



Dealing with Resistance Playbook



**Facilitating inclusive dialogue in the face of
team resistance.**

Purpose

In times of change and transformation, leaders often face resistance from their team members, which can hinder progress and impact morale. This "Dealing with Team Resistance" workshop equips leaders with practical tools to navigate these challenges effectively.

Grounded in the four principles of Deep Democracy [1], this playbook guides leaders through a structured process of acknowledging diverse perspectives, fostering inclusive dialogue, and collaboratively developing solutions.

The workshop is tailored for leaders steering their teams through significant changes, whether it's organizational restructuring, new strategic initiatives, or shifts in company culture. By engaging in activities that promote active listening, visual representation of opinions, and creative problem-solving, leaders will develop skills to transform resistance into constructive engagement. This approach not only addresses immediate challenges but also builds a foundation for a more resilient, adaptable team culture that can thrive amidst ongoing change.

With the steps in this guide, you can run this workshop independently. But if you need help, do not hesitate to contact me at christian@hofstetter-coaching.com or reach out to me on [LinkedIn](#).

Let me know how it went!

Christian Hofstetter



Flow

Total duration

 **160 min**

1

Check-In

 **20 min**

2

Setting the Stage

 **15 min**

3

Making it Safe to Say No

 **30 min**

4

Gain all the Views

 **35 min**

5

Wisdom of the Minority

 **45 min**

6

Debrief & Closing

 **15 min**



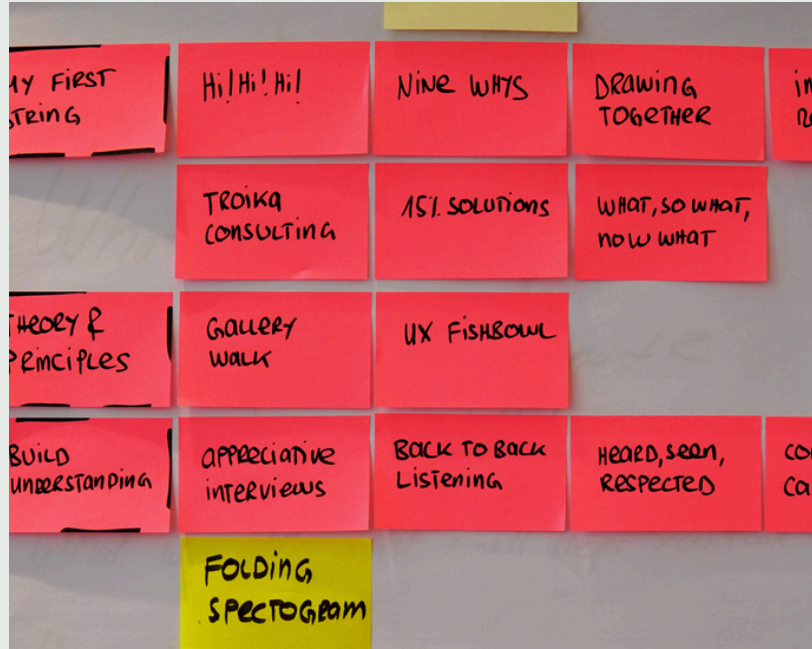
Before the Workshop

Group Size

This workflow is suited for teams of 2 up to 15 people. With some minor modifications, you can scale it beyond that number.

Intended Audience

This playbook is designed for change agents, team leaders, and facilitators working with groups navigating organizational transitions. If you're guiding teams through restructuring, digital transformation, or cultural shifts and encountering pushback, this resource is for you. It provides practical strategies to transform resistance into constructive dialogue and collective progress.



Online Delivery

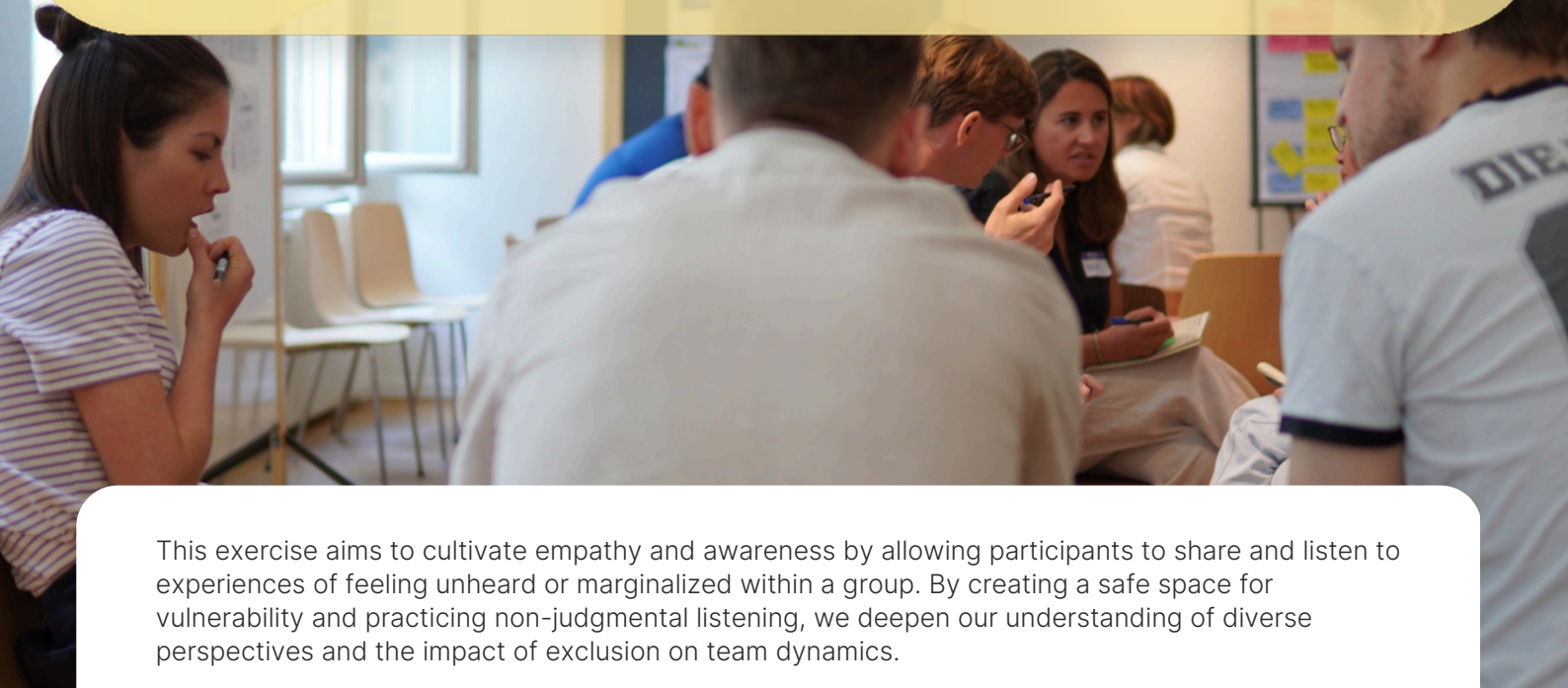
This workshop is equally effective when conducted in an online setting. To facilitate online delivery, it's essential to have access to a video conferencing platform that supports breakout sessions. Zoom [2] is highly recommended for this purpose, but you can find similar features in tools like Teams. Additionally, the inclusion of a virtual whiteboard is imperative, as it enables participants to interact by placing sticky notes on the map. For this function, platforms like Mural, Miro, and Google Slides [3][4][5] prove to be suitable choices.

Material

- Pen and paper for participants to write on
- Stickies in different colors and sizes
- A roll of masking tape or blue tape
- Place chairs in a circle. Put tables aside.



Making it Safe to Say No



This exercise aims to cultivate empathy and awareness by allowing participants to share and listen to experiences of feeling unheard or marginalized within a group. By creating a safe space for vulnerability and practicing non-judgmental listening, we deepen our understanding of diverse perspectives and the impact of exclusion on team dynamics.

Invitation

"Think of a group you have been part of. Tell a story of a time when you had a different opinion than the rest of the group. And you did not feel heard, seen or respected."

Steps

1. Introduce the exercise, emphasizing its purpose of practicing empathetic listening and understanding the experience of being a minority voice. Stress the importance of creating a safe, non-judgmental space.
2. Provide clear guidelines for storytelling: Choose a moderate example, not the most emotionally charged one. Focus on personal feelings and experiences rather than blame. Hold the silence if there is nothing to say. Pick a group from the past rather than the current one.
3. Set up pairs, offering seating options (side-by-side or angled) to enhance comfort. Encourage partners to decide who goes first.
4. First round of storytelling: 4 minutes for sharing, followed by 30 seconds of silent reflection.
5. Second round: Switch roles, repeat the process.
6. Pair reflection: Discuss the experience of both telling and listening.
7. Large group debrief: Invite volunteers to share key takeaways or insights, focusing on the process rather than story details.
8. Conclude by connecting the exercise to the workshop's broader themes of inclusive dialogue and minority voices.

🕒 5min

🕒 5min

🕒 5min

🕒 8min




About me



Christian Hofstetter

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Hi, I'm Christian. Let me help you and your teams reach your true potential.

My focus is on providing teams and organizations with tools and structures so they can drive change from within and act independently.

