

Interactive Strategies for Meetings

Strategy	Description
Card Clusters	Participants write their thoughts (about a question or prompt) individually on sticky notes. Put all the sticky notes up on a wall, and then the group clusters them by similar ideas and themes.
Milestones	First, create a time line on the board. Participants think about a big event that occurred (a life event, something that happened at school, or something that happened in their team) and then write it on a sticky note. Participants then put their sticky notes on the time line, and everyone shares by going from the beginning to the current time to share the major events that have taken place.
Passing Notes	Present an incomplete sentence prompt, a question, or a quote. Participants each add their thoughts to a sheet of paper and then pass it on to the next person. Once everyone has read everyone's thoughts, hold an open discussion about the themes that emerge.
Role Play or Skits	Insert skits or role play into meetings to allow participants to experience certain concepts and understand different perspectives.
Edward de Bono's (1985) Six Thinking Hats	Participants wear different hats to provide feedback based on particular perspectives. The hats are logic (facts); optimism (benefits); devil's advocate (difficulties); emotion (feelings); creativity (new ideas); and management (ensure participants are fulfilling the roles of their hats). If you want to get creative, you could bring a variety of hats—or you could just have the audience use a sticker to name their hat and put it on their shirts (like name badges).
The Five Whys	Pose a problem and ask participants why. After they answer, ask why again. Continue to ask why three more times to uncover the various layers before getting into solutions.
Ball Throwing	Use a tennis ball or a stuffed animal to throw to participants throughout the meeting. Whoever you throw to is the person who speaks.
Study Tables	Have a printout of a few different articles at different tables. Participants go to a table, read the article, and then take turns sharing their learning with the whole group.
Ignite	Participants prepare two-minute presentations with personal pictures of themselves that tell their stories. You can have one or two participants give their presentations at each meeting until everyone has had a turn. Through this activity, participants learn more about one another.
Keep and Throw	Pose a question and ask some participants what ideas they want to keep and ask another group what ideas they want to throw away. Switch sides and ask again.

Source: Butler, A. S. (2014). *Mission critical meetings: 81 practical facilitation techniques*. Tucson, AZ: Wheatmark.

Reference

de Bono, E. (1985). *Six thinking hats*. New York: Little, Brown.