a star next to their top three ideas. The ideas with the most stars are the ideas the team will move forward.
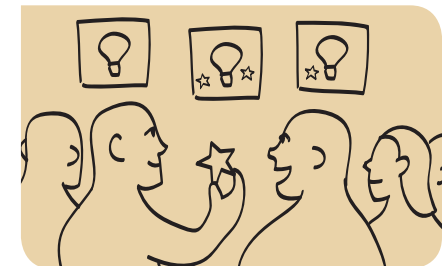
When you're done: Try out some Make Something Real activities to bring your ideas to life!

Don't forget to fill out a Learning Card when you transition to another activity area.

fold along line

cull the set

Look across all the ideas your group has created and decide which ideas should be made real—and for the right reasons.

time
1 hr. for a group of 10

roles
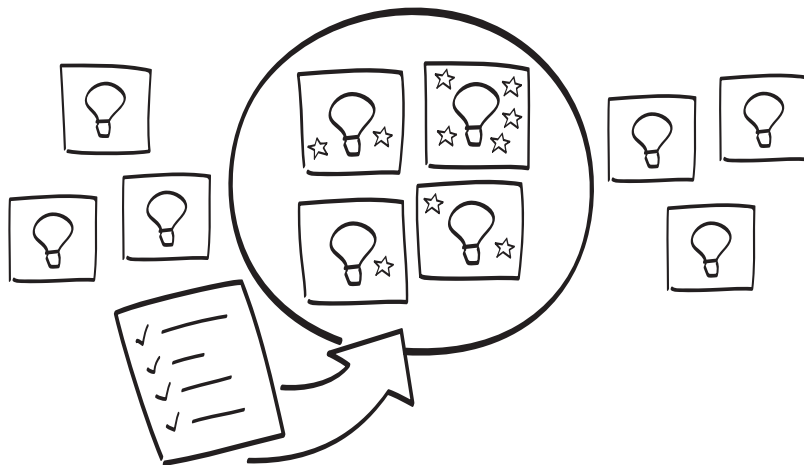Participants, 1 facilitator, 1 recorder

materials
Printer-size paper (8.5" x 11") or larger, pens
optional: camera, markers

where to next?

Try another Imagine activity like 'Jam Session' to generate more ideas based on what you've learned.

Jam Session

1 Collect all the ideas the team has created to date and place them on the wall or the floor. If you haven't already, ask everyone put a star next to their top three ideas. Then count all the stars each idea has and write the number next to the title. Gather the 10 ideas with the most stars together in a space everyone can see.
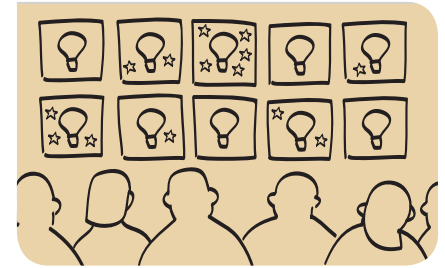
2 Have everyone look at these concepts and discuss how they are similar or different from each other. Place similar ideas next to each other to as you go along. Give these groups of ideas a name.

3 Discuss what makes each group of ideas successful. Have the activity facilitator write the team's answers on a separate sheet of paper. See if there are any qualities that make an idea better than the rest: easier to make, could be used by many people, and so forth. These are your team's 'success criteria' for what makes a good idea.

4 With this list of criteria in mind, go back to your starred ideas on the wall and see which ones best meet the criteria your team defined. Have the activity faciltator write down what people say during the discussion. Keep the criteria and the notes available to the team for reference in the future.

When you're done: Try out some Make Solutions Real activities to bring your ideas to life!

Don't forget to fill out a Learning Card when you transition to another activity area.

make something real
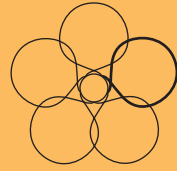
You don't know if an idea will work until you try to make it real. This activity area will help your group test out ideas in fun ways, such as telling stories or by building a version of it to evaluate. Experiment with a few of these activities and see what your team discovers.

make activities

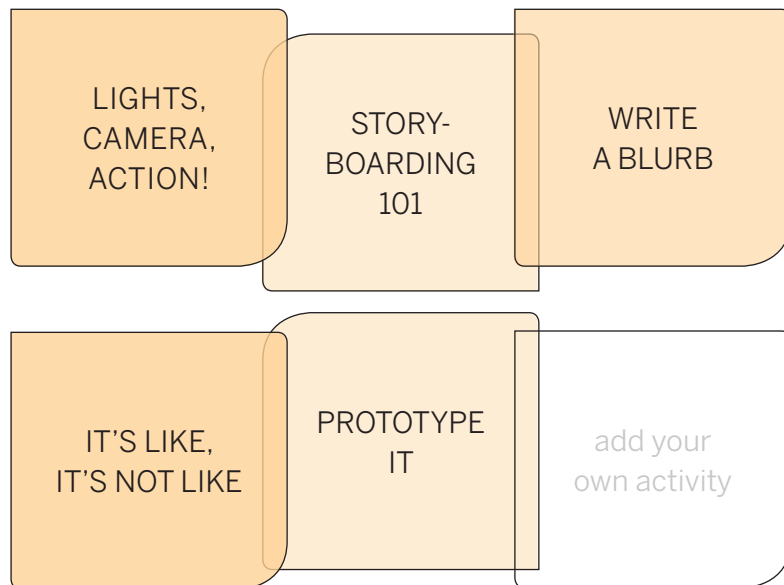|		
LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!	STORY-BOARDING 101	WRITE A BLURB
IT'S LIKE, IT'S NOT LIKE	PROTOTYPE IT	add your own activity

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

express your ideas in many ways
Try all of these with the ideas that you want to share with your group and potentially your community: Tell a story. Perform a drama. Sing a song. Write a story down. Draw your idea. Create a comic strip. Make a collage. There is rarely one single way to best express your ideas to others.

mix and match your materials
Use your imagination with the various materials you use to construct your ideas.

continue to provide constructive feedback
When group members share their ideas with you, tell them two things that you liked about those ideas, and one thing that you felt could be improved. Practice this so it everyone in your group feels comfortable.
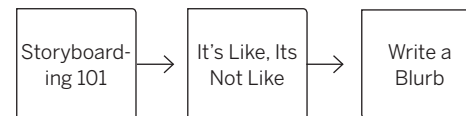
start with lower fidelity
You'll learn a lot by starting with simple expressions of your ideas, then making them more and more like the final product.

solicit feedback from outside your group
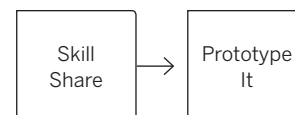If your group feels comfortable with it, find time to share your ideas with friends or community members that would give you valuable feedback. Be sure to clearly tell them what kind of feedback you'd like from them.
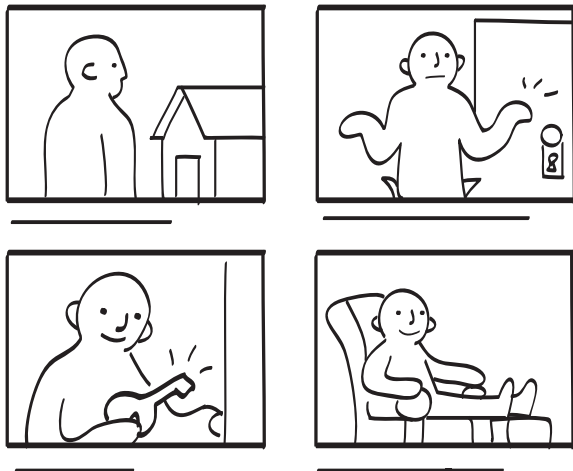
suggested sequences

To communicate your idea:

Storyboarding 101 → It's Like, Its Not Like → Write a Blurb

To build your idea:

Skill Share → Prototype It

fold along line

storyboarding 101

Create a visual story, much like a comic strip, that explains how an idea would impact people in your community over time.
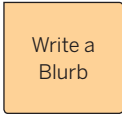

time
45 min. for a group of 5

roles
Participants, 1 facilitator

materials
Printer-size paper (8.5" x 11") or larger, pens
*optional: camera, markers, collage materials, e.g. photos, magazines, colored paper, stickers*

where to next?

Try another Make activity, like 'Write a Blurb,' to shape the story you just drew into clear, crisp statements you can share.

Write a Blurb

1. Divide your group into teams of one to three people. Ask each group to select an idea from a previous activity to storyboard. They should discuss how to tell this idea in a story to another person:
   • Who are the main characters?
   • What specific challenge is being solved?
   • What steps do they go through?
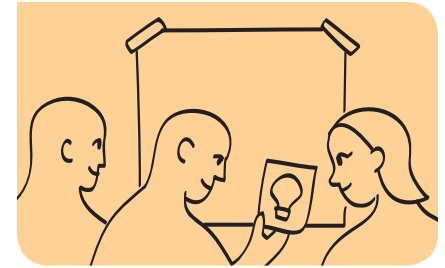
2. Post a large piece of paper for each team. Have each group draw four storyboard frames (squares) on the paper. They should write a few words below each frame to describe what should happen in the scene they are about to draw or collage from images in magazines. Follow the outline included in Step 3.
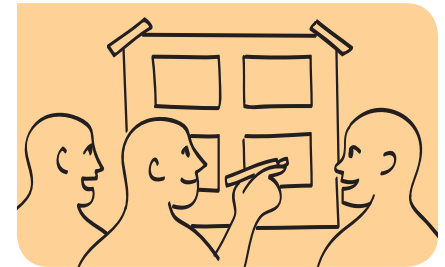
3. Have the team illustrate each frame:
   • First frame: Introduce the characters
   • Second frame: Create a scene that shows the problem where it happens
   • Third frame: Show a close-up of one of the characters using your idea
   • Final frame: What happens after the character uses it?

4. Have each group share their storyboards and pin them up on the wall. Have a discussion about what works about each storyboard and what potentially is missing that could expressed in a different way.

When you're done in this activity area:
Try moving to the Plan for Action activity area to plan how and when you could realize your idea for the community.

Don't forget to fill out a Learning Card when you transition to another activity area.

fold along line

lights, camera, action!

Use characters, scenes, and conversations to tell a meaningful tale about your idea to an audience.
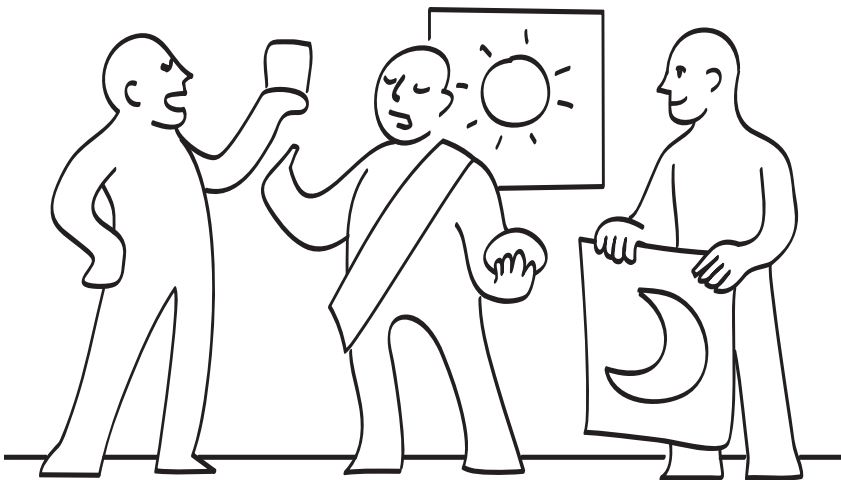
time
1 hr. for a group of 5

roles
Participants, 1 facilitator, 1 recorder

materials
Printer-size paper (8.5" x 11") or larger, pens, camera
*optional: markers*

where to next?

Try another Make activity like 'Prototype It' to build an idea from scratch.

Prototype It

1 Split your entire group into teams of three people or less. Have each team select an idea they want to work with. Multiple teams can work on the same idea or different ideas at the same time. (Note: This activity can also be done by individuals rather than teams, depending on how many people are in your group.)
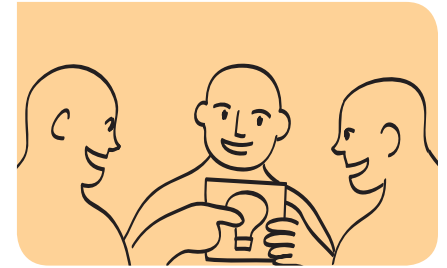
2 Give each team ten minutes to decide how to talk about their idea to other people in the group through a story. Each team needs to think about:
• Conflict: What problem you will address
• Character: The people helped by it
• Concept: How the idea should be shared
• Conclusion: Its larger impact on the world
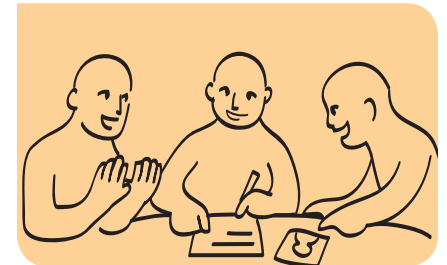
3 Give each team 20 minutes to craft a three- to five-minute skit that expresses their idea through a story. Provide them an additional five minutes after they've planned their skit out to practice it and come up with a title for it. Encourage each team to include all of their team members in the skit and use any relevant props.
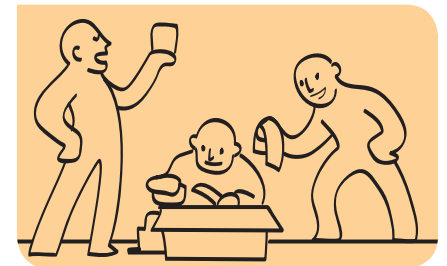
4 Ask each team to perform their skit. As one team shares their story, the other teams should take notes, photograph, sketch, or videotape the performance for future reflection. After the skits, have a discussion about what everyone learned about the ideas in the stories and what it would take to bring them further to life.

When you're done in this activity area: Try moving to the Seek New Understanding activity area to determine how people in the real world might use these ideas.

Don't forget to fill out a Learning Card when you transition to another activity area.

write a blurb

Craft a simple story that explains to other people why your group's idea is relevant, then practice sharing it with others.
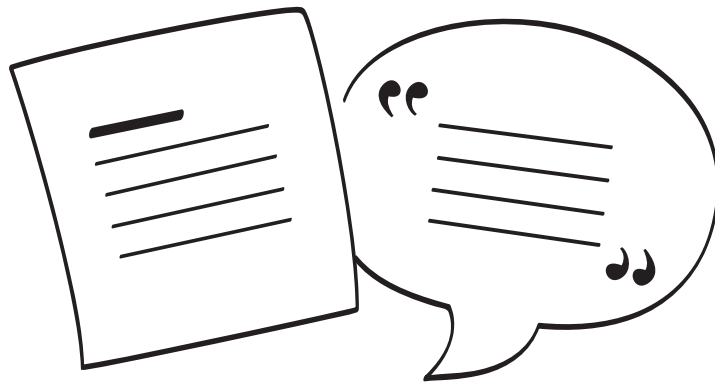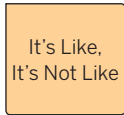
time
1 hr. for a group of 5

roles
Participants, 1 facilitator, 1 recorder

materials
Printer-size paper (8.5" x 11") or larger, pens
optional: camera, markers

where to next?

Try another Make activity like 'It's Like, It's Not Like' to help other people understand your group's idea.

It's Like, It's Not Like

1 Split your entire group into teams of three people or less. Have each team select an idea they want to work with. Multiple teams can work on the same idea or different ideas at the same time. (Note: This activity can also be done by individuals rather than teams, depending on how many people are in your group.)
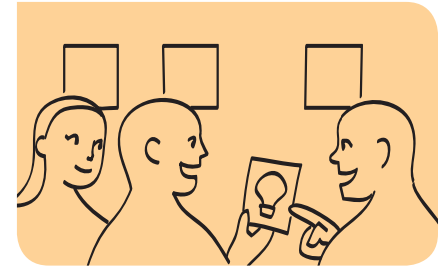
2 Over 10 minutes, ask each team think through and discuss:
• What the idea is
• Who the idea is for
• How it will change the community
• Why it will help the community
• When it will happen
• Where it will be used
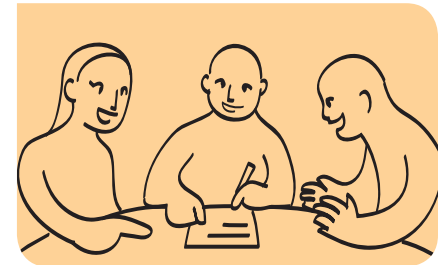
3 Have each team write a one-sentence description about why the idea is great. Then each team should spend 20 minutes writing a paragraph telling the story of the idea. Experiment with the tone of your story by pretending to be journalists, the town preacher, your city's mayor, and so forth. Give your story a snappy title.
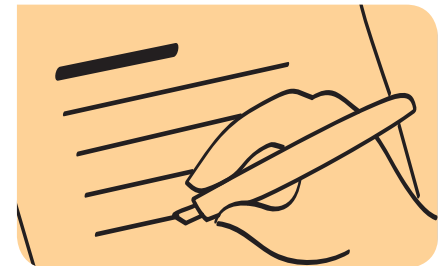
4 Ask each team to share their story. Then have each team post their written story on the wall. Gather the entire group around each written story and talk about the elements of each story that stood out and the qualities of a strong story. Have one of your group members write down what worked and what could be improved in each story.
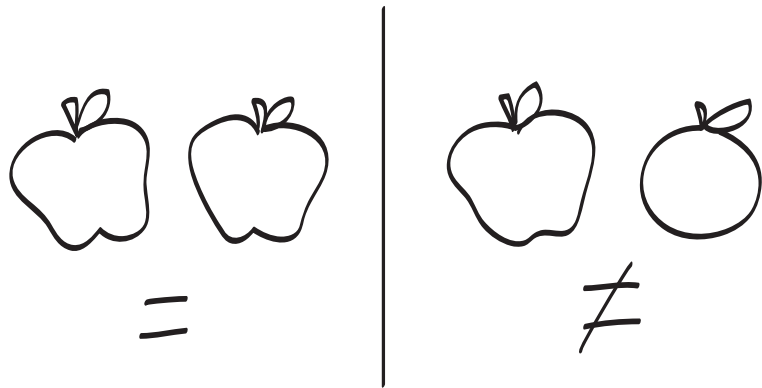
When you're done in this activity area:
Try moving to the Build Your Team activity area to recruit more people for your group using these stories.

Don't forget to fill out a Learning Card when you transition to another activity area.

fold along line

it's like, it's not like

Share your ideas with other people in a way that relates new concepts to real-world examples.

time
1 hr. for a group of 10

**roles**
Participants, 1 facilitator, 1 recorder

materials
Printer-size paper (8.5" x 11") or larger, pens
optional: camera, markers

where to next?

Try another Make activity like 'Storyboarding 101' to transform your idea into a visual story to share with others.

> Story-
> boarding
> 101

1 Split your entire group into teams of three people or less. Have each team select an idea they want to work with. Multiple teams can work on the same idea or different ideas at the same time. (Note: This activity can also be done by individuals rather than teams, depending on how many people are in your group.)
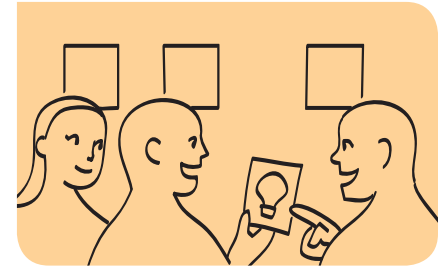
2 Each team should select an idea and writes that idea's name on the top of a piece of paper. Draw a vertical line down the center of the page. Write "It's Like" on the left side of the page and "It's Not Like" on the right side of the page.
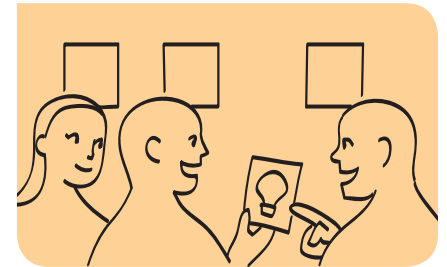
3 Ask the team to call out things that are similar to their idea. Have one team member write these things down in the "It's Like" column. Then, ask the team to call out dissimilar ideas for the "It's Not Like" column. (Remember: "Not Likes" are just as powerful as "Likes." because they provide concrete examples for your team.)
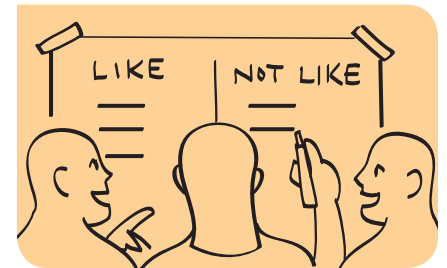
4 Ask each team to vote on the best "Likes" and "Not Likes" and write down the number of votes each gets on your sheet of paper. Get back together into your entire group and write your "Likes" and "Not Likes" for your ideas on a clean sheet of paper. Post these up for reference when talking about your ideas in the future.
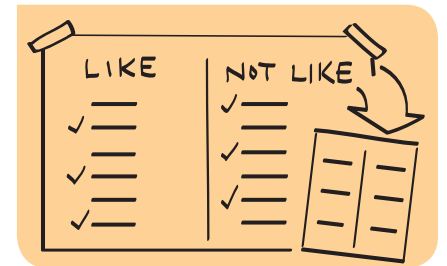
When you're done in this activity area: Try moving to the Imagine More Ideas activity area to find more solutions based on what you know now about your ideas.

Don't forget to fill out a Learning Card when you transition to another activity area.

fold along line

prototype it

Physically make a real-world version of your idea with whatever materials you have around you. Then test it with people in your community.

time
1 hr. for a group of 10

roles
Participants, 1 facilitator, 1 recorder

materials
Printer-size paper (8.5" x 11") or larger, pens
optional: camera, markers, any other materials you may have on hand in your space

where to next?

Try another Make activity like 'Storyboarding 101' to make your idea into a visual story to share with other people.

> Story-
> boarding
> 101

1 Split your entire group into teams of three people or less. Have each team select an idea they want to work with. Multiple teams can work on the same idea or different ideas at the same time. (Note: This activity can also be done by individuals rather than teams, depending on how many people are in your group.)
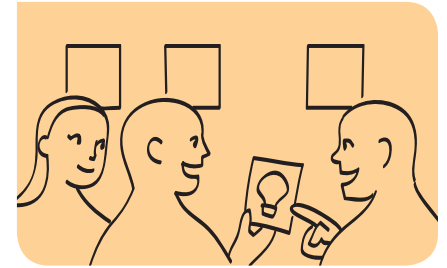
2 Ask each team to write down all the different types of materials they think they will need to make their idea real. Have the team do a quick checklist to see if they have any of the materials on hand. If you don't, are there any things that you can use as a substitute to get your idea across? What could you make with just paper?
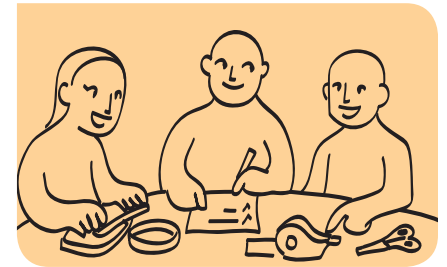
3 Once you've gone through what materials you can work with, start making parts of your idea! Try making your idea with differ-ent kinds of materials or using unexpected combinations of materials. You'll figure a lot out just by experimenting.

4 Have teams swap what they've made with the other teams. Do the ideas make sense? Do they inspire any new ideas or things that you could make?
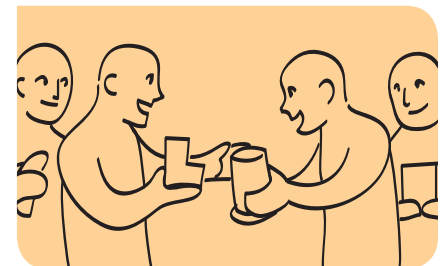
When you're done in this activity area: Try moving to the Seek New Understand-ing activity area to show your ideas to community members and get feedback.
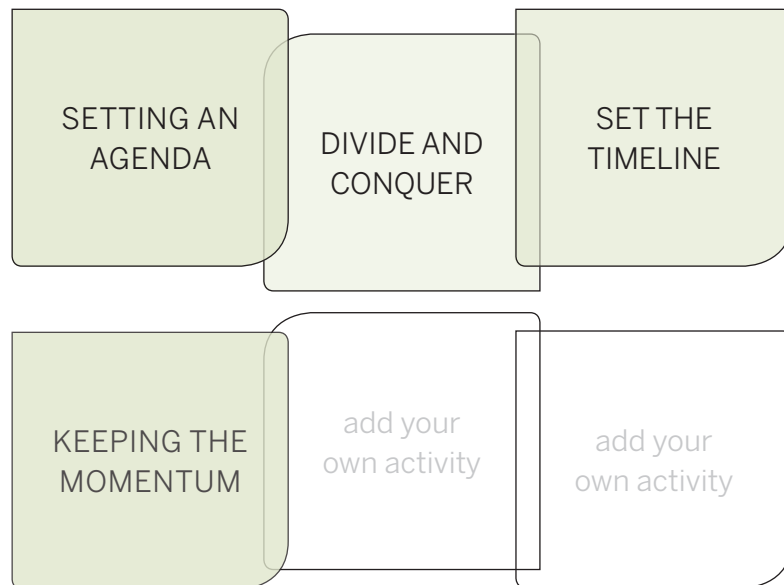
Don't forget to fill out a Learning Card when you transition to another activity area.

fold along line

plan for action
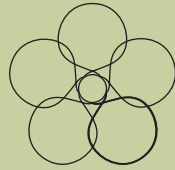
Become organized about what each group member is doing to reach your shared goals. This activity area will help your group generate concrete action items and understand how those actions will help everyone show progress towards those goals.

plan activities

SETTING AN AGENDA	DIVIDE AND CONQUER	SET THE TIMELINE
KEEPING THE MOMENTUM	add your own activity	add your own activity

make visible what everyone needs to do
Post everyone's action items where your group meets. Keep a "group resume" that shows what people have checked action items off their list, so everyone knows what progress has been made.

celebrate small wins
As part of your group meeting, let your group members know when you've accomplished an important action item that contributes to your shared goal.

foster a sense of accountability
In any group, there's a risk that if someone doesn't get their action items done, the group won't be able to proceed with an activity or reach a goal. Encourage everyone to use their own initiative to get things done.

build a support network
Pool information with your group about what people or organizations might be able to help out with action items, in case group members aren't able to finish.

be willing to adapt
Sometimes you can't predict when things will go right or wrong. Have the flexibility to change course if you receive new information or something goes wrong.

suggested sequences

To plan what to do next:

State Our Purpose → Divide & Conquer → Set the Pace
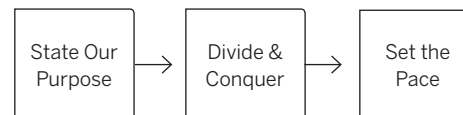
Use the activity "State Our Purpose" after visiting other activity areas to get your team heading in the right direction

To organize your meetings:

Set the Pace

fold along line

setting an agenda

Identify the most pressing challenges your team needs to tackle, then agree on the steps you should take to address them.
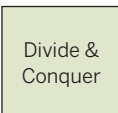

time
40 min.

roles
Participants, 1 recorder

materials
Printer-size paper (8.5" x 11")
or larger, pens
*optional: camera, markers, Post-Its*

where to next?

Try another Plan activity like 'Divide & Conquer' to split up some of these tasks up between people.

Divide & Conquer

1. Post one sheet of paper on the wall and have everybody gather around it. At the top of the sheet of paper, write the following question: "What challenges are we trying to solve right now so we can accomplish our overall goal?" Have the group members write answers to this question underneath it on sticky notes.
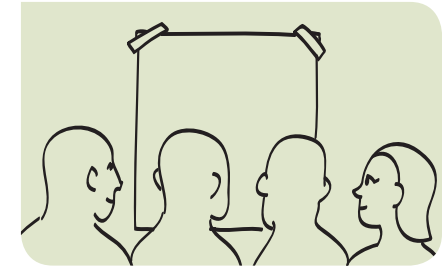
2. Take each Post-It note and put it in the center of a new sheet of paper. Answer the following questions for that challenge:
   • Why is this challenge important to solve?
   • Who needs to be involved to solve it?
   • When do we want to resolve it?
   • What hurdles stand in our way?
   • How can we remove those hurdles?
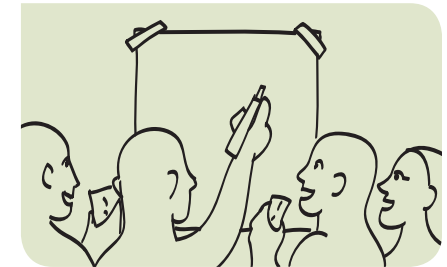
3. Take a step back and look at everyone's answers as a group. Ask these questions:
   • Which challenges do you need to address most urgently?
   • What patterns or themes are visible across all of these challenges?
   • Do you see ways to resolve multiple challenges with similar efforts?
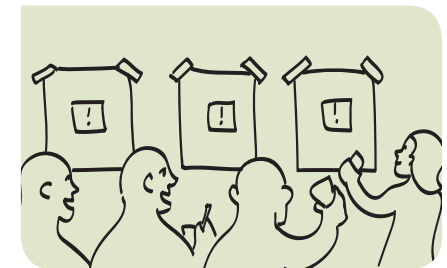
4. From your group discussion, write down the action items your team should take on next to address the challenges you've identified as most urgent.

When you're done in this activity area:
Try moving to Seek New Understanding activities to determine who to talk to next, or Imagine More Ideas to come up with more solutions.

Don't forget to fill out a Learning Card when you transition to another activity area.

fold along line

divide and conquer

Split your group into smaller teams that can plan and execute specific action items.
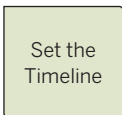
time
1 hr.

roles
Participants, 1 facilitator, multiple recorders

materials
Printer-size paper (8.5" x 11") or larger, pens
*optional: camera, markers*

where to next?

Try another Plan activity like 'Set the Pace' to establish your future meeting schedules.

Set the Timeline

1 Gather your group around a sheet of paper. Ask everyone to write on the sheet every activity they're doing right now to help the group reach their shared goal. Have the group look at all the activities and identify which are similar and can be grouped together. Give these similar tasks a name. Keep it simple, like 'recruiting.'
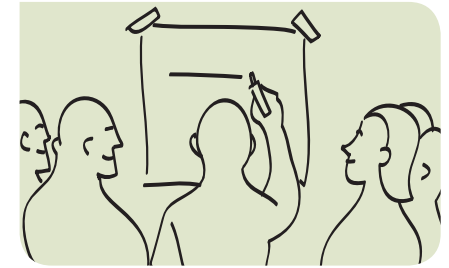
2 Have someone from your team write these task names on separate sheets of paper. These will be different committees to take care of a specific responsibilities for your group. Ask people to write their initials with the name of the committee they want to join.

3 Split your group into their specific committees. Have them go to different parts of the room and meet with their committee. Ask the committee members to write down the responsibilities, challenges and goals they should tackle. If there is only one person in a committee, they should join another group.

4 Have each committee write down specific tasks to help them reach their group's goals. Prioritize the activity list as a committee, taking at least 15 minutes to write action items based on their top five to ten priority tasks. Have team members initial which action items they'll take on. Then have each team post and share their plan.
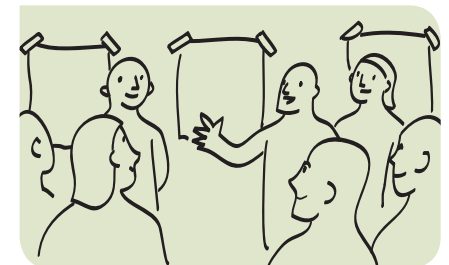
When you're done in this activity area: Try moving to Seek New Understanding activities to determine who to talk to next, or Imagine More Ideas to come up with more solutions.

Don't forget to fill out a Learning Card when you transition to another activity area.

fold along line

set the timeline

Create a schedule for your team to keep track of what needs to get done—and what you've accomplished.
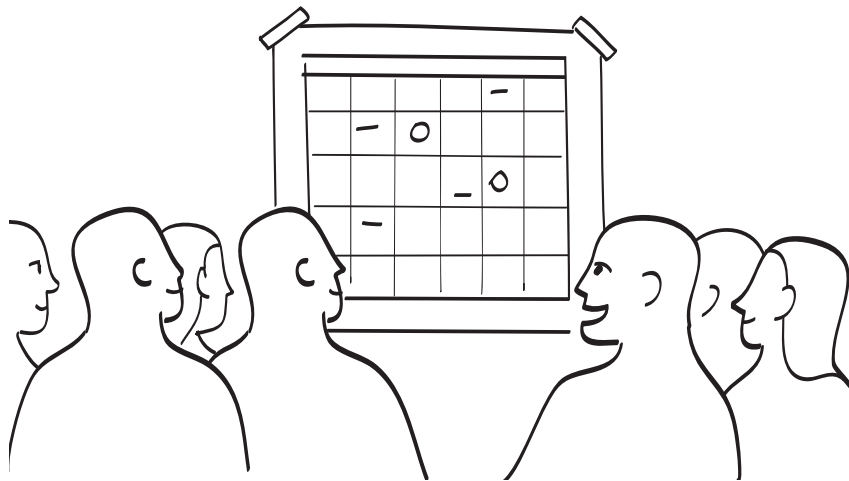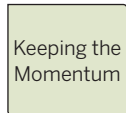
time
45 min. at a minimum

roles
Participants, 1 facilitator, multiple recorders

materials
Printer paper, large sheet of paper, markers, pens

where to next?

Try another Plan activity like 'Keeping the Momentum' to help your team track their progress.

Keeping the Momentum

1. When your group gets together, discuss how quickly your team wants to accomplish their goal. Then, have your group split into committees. They can be the same committees as the ones created for the activity 'Divide and Conquer.' If you don't have enough people for committees, each person can do this individually.
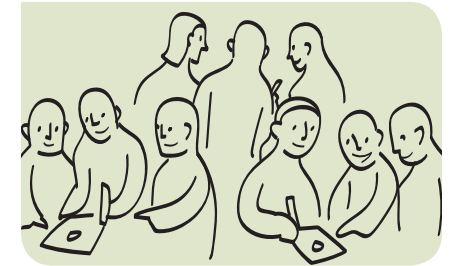
2. In your committees, write down on a sheet of paper the final milestones your need to accomplish to achieve your group's goal. Sketch out a calendar of days between today and the final milestone date. Looking at your final milestones, write out the interim milestones you'll need to achieve to get to that final milestone.
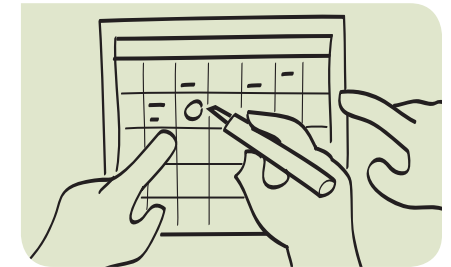
3. Get back together with your full group. Have one person create or use a large calendar to consolidate all of the dates from all of your committees. Ask each committee to share their milestones with the group, and have one person write down the major and interim milestones on your shared calendar.
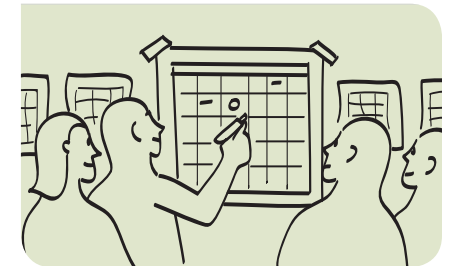
4. As a group, discuss if there are conflicts or issues due to the placement of milestone dates. Adjust the milestone dates if there are dependencies that you see on what action items your group members are taking on.
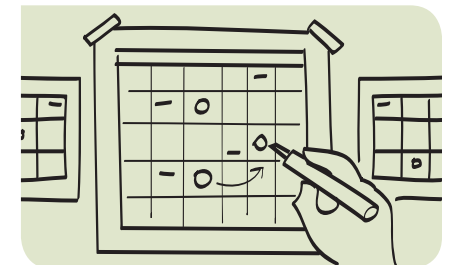
When you're done in this activity area: Try moving to Seek New Understanding activities to determine who to talk to next, or Imagine More Ideas to come up with more solutions.

Don't forget to fill out a Learning Card when you transition to another activity area.

keeping the momentum

Motivate everyone on your team to keep moving forward at a productive rate—and communicating about who's doing what.
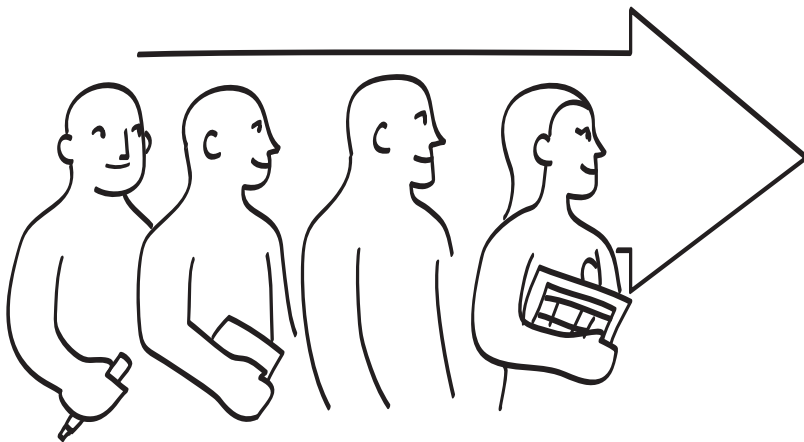
time
45 min. at a minimum

roles
Participants, 1 facilitator, multiple recorders

materials
Printer paper, large sheet of paper, markers, pens

where to next?

This is a great time to go to the activity area Clarify Your Goals and do the activity 'Check Your Goal.'

Check Your Goal
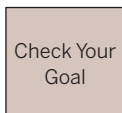
1. With the full group together, decide who will be responsible out of the group for:
   • Updating your schedule as the group accomplishes milestones (or doesn't)
   • Tracking decisions made and next steps
   • Determining when and where the group will check in. Ideally, this is a stable location and recurring date and time.

2. At the beginning of each meeting, it's important to start with a lively update regarding what group members have done. This should be a free-form conversation, where each group member shares what they've accomplished and what roadblocks might still be standing in their way.

3. Answer the following questions together:
   • What has the team accomplished since their last meeting?
   • What challenges have emerged that the group didn't expect?
   • Who can best resolve those issues?
   • How will they best be resolved?
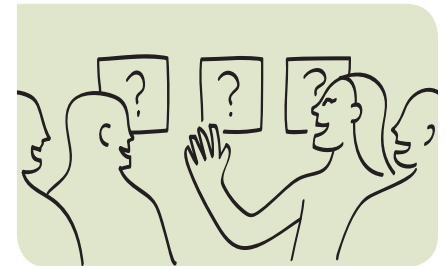
4. Once the team has answered these questions, look at your group calendar (created in the 'Set the Timeline' activity) and determine if milestones or dates need to be adjusted based on the challenges and proposed solutions.
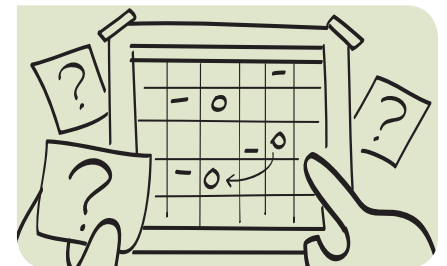
When you're done in this activity area: Try moving to Seek New Understanding activities to determine who to talk to next, or Imagine More Ideas to come up with more solutions.

Don't forget to fill out a Learning Card when you transition to another activity area.

fold along line

about this toolkit

This toolkit is part of frog's commitment to invest in social impact. While intended for use by leaders in local communities, it draws from both our social innovation work and our expertise in encouraging grassroots innovation within startups and large-scale organizations.

It can be used as an accelerant for group problem solving, whether by local community groups, schools, nonprofits, corporations, and so forth.

how to build on this toolkit

This toolkit is intended to be shareable via a **Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike CC BY-NC-SA License**. This license lets others build upon this toolkit non-commercially, as long as they credit frog and license their new creations under the identical terms. If you're interested in gaining access to this toolkit for localization purposes, please contact us at **cat@frogdesign.com.**

what inspired this toolkit?

The first seeds for this Toolkit were planted while working on a research project with the Girl Effect. As part of that project, we paired skills development with design research, facilitating activities with adolescent girls living in extreme poverty. The activities were intended to encourage girls to explore their world and collaborate in groups to devise solutions for local problems that they'd discovered.

During this work, the girls told us they wanted to share these activities with their families, friends, and the broader community. After the project, we stepped back and realized that if these types of activities could be shared with a more general audience, everyone could benefit.

A group of frogs came together and looked across our existing problem-solving practices, including how frogs collaborate in groups when working on client projects. We distilled what we learned into this toolkit.

fold along line

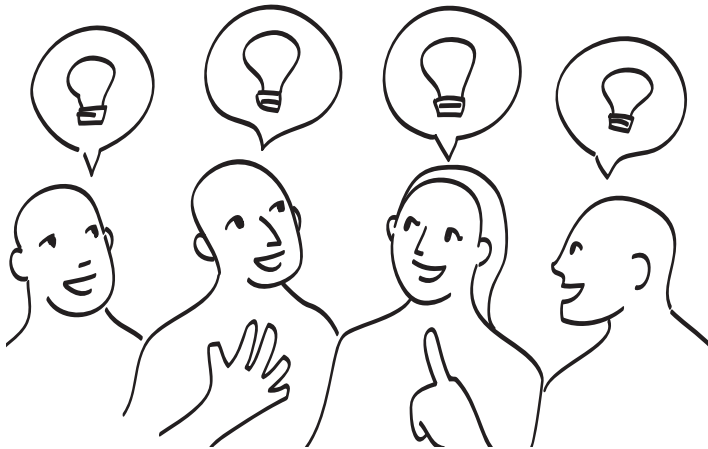# share this toolkit with others

DOWNLOAD A VERSION OF IT FOR FREE AT:

http://www.frogdesign.com/cat

share your story

WE'D LOVE TO HEAR HOW YOUR GROUPS HAVE BEEN USING THE COLLECTIVE ACTION TOOLKIT.

cat@frogdesign.com

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