

Ritual Dissent

Ritual Dissent is a workshop method designed to test and enhance proposals, stories, ideas or whatever by subjecting them to ritualised dissent (challenge) or assent (positive alternatives). In all cases it is a forced listening technique, not a dialogue or discourse.

The basic approach involves a spokesperson presenting a series of ideas to a group who receives them in silence. The spokesperson then turns their chair, so that their back is to the audience and listens in silence while the group either attack (dissent) or provide alternative proposals (assent). The ritualisation of not facing the audience de-personalizes the process and the group setting (others will be subject to the same process) means that the attack or alternative are not personal, but supportive.

Listening in silence without eye contact, increases listening. Overall plans that emerge from the process are more resilient than consensus based techniques.

Source: Cognitive Edge

(Extract from the public content on the webpage of Cognitive Edge)