

# FACTSHEET: WORLD CAFE

## World Cafe Method

Drawing on seven integrated design principles, the World Café methodology is a simple, effective, and flexible format for hosting large group dialogue.

World Café can be modified to meet a wide variety of needs. Specifics of context, numbers, purpose, location, and other circumstances are factored into each event's unique invitation, design, and question choice, but the following five components comprise the basic model:

### 1) Set the Context

Pay attention to the reason you are bringing people together, and what you want to achieve. Knowing the purpose and parameters of your meeting enables you to consider and choose the most important elements to realise your goals: e.g. who should be part of the conversation, what themes or questions will be most pertinent, what sorts of harvest will be more useful, etc..

### 2) Create Hospitable Space

Café hosts around the world emphasise the power and importance of creating a hospitable space - one that feels safe and inviting. When people feel comfortable to be themselves, they do their most creative thinking, speaking, and listening. In particular, consider how your invitation and your physical set-up contribute to creating a welcoming atmosphere.

### 3) Explore Questions that Matter

Knowledge emerges in response to compelling questions. Find questions that are relevant to the real-life concerns of the group. Powerful questions that "travel well" help attract collective energy, insight, and action as they move throughout a system. Depending on the timeframe available and your objectives, your Café may explore a single question or use a progressively deeper line of inquiry through several conversational rounds.

### 4) Encourage Everyone's Contribution

As leaders we are increasingly aware of the importance of participation, but most people don't only want to participate, they want to actively contribute to making a difference. It is important to encourage everyone in your meeting to contribute their ideas and perspectives, while also allowing anyone who wants to participate by simply listening to do so.

### 5) Connect Diverse Perspectives

The opportunity to move between tables, meet new people, actively contribute your thinking, and link the essence of your discoveries to ever-widening circles of thought is one of the distinguishing characteristics of the Café. As participants carry key ideas or themes to new tables, they exchange perspectives, greatly enriching the possibility for surprising new insights.



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## **6) Listen together for Patterns and Insights**

Listening is a gift we give to one another. The quality of our listening is perhaps the most important factor determining the success of a Café. Through practicing shared listening and paying attention to themes, patterns and insights, we begin to sense a connection to the larger whole. Encourage people to listen for what is not being spoken along with what is being shared.

## **7) Share Collective Discoveries**

Conversations held at one table reflect a pattern of wholeness that connects with the conversations at the other tables. The last phase of the Café, often called the “harvest”, involves making this pattern of wholeness visible to everyone in a large group conversation. Invite a few minutes of silent reflection on the patterns, themes and deeper questions experienced in the small group conversations and call them out to share with the larger group. Make sure you have a way to capture the harvest – working with a graphic recorder is recommended.

*(Taken from: <http://www.theworldcafe.com/key-concepts-resources/design-principles/> on 10/3/2017)*