

# Exercises to Enhance Participation

## KWL (Know/ Want to Know/ Learned)

KWL is a two-part exercise to enhance both your effectiveness as a facilitator and participants' investment in an orientation or training. Part one, the K & W portion, takes place at the beginning of the orientation. Part II, the L portion, takes place at the end of the workshop prior to the evaluation stage.

- Objective**
- (1) To provide the facilitator with a quick needs assessment for the group and address questions/ concerns that those at the orientation may have.
  - (2) To provide participants with an opportunity to become invested in the workshop through sharing information.
  - (3) To provide a safe environment for participants to ask questions.

- Materials**
- Post-it notes with different colors for K, W, and L.
  - Flip chart paper with column headings of K, W, and L. For each heading, use the same color marker as for the post it notes (i.e., if you use a yellow marker for K on the flip chart, use yellow post it notes for K responses.)
  - Dark pens, magic markers

- Instructions**
- Explain to participants that you would like to have a sense of the knowledge base in the room, and that this exercise provides you with information about what they already know and what they want to know so you can tailor the training.
  - Explain that K = things they already know; W = things they want to know; and L = is for things that they've learned during the orientation or training, to be addressed later.
  - Give each participant nine post-it notes, three in each color.
  - Ask participants to write down three ideas for the K and W categories, one idea per post it note.
  - Collect the notes or have participants post them on the flipchart paper, grouping similar ideas together.
  - Briefly run through the Ks; acknowledge ideas that are accurate and gently correct inaccuracies. Indicate the Ws will be covered over the course of the orientation. If there is a W you can't answer, place it in the parking lot with a promise to get the information and share it at a later date.
  - At the end of the orientation, check the flip chart to see if all Ws have been answered.

- Now ask participants to get out their L notes, and write down one thing that they have learned. Tell them that this will test your effectiveness as a presenter.
- Post these notes on the flip chart and briefly run through them to debrief.

**Duration:** *For the K & W part of the exercise at the start of the workshop:*

- Allow 5-6 minutes for completion of the notes. Do a time check at 4 minutes to see if more time is needed. The post its can be collected as you scan and/or walk around the room and see that folks have finished.
- Allow 5-7 minutes to debrief or run through the Ks and Ws. The time will depend upon the number of people and amount of commentary around the Ks and clarification needed for the Ws.

*At workshop conclusion:*

- Allow 5-10 minutes for check in to see if all Ws have been answered and to complete the L part of the exercise.

**Facilitator  
Notes:**

## **Parking Lot**

This exercise enhances engagement in an orientation or training by encouraging participants to get up and physically record, in a public place, thoughts they want to have addressed.

**Objective:** (1) To provide participants and the facilitator with a place for questions or comments that need to be addressed at some point during the training.

**Materials:**

- One piece of flipchart paper
- Markers and/or post-it notes

**Instructions**

- At the start of the orientation or training, introduce the Parking Lot, which is usually set up to one side of the presentation area.
- Let participants know that this is the place for them to put questions as they arise. Encourage them to get up at any time to record an idea, comment or question.
- Before breaks, invite participants to stop by the parking lot.
- During the meeting, as facilitator, write down any points that have been raised that will be answered later.

**Duration:** Ongoing throughout orientation or training.

**Facilitator  
Notes:**

## **Questions/ Comments/ Burning Issues**

Use this exercise either at the beginning of a training or at various points throughout the training. The exercise helps the facilitator address any concerns brought up in the course of the training, and keep participants focused on the meeting topic. It also provides an opportunity for disengaged participants to participate.

**Objective:** (1) To provide participants with a place for questions/ comments/ burning issues that need to be addressed throughout the course of the training

**Materials:**

- Three pieces of flipchart paper, one for each category: Questions, Comments, and Burning Issues
- Markers

**Instructions**

- Using the flip chart paper for each category, write down responses to each of the following three questions. Spend three to five minutes on each question.
  1. “Do you have any questions you would like answered during the course of the workshop?”
  2. “Do you have any comments you would like to share with the group regarding the workshop?”
  3. “Do you have any burning issues you would like to share with the group?”

**Duration** 9 – 15 minutes

**Facilitator's  
Notes**