

## What is it for?

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A way to refocus small group discussions and information sharing

## Time & People

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10 - 15 minutes

Any number where there are at least two small groups of a minimum of 3 people. Typically used with groups of 15 - 60

## Materials

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None

## Source

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Viv McWaters

## And also...

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This activity grew out of the frustration and tedium of small groups reporting back.

It is a playful way of refocusing groups when they inevitably drift off topic.

## Description

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After an activity, presentation, experience etc ask people to sit in small groups, ideally, without tables, for a review/debrief discussion.

Give the groups a focus question, and say 'go'. Resist answering any questions about the time they have, whether they should take notes, if they need to report back etc. The aim is to get them talking with each other.

Set a timer for 5 minutes. By this time, the groups will have started doing what groups typically do - wandering off topic.

Ask the groups to pause and invite one person in each group to stand up (provide criteria: for example, the person wearing the most colourful clothes - you need the criteria to be immediately obvious as you don't want them to dither over the choice).

Tell the people standing that they are now a group 'spy'. They will infiltrate one other group for 2 minutes and discover as much as they can about what that group was saying about the topic under discussion. Instruct the other group members that they will be cooperative and provide as much information as the spy asks for.

After two minutes ask the spies to return to their original group and share what they have discovered.

After another 2 - 3 minutes call a halt to the discussion and debrief as a whole group if needed.

## Debrief questions

What were your key insights about <topic>?

Did anything exciting, new, different emerge?

What was the role of the 'spy'?