

Planning a World Café



A Training for Facilitators/Hosts

Overview

AGENDA

Welcome and Introductions

Training/Materials Overview

Review of the 7 Principles of Design- (1-3)

Café Planning Practice 1-3

BREAK (10 mins)

Review of 7 Principles of Design- (4-7)

Café Planning Practice 4-7

Review of Café Plans

Closing and Evaluation

Why World Café?

- ▶ Research by evolutionary biologist Humberto Maturana and cognitive scientist, Francisco Varela reaffirms the central notion of the World Café model:
 - ▶ Humans evolved the unique capacity for talking together and making distinctions of meaning in language.
 - ▶ Since our earliest ancestors, conversation has been our primary means for discovering what we care about, sharing knowledge, imagining the future and acting together to survive and thrive.
 - ▶ Conversations create meaning-making networks that shape our lives.
 - ▶ Conversations are the lifeblood and heartbeat of social systems and change.

The Tools

- ▶ Please refer to the packet you were given as you came in.
 - ▶ Café Planning Worksheet
 - ▶ Café Planning Guide
 - ▶ Sample menu
 - ▶ Table host guide
 - ▶ Supply list
 - ▶ Evaluation
 - ▶ Organizational survey
 - ▶ Parent survey
 - ▶ Cafe-in-a-Box letter

7 Design Principles



Planning Groups

- ▶ You will divide into groups of 2-3 (if you came here with the intention of working on a particular project with particular people, that can be your group)
- ▶ If you don't have a particular café in mind and did not come with specific people to work with, find a partner or two. Here is a list of possible café scenarios to work with as practice:

Café ideas for parents

- 1) Resilience
- 2) Self-care
- 3) Social connections
- 4) Dealing with a difficult parenting situation
- 5) Discipline
- 6) Promoting literacy for children
- 7) Promoting social-emotional development in children

Café ideas for teens

- 1) Self-care
- 2) Social media
- 3) School engagement

1. Set the Context—Purpose, Participants, Parameters



<http://www.theworldcafe.com/tools-store/hosting-tool-kit/image-bank/stamps>

The Purpose

- ▶ *What is the purpose of your Café? Why are you bringing people together? What do you want to achieve? What need (or needs) will this conversation fulfill?*
- ▶ *Who should be part of the Café planning team?*
- ▶ *Who should participate in your Café?*
- ▶ *What is your budget?*

The Participants

- ▶ Who needs to be in the conversation in order to achieve our purpose?
- ▶ What additional people or perspectives could add valuable insights?
- ▶ What do we know about who's coming and what are they're needs, interests and questions?

The Parameters

- ▶ Consider the “givens” you have to work with:
 - ▶ Time constraints
 - ▶ Location/venue
 - ▶ Politics
 - ▶ Money and Human Resources

2. Create Hospitable Space



- ▶ *Where will it be held?*
- ▶ *How does your physical set-up contribute to setting up a welcoming environment?*

3. Explore Questions that Matter



- ▶ *Do you want to explore a single question in all three rounds or use a progressively deeper line of inquiry through three rounds?*
- ▶ *What are the questions you plan to discuss at the Café?*
- ▶ *How do you plan to divide your time during the Café? (A World Café generally consists of three rounds of progressive conversation lasting approximately 20-30 minutes each, followed by a dialogue among the whole group.)*

A Powerful Question:

- ▶ Is simple and clear
- ▶ Is thought-provoking
- ▶ Generates energy
- ▶ Focuses inquiry
- ▶ Surfaces unconscious assumptions
- ▶ Generates curiosity
- ▶ Stimulates reflective conversation
- ▶ Opens new possibilities
- ▶ Touches a deep meaning
- ▶ Stays with participants
- ▶ Evokes more questions
- ▶ “Travels well”—spreads into larger networks of conversation

3 Dimensions of Powerful Questions

Construction

- Linguistic construction of a question either opens our mind or narrows possibilities.
- Most powerful questions start with “how”, “what”, “why”* and are open-ended.

Scope

- Match the scope of the question to the needs of the group.
- Tailor the scope precisely—not too broad, not too narrow

Assumptions

- All questions have implicit or explicit assumptions.
- Check for assumptions or beliefs that may not be shared by participants.

When Framing Questions, Ask:

- ▶ Is this question relevant to the real life and real work of the people who will be exploring it?
- ▶ Is this a genuine question—a question to which we don't know the answer?
- ▶ Is this question likely to invite fresh thinking?
- ▶ What assumptions and beliefs are embedded in the way this question is constructed?
- ▶ Is this question likely to generate hope, imagination, engagement, creative action and new possibilities rather than focus on past problems & obstacles?
- ▶ Does this question leave room for new and different questions to be raised?

(Adapted from Sally Ann Roth, Public Conversations Project, 1998)

4. Encourage Everyone's Contribution



- ▶ *What can you do to encourage everyone's contribution?*

5. Connect Diverse Perspectives



- ▶ Progressive “rounds” of conversations.
- ▶ As people move between tables, they “cross-pollinate” ideas.
- ▶ Participants build on, each other's ideas and add their own.
- ▶ Common patterns may arise.

6. Listen Together for Patterns & Insights



- ▶ *How do you want to handle Table Hosts for your Café? Choose them in advance? Ask for volunteers?*

(you can also refer to the Table Host guidelines in your materials packet)

7. Share Collective Discoveries



- ▶ *What creative ways for harvesting, documenting, and sharing discoveries will be most useful for a) the participants at the event and b) carrying the insights forward to other constituencies?*
- ▶ *Why did you choose that method?*
- ▶ *What do you want to make sure people get out of the harvesting?*

Café Plans

- ▶ Please share
 - ▶ Purpose/participants
 - ▶ Questions
 - ▶ How you might harvest

Next Steps



- ▶ Please complete the training evaluation.
- ▶ Inspirations and Connections

Thank you for your participation!