

# How to run a **Yes, And...Circle**

## **Everyone says "Yes And..."**

Layer upon ideas and add ideas to achieve the desired outcome.

## **Use the Yes And... ball**

Throw the ball around keeps everyone present and listening. Since you never know when you may get the ball.

## **Stand in a circle**

Standing generates the most engagement and best ideas. Breaks the pattern of meetings.

## **Listen for the gold**

Practice listening for the best in what everyone says. Avoid getting triggered by "how" someone reacts or says something. Instead listen for the best in what others say.

## **Ask a question**

When the conversation starts to slow or stall. Our brains love to answer questions.

## **Use "What" and "How" open questions**

Start + guide the conversation. Throw the ball around 1-2 times to explore starting questions.

## **Avoid "can" and "do" closed questions**

Since they often lead to pointless debate of participants' opinions.

## **Avoid "why" questions**

Only 17% of people prefer why questions. Most people feel judged. Reword questions with "what" or "how" instead.

## **Avoid "but"**

"Yes, but" is a no. But negates what came before.

## **Keep the ball moving around**

Throw to participants who have not contributed recently. Avoid ball hogs.

## ..... Different types of **Yes, And...Circles**

### **Idea Explosion! Circle (10 - 12 minutes)**

---

- Teams generate **30 to 40 potential ideas** in less than **10 to 12 minutes**. Fun to count how many ideas get identified in 10 minutes
- **Improved with** visual timekeeping, scribe(s) to capture on flipcharts
- **Remember** all ideas get captured, versions of ideas get captured
- **Follow up** with an Idea into Action Circle

### **Idea into Action Circle (5 - 7 minutes)**

---

- Teams link potential ideas into a specific broader strategy/tactic. Whole team layers on the one idea to translate one idea into an action plan
- **Improved with** index cards to capture action steps and visual timekeeping
- **Remember** all people describe actions, someone captures and order cards as you go
- **Follow up** with an Alignment Exploration Circle on how to measure progress/results

### **Alignment Exploration Circle (8 - 15 minutes)**

---

- Everyone shares their perspectives, listening and layering on others' perspectives. Soon everyone understands the challenges deeply enough to find the right solution
- **Improved with** trust. Great questions that begin with easier to answer ones then whole team. Allow everyone to share freely
- **Remember** to consider multiple perspectives like customers, vendors, volunteers, other impacted teams + leaders
- **Follow up** with an Idea into Action Circle