



Knowledge to lead

Guidelines for Implementing Future Search

Key Elements

- The more diverse the group, the more successful the gathering will be: get the whole system in the room, make sure that all the key actors are present
- Think globally, act locally: discuss all aspects of the system before you seek fixing any part of it
- Establish a common ground and keep the focus on it throughout the whole event
- Make sure participants understand that they need to manage and take responsibility for their actions before, during and after the future search
- Allow enough time for the information to sink it, make the event last at least 3 days
- Discourage part-time participation
- Make sure that the diversity and the clashing nature of perspectives is acknowledged and accepted during the event
- Accept the ups and downs in the atmosphere: there will be frustration and challenges, as well as feelings of success and accomplishments



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Facilitator's Role

- Hands-off approach: participants manage and take responsibility their actions
- Clarifies of goals and explaining tasks
- Promotes a cooperative atmosphere
- Helps participants self-organize
- Avoids suggesting solutions
- Overviews the process
- Remains passive when participants are working well together
- Gets active when there is a conflict or avoidance of fulfilling the tasks
- Follows-up and supports action-groups
- Uses visual facilitation tools, such as mind maps

Step by Step

1. Focus on the Past (Mixed Groups)

Participants discuss the past; point out milestones, list successes and failures as well as challenges. They find shared elements and events in the past and establish their common ground.

2. Focus on the Present (Stakeholder Groups)

Participants explore the trends which influence their lives, discuss concerns and set up priorities.



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3. Focus on Ideal Future Scenarios (Mixed Groups)

In groups, stakeholders imagine their future in 5, 10 and 20 years. They envision their possible successes, barriers and challenges.

4. Identify and Confirm Common Ground (Whole group)

All participants come together, share, and develop an idea for the common future by discussing shared obstacles, unresolved issues, future projects and how to get there.

5. Make Action Plans (Stakeholder or Self-Selected Groups)

After personal reflections where each individual contemplates their role and their tasks for the future, they get together with others who have similar goals and passions in order to create action plans for the future. Experience has shown that these groups tend to continue working together in the future as well.



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