



# SKILLS AND DREAMS

## LAYER TYPE: STRUCTURE, INDIVIDUAL, COMMUNITY

A method to create working groups, know each other better, create synergy and evaluate the real strength of a group in the present time.

A visual representation of human resources that stretches into the future.



### Aims and Objectives

This method has the aims to:

- create working groups that are effective and sustainable
- help people reflect on their personal resources and dreams & wishes
- create synergy in the group and strengthen the peer to peer learning process
- know each other better, in an unexpected way



### Time

60 to 90 minutes, depending on the group size.



### Materials Preparation

- A flip chart with a few clean sheets
- Colored markers
- Sheets of paper and pencils for participants



### Target audience

This method is aimed at groups that need to create a functional structure and perform joint actions in order to achieve their goals. Sociocratic groups during their planning phase can also benefit from this method .



### Number of Participants

Minimum 5 – maximum 30.



## Duration Activity

10' INTRODUCTION - FRAMING THE EXERCISE

15' COLLECTING IDEAS

20' CREATING THE MAP OF HUMAN RESOURCES

20' CREATING WORKING GROUPS

15' DEBRIEFING

# INTRODUCTION

## FRAMING- 10 MINUTES

This method is used in a plenary session when a group needs to create smaller, long lasting and effective working groups.

A short introduction on the purpose should cover how to set up teams that work together efficiently and productively. In order for a community to be socially sustainable, we need to give time and space for personal evolution and upgrading of skills as desired by all members.

It encourage people to think with a win-win mind-frame, so they look for their best possible offer/contribution while also fulfilling their inner wishes, dreams and desires.

As strong working groups are based both on good performance and personal fulfillment, this method will look into both areas to make sure they are well balanced or at least openly declared and considered.

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## INSTRUCTION 1 - COLLECTING IDEAS 15 MINUTES

Each person receives a sheet of paper and is asked to reflect individually on the **first question**:

"What personal skill do I bring to the group? What is my "specialty", my best **professional ability** that I want to contribute to the group's life?"

After 2-3 minutes of individual reflection, each person identifies **three skills** and writes down short three sentences describing each one.

Instruct people to be brief and clear.

Now ask people to reflect on the **second question**:

"What would I really like to do in my life? What is my **"dream in the drawer"**, something that I always liked doing and maybe never could? What activity would make me happy in this time in my life, in this group or community?"

Give again 3 minutes and write the three dreams on paper.

## INSTRUCTION 3 - CREATING WORKING GROUPS 20 MINUTES

The facilitator and the participants together will now create two separate lists.

One with **"Structural groups"** and the second with **"Project groups"**. Structural groups are permanent and will last as long as the community does (administration, communication, and others depending on the nature of the group).

Project groups are focused on a specific event or action that needs to happen in the near future, and can have a beginning and an end (celebration, training, activity, etc.). The topics will emerge from the mind maps, and the facilitator can integrate other ones with the question "What other teams do we need to make this group work well?".

## INSTRUCTION 2- CREATING THE MAP OF HUMAN RESOURCES - 20 MINUTES

On the flip chart, draw a mind map with two parts. In the top one in the centre write "SKILL" and in the bottom write "DREAM". If the group is large (from 12 to 30), use two separate sheets.

Each participant draws a branch in the top part of the map: name and **three special skills** (in keywords).

Examples:

Mary - cooking for groups, catering, food shopping

Hans - administration, financial management, project writing

Then draw the bottom part of the map with **personal desires and wishes**.

Examples: Mary - gardening, babysitting, meditation

Hans - cooking, woodwork/crafts, farming.

The facilitator will invite the participants to join the different groups, inviting the **"experts"** to be the focalizers of the topic and the **"dreamers"** to be supporters - learners.

No one is obliged to take on a task they do not want; leave time for dialogue in front of the mind map, so that people make connections around a shared interest.

Each person is encouraged to participate in more than one group, ideally changing roles (once as expert, once as supporter). Use graphic skills to draw the identified working groups around the mind-map or on a new sheet of paper.

Ask the group to also come up with **a separate list of important tasks** that currently have no human resources available.

Instruct the newly created working groups to set a time and place to meet and start to work together.



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## INSTRUCTION 4 - DEBRIEFING 15 MINUTES

Sitting in a circle, participants are encouraged to share their experience and what they learnt about each other. Interesting questions to bring to the group:

- Have you become aware of skills present in this group that you had not seen before?
- What is the strongest energy and inclination of this group right now?
- Are the available skills enough to set up a fully operational structure?
- Will we organize primarily according to competence levels, personal needs or to our dreams/aspirations?
- Or will it be a mix?
- What are the implications?
- Does the group need to outsource tasks to cover the gaps? Other strategies? Who can assist?

## RELATION TO THE CLIPS MODEL

This method is related mainly to the Structure level (organizing groups), but is rooted in the "I" level (individual skills and wishes) and in the "Community" level (creating effective working teams).

The "intention" level needs to come in at the end, to check if the available skills, resources and dreams are aligned with the mission and strategy, or if something needs to be adapted in order to create better synergy.

**FACILITATION TIP:** Opening a space for people's dreams may uplift the energy of the group and create personal links that may otherwise remain hidden.

This method is also rank-effective, as it highlights, in a safe and respectful way, areas where leaders can unveil their "dream space" to become learners of other member who are more shy and less prominent.

It has a solid peer to peer element, and stimulates mutual learning in a practical and supportive way.

Following the **permaculture principle** "3 elements for each function, 3 functions for each element" it makes the structure more resilient and less dependent on a single human resource.

"Skills and dreams" can also be applied to create the circles in a sociocratic organisation.

This procedure can be repeated periodically to check the health of working groups, make possible changes to the structure, and also to replace project groups that have completed their task.

The exercise can lead to interesting explorations in diversity management - to lift the curtain for underlying skills and dreams that might not have been so obvious, but can be effectively included in the work.

