

### *Dialogue meeting method C: Prioritisation, ideas for initiatives and group action plan start-up*

Time: 2 hrs. including break

Participants: 6-40 people

Facilitator: required experience Experience with process management and prior selection of a few focus areas based on the three reading approaches.

Participants: required experience None

Materials Flip charts, Post-it notes, markers (half the number of participants) and pens

The exercise facilitates prioritisation of pre-selected focus areas, the development of ideas and deciding on action plans. The method makes it possible to involve all participants in developing the most important ideas, and the payoff is motivation to continue working with the selected initiatives. If you choose this method, the meeting planners and the management must be prepared to support the initiatives that are chosen.

#### Introduction (10 min.)

The facilitator of the meeting should open the meeting by briefly sketching out the purpose of the meeting, the intentions behind it, and what results the meeting is intended to produce.

Posters with a few proposed focus areas should be made in advance (preferably formulated as goals).

These should be hung on the walls of the meeting room so that everyone can see them. The posters could be made by a working group of employees from the unit who have asked their colleagues to identify what important areas are pointed out by the report. The focus areas can also be identified using method A or B.

If a specific number of focus areas is the desired result, this should be named during the introduction (for example, 'The five focus areas that get the most check marks are the ones we will choose to work on going forward'.) This also applies if a particular framework should be taken account, for example constraints of time, resources or finances, so that participants do not propose ideas that will have to be retracted or rejected afterwards. The facilitator can either explain the framework in the introduction or announce that all ideas are subject to final approval after the meeting.

#### The selection of focus areas and the (re)formulation of goals (10 + 10 min.)

The first 10 min.: Participants pair off and discuss the proposed focus areas as they walk around looking at the posters. Each pair has a marker. Before the ten minutes are up, each pair has to check off the three focus areas they think are most important to prioritise.

The final 10 min.: The posters that have been given the most checks are left hanging. The others are taken down. The facilitator explains what will happen to the proposals that are taken down (will they be put up

again at another time, or will they be thrown out).

The focus areas on the remaining posters are formulated as positive goals (what we want to achieve).

#### Ideas for concrete initiatives (15 min.)

The participants remain in their pairs and walk around looking at the remaining focus areas/goals again. Each pair has a block of Post-it notes. In this round, they write down their best ideas for concrete initiatives on Post-it notes and put them up on the relevant focus area posters. For example, if there is a poster with the focus area 'keeping a civil tone', participants can put Post-it notes on it with their best ideas for what has to be done to achieve that. For example, 'Next week, everyone does their best to keep a civil tone at meetings and in working relationships. When the week is up, we discuss what changes have resulted from this focus on 'civil tone'. What had the greatest effect?'

#### Presentation of initiatives and categorisation (30 min.)

All participants now walk around to the selected posters with focus areas and initiatives. Each poster should receive an equal time (for example 10 minutes per poster). All initiatives related to each poster should be presented, and it is the facilitator's job to identify similarities, overlap, and differences, as well as to categorize the initiatives as they are presented. The facilitator should ask the participants to assist with this during the presentations, so that everyone contributes. It is important to respect the intentions of each contributor. Otherwise, motivation can easily be transformed into resistance.

#### Decision-making process with action plans (15 + 10 min.)

The first 15 min.: Now, the participants can go over to the focus area they are most interested in contributing to. Their task is to decide on a short, clear action plan with agreements on who is to do what, when and how. If the faculty/the administration has agreed on a standard action plan format, this must be used.

The final 10 min.: After 15 minutes of work, the facilitator visits each group and asks them in turn to present the concrete initiatives they propose for their focus area to the entire group.

The facilitator might ask questions such as: *Which initiatives can be launched tomorrow? What needs to be achieved within the next month? What binding agreements do we need to make with one another? Etc.*

#### Wrap-up (5 min.)

The facilitator thanks everyone for their contributions and wraps up by addressing the following points:

- 1) What has come out of the meeting today (which focus areas and initiatives have been identified)
- 2) What happens next. How what has been agreed will be followed up on. How the next steps in the process will take place.

The decisions and agreements should be documented, and all decisions and proposals should be made available electronically or hung up in a visible spot after the meeting.