

This is us

Dialogue Format

THIS IS US



UMC Utrecht

Why dialogue?

Discussing important subjects that affect us all is not always easy. Whether it is at work or at the university.

With a good portion of creativity, a healthy dose of guts and, above all, an open and empathetic attitude, you can get a lot done. The main thing is to just get started. Whether you take the first step as a team (supervisor) or team member or simply together with colleagues or your student association, anything is possible, provided you manage to create a safe environment.

This format for conducting a dialogue offers a handle for this.

Talking about dialogues...

A dialogue is a conversation between people who freely exchange ideas, which leads to new insights among those involved.

A typical aspect is that **meanings** arise that could not have come about without dialogue.

Really **listening** is at the heart of this.

(For a good example, see:
www.utrechtindialoog.nl).

During a dialogue, a number of rules apply.

- Together, you are responsible for an inclusive dialogue. Everyone counts, everyone joins in.
- Let the other person tell their story.
- Do not immediately counter it with your own story.
- Treat each other friendly and with respect.
- Allow silences when people need a moment to think.
- Speak for yourself, not for others ("I think" instead of "people say").
- It is not about being right or wrong, but about listening to each other.

Dialogue format

Conducting a dialogue

Introduction:

- Introduce the subject, objective and importance of the dialogue
- Agree on the conversation rules with each other, create a safe environment

Step 1: collect all points of view

- Invite the participants to present their opinion, idea or point of view, even if it differs from yours.
- Attitude required from participants: do not judge, LSD: listen-summarize-dig deeper, show sincere interest, open, curious, neutral

Step 2: find alternatives

- Who has a different point of view?
- Which perspective has not yet been discussed?
- Which relevant issues have we not yet covered?

Step 3: support for dissenting opinions

- Who recognizes this? Prevent people from becoming isolated.
- Who has a similar idea or feeling?

Additionally, if decision-making is desired

Step 3 continued: vote on the proposals formulated

- Unanimous majority? -> ready and implement
- Disagreement? Everyone can lobby well and clearly for their 'own' idea
- Vote again until there is a majority -> step 4

Step 4: from minority to majority

- A shame that you aren't getting what you want.
- What do you need to get along with the majority decision?
- If you can't reach agreement, go to step 5

Step 5: discuss the undercurrent

- Investigate contradictions by digging deeper. What beliefs, norms, values, assumptions are behind it?
- Solve these.

Based on the starting points of Deep Democracy

This video presents a brief explanation.

In conclusion ...

Questions? Send an email to ditzijnwij@umcutrecht.nl

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Uncomfortable?

Remember that meaningful and impactful conversations are not meant to be comfortable. When we all feel comfortable, are we talking about what really matters? Or are we just raising points on which we can all agree? Difficult conversations don't have to go smoothly. The main thing is that you work through it together with respect for everyone's opinion and feelings.

What helps?

As dialogue facilitator, you play an important role in guiding difficult situations during the dialogue and in recognizing and acting on them during the conversation.

Run interference. Name what you hear or see happening and what this evokes in you and present it to the group. For example:

- "I notice we're not really listen to each other anymore, I think it's important that everyone is heard. How can we ensure that we listen better to each other?"
- "I see that what is being said now affects you (drop silence so that others can respond). Is there anything we can do for you now?"
- "I see that a number of you have not had the opportunity to respond yet. Your opinion/vision is important to me and the team. Who would like to say anything? (Or if that's uncomfortable for those addressed: "What's a good way for you to also give your vision or opinion?")"

If necessary, make a follow-up appointment to continue the dialogue.

Looking out for each other afterward

Look out for those who experienced the dialogue as difficult and may have been personally affected by the subject. Make sure you look out for each other during and afterward by asking 1 on 1 how someone is doing. Refer to a counselor if necessary or desired.

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