



**ONE x ONE**

TRANSFORMING OUR FUTURE TOGETHER.

# COMMUNITY CONVERSATION TOOLKIT

JOIN THE CAMPAIGN FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN PUBLIC EDUCATION!

JACKSONVILLE  
*Public Education Fund*



# about us:

THE JACKSONVILLE PUBLIC EDUCATION FUND

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The Jacksonville Public Education Fund (JPEF) is an independent nonprofit organization that works with our community to help Duval County Public Schools become one of the best school systems in the country.

Formerly known as the Alliance for World Class Education, the Jacksonville Public Education Fund was formed in 2009 through the support of a small cadre of dedicated philanthropists convened by The Community Foundation in Jacksonville. Today, our mission is to initiate and maintain city-wide conversation on education issues. We want that conversation to become the foundation of education reform in Jacksonville.

We believe that every person in our community has a story to tell and can bring solutions to the table when it comes to what's best for their children, families, schools and communities. The Jacksonville Public Education Fund aims to drive civic action by connecting the voices of the community with best practice research and data analysis. We do so by listening carefully, as well as by informing the community about changes that must take place.

JPEF is led by a board composed of diverse group of community leaders who are ambassadors for our beliefs and mission. Our ultimate vision is that high-quality public schools are available to every child in every neighborhood in Duval County, and that all students in Jacksonville graduate ready for college or the workforce.



# one by one:

TRANSFORMING OUR FUTURE TOGETHER

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**Duval County is at a critical moment for improving public education. Economic studies show that reducing our dropout rate by half would add an estimated \$65 million to the regional economy. And in a recent poll, 41 percent of Duval County residents said they believed having a top-rated public education system—more than any other issue—is most important for our city’s future. But Jacksonville needs civic investment in education in order to get the public school system it needs.**

Recognizing this, the Jacksonville Public Education Fund launched the ONE by ONE campaign to unite the community behind a common vision to ensure that all students graduate from high school ready for college and the workforce. The campaign begins with the power of art to spark change. ONE in THREE: Let’s Solve Our Dropout Crisis is a photography exhibition featuring 20 current and former public school students. The exhibition takes its name from the sobering reality that one in three students in Duval County does not graduate from high school on time or at all. Through large-format photographs and videos, the students’ stories demonstrate the power of a community that works hand-in-hand with the schools to improve student success.

The exhibit runs through December 20, 2011 at the Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens. Then, starting in January 2012, it will travel the entire city. As it moves from one neighborhood to the next, stories of these students will awaken the community to the fact that we can only solve this problem face to face, voice by voice, and ONE by ONE.

The core belief of ONE by ONE is this: We cannot move forward until everyone has the chance to be heard. In the first phase of the initiative, the Jacksonville Public Education Fund will engage the community in a structured process to develop a collective vision for our schools and set priorities for improving public education.

From November 2011 through the fall of 2012, the initiative, coordinated by a volunteer-led Community Advisory Team (CAT) will conduct more than 80 facilitated conversations. Modeled after proven methods in other cities, ONE by ONE aims to engage 1,500 participants from every part of Jacksonville. The conversations will take place in homes, businesses and places of worship throughout the city. The campaign will also hold periodic large-scale listening events.

**The goal of the conversations is not simply to talk. The conversations will be documented, and the themes and ideas discussed will be entered into a database. From it, a vision for education that truly represents our entire city will emerge.**

By the fall of 2012, the project will move into its second phase: Turning those aspirations into reality. The CAT will work with citizens to turn the conversation input into a collective agreement for action. The agreement will be shared with the school board and an action framework will be developed that shares responsibility between the school district and the community. The third phase of ONE by ONE is projected to begin in early 2013, and will include the creation of teams to execute the action framework. The thousands of people who participate in the process must also ensure their elected officials support the vision, and work side by side with them to ensure they have the necessary resources and support to enact change. The Jacksonville Public Education Fund will be responsible for coordinating that action—holding to account not only public officials but also the people who elect them. We are all responsible for our children’s future.

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# getting started:

## YOUR ROLE IN THE CONVERSATION



### CONVERSATION HOSTS, FACILITATORS, AND SCRIBES

What conversation leaders are necessary for a successful community conversation? There are three important roles that need to be filled: conversation hosts, facilitators, and scribes.

#### WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE TO EFFECTIVELY LEAD A CONVERSATION?

Conversation leaders need to be able to engage people in discussions that emphasize the importance of working together and talking about tough public issues. Facilitating a conversation is so much more than just running a meeting, rather it is guiding a discussion to encourage others to express their feelings, thoughts, and ideas, as well as draw conclusions based on their prior knowledge and experiences.

#### WHAT IS A HOST?

A host is a person or organization that invites and registers an appropriate number of participants to have a conversation or dialogue.

#### WHAT ARE THE EXPECTATIONS OF A CONVERSATION HOST?

- Invite guests of their choosing to participate in a community conversation.
- Keep record of who plans to attend the conversation.
- Arrange a location or venue for the conversation.
- Provide refreshments for the conversation.
- Welcome guests and provide an opening statement regarding why they felt it was important to play this role and why they invited their guests to be a part of it.

#### WHAT IS A FACILITATOR?

A facilitator is someone who helps a group of people understand their common objectives and assists them to plan to achieve them without taking a particular position in the discussion.

#### WHAT ARE THE EXPECTATIONS OF A CONVERSATION FACILITATOR?

- Remain neutral about the topic under discussion, and avoid being seen as having an agenda or siding with a particular group.
- Demonstrate a genuine sense of curiosity and openness in exploring the ideas of others
- Listen to people and build trust.
- Challenge people to consider the perspective of others and understand why others think in different ways.
- Help people to reconcile conflicting remarks they or the group may have made in a non-confrontational manner.
- Preferably have experience leading or facilitating large group discussions.
- Use the conversation guide to keep the conversation focused on core areas of reflection.
- Use charts to jot down key quotes, conversation themes, and key takeaways that come out of conversations.
- Debrief the conversation with the scribe to reflect on thoughts, quotes, themes, and key takeaways.
- Be mindful of the amount of time available and the amount of space you take up in the room.
- Be the facilitator, which means talk the least.
- Balance instructional, probing guidance with leading questions.

# getting started:

## YOUR ROLE IN THE CONVERSATION CONT.



### WHAT IS A SCRIBE?

A scribe is the person who keeps records of the conversation.

### WHAT ARE THE EXPECTATIONS OF A CONVERSATION SCRIBE?

- Pick up scribe kit at least two hours prior to the scheduled conversation. If the conversation is scheduled on the weekend, pick up the scribe kit the day before.
- Pass around and collect sign-in sheet to keep record of who attends the conversation.
- Set up audio equipment.
- Ensure that participants are granted the opportunity to complete the Pre-conversation Survey.
- Write or type detailed notes, capturing key quotes throughout the conversation.
- Debrief the conversation with the facilitator to reflect on thoughts, quotes, themes and key takeaways.
- Collect charts, audio equipment, surveys, sign-in sheets and all documentation materials from conversation site.
- Turn in scribe kit and all documentation materials to JPEF within two days of recording a conversation.  
**(See submission information on The Conversation Details Checklist)**
- Submit typed detailed notes from conversations electronically to JPEF within a week of the conversation. Include the Themes Generator document when submitting typed detailed notes from conversations.

Receiving these items in a timely manner will help us ensure that the data is consistent and transparent for all conversations. JPEF will update our system and add conversation records to [www.onebyonejax.org](http://www.onebyonejax.org) within a month of each conversation's occurrence.

# getting started:

## SELECTING A CONVERSATION SITE



### HOW TO IDENTITY AN IDEAL CONVERSATION SITE

Where the community conversations occur will have a big impact on (1) who attends the conversations (2) the quality of the conversations (3) the participants' ability to have a productive conversation. Sometimes desirable sites may be difficult to secure, so it is extremely important to reserve the necessary space as soon as possible.

#### HERE ARE A FEW KEY THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN IDENTIFYING IDEAL CONVERSATION SITES:

- A place that people are familiar with and use frequently
- A place that is considered to be a part of the community
- A place that has more than one meeting room, in case you have to divide up a large group.
- A place available in the evenings and/ or on weekends.
- A place that offers a comfortable environment.
- A place that is sufficiently quiet and free of distractions to enable the conversation leaders and participants to get things accomplished.
- A place that is easily accessible to all participants
- Plenty of parking, centrally located, safe, near public transportation, accessible to those with disabilities



# getting started:

## PREPPING A ROOM



### CONVERSATION ROOM LOGISTICS

- Arrive approximately one hour early. This will leave time to set up the room before people arrive. [Don't assume anything about the space until you see it!]
- If necessary, put up signs to direct people from the main entrance to the meeting room.
- Designate a place to put the sign-in sheet. This should be the first thing people fill out when they enter the conversation site. **Completion of the sign-in sheet is absolutely critical, as obtaining this contact information will allow the campaign to keep in touch with those who are interested in staying involved.**
- The room should be well lit, but not too bright. Make sure the room's temperature is comfortable.
- Ensure that the tables in the room are set up in a way that allows people to write and take notes, while they engage in the discussion. This makes the room feel like more of a work space, as opposed to just another conversation.
- Provide nametags and name tents for people to write their names on. Make sure you put one on as well. Place refreshments in a location that is easily accessible without disrupting the conversation.
- Make sure you know exactly where the restrooms are so you can inform the group before the conversation begins.

### MATERIALS NEEDED AT SITE

- Most items are included in scribe kit (see Appendix D).
- Pens/ pencils
- Name tag and/or table tents
- Sign in sheets
- Paper to make signs
- Charts and markers
- Audio Equipment
- Refreshments (usually provided by host)
- Pre-conversation survey
- The Ground Rules
- Detailed Notes & Themes Template

# getting started:

## CONVERSATION DETAILS CHECKLIST



### HOST CONVERSATION DETAILS CHECKLIST

#### PLANNING

- Start planning and send ONE by ONE invite postcard or e-vite at least a month ahead of time
- Find a space to hold the conversation
- Keep conversations small and informal. People tend to feel less inhibited in more informal settings.
- Call to invite and follow-up with written confirmation.

#### BEFORE THE DOOR OPENS

- Arrange seating in the room so that everyone can see each other. If there are too many participants to fit around one set of tables, stick with the horseshoe model when setting up rows.
- Put refreshments in a location that people can access without interrupting the conversation.
- Inform participants where the restrooms are before the conversation begins.

#### AFTERWARDS

- Optional: Send participants a thank you note.

### FACILITATOR CONVERSATION DETAILS CHECKLIST

#### PLANNING

- Review frame-up statement
- Feel comfortable with the Discussion Guide

#### BEFORE THE DOOR OPENS

- Review the Discussion Guide
- Provide assistance for the Scribe, if needed.
- Make sure all charts are positioned where you can write on them.

#### AFTERWARDS

- Debrief with Scribe to discuss the common themes discussed in the conversations.

# getting started:

## CONVERSATION DETAILS CHECKLIST



### SCRIBE CONVERSATION DETAILS CHECKLIST

#### PLANNING

- Pick up scribe kit from JPEF two hours prior to the scheduled conversation. If the conversation is scheduled on the weekend, pick up the scribe kit the day before.

#### BEFORE THE DOOR OPENS

- Make sure you have positioned the supplies to help facilitate discussion: charts, markers, tape or stick pins, name tags, pens and paper for people to take notes and any hand-out materials.
- Put the audio recorder in the center of the table and make sure it works.

#### AFTERWARDS

- Debrief with Facilitator to discuss the common themes discussed in the conversations.
- Be sure to gather and record the charts, audio equipment, surveys, sign-in sheets and all documentation materials from the conversation site.
- Make sure the note-taking template is complete.
- Return the scribe kit and all documentation materials to JPEF within 1-2 days of recording a conversation.
- Electronic submission of typed detailed notes from conversations must be submitted to JPEF within a week of the conversation occurring.

**Return all conversation materials to the Empowerment Coordinator: Ale'ta Turner at the JPEF office, 245 Riverside Ave. Suite 310, Jacksonville, FL 32202. Contact Ale'ta at [ale'ta@jaxpef.org](mailto:ale'ta@jaxpef.org) for drop off times.**

**Email the electronic submission to Carly Yetzer at [carly@jaxpef.org](mailto:carly@jaxpef.org). Please call 904-356-7757 with any submission related questions.**

**Direct any conversation content or process related questions to the Community Engagement Manager, Rachael Tutwiler, at [rachael@jaxpef.org](mailto:rachael@jaxpef.org) or 904-356-2194.**

# discussion guide:

## THE BASIC GROUND RULES



### GROUND RULES FOR COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

**1. HAVE A “KITCHEN TABLE” CONVERSATION**

Everyone participates; no one dominates

**2. THERE ARE NO RIGHT ANSWERS**

Draw on your own experiences, views and beliefs; you don't need to be an expert

**3. KEEP AN OPEN MIND**

Listen carefully and honor differences in viewpoints and opinions.

**4. HELP KEEP TRACK OF THE DISCUSSION TRACK**

Stick to the questions, try not ramble and monitor time

**5. BE RESPECTFUL**

Diverse opinions offer rich results; respect others as we share our aspirations and challenges

**6. HAVE FUN!**

# discussion guide:

## STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE



*Comments in this margin will help you guide the conversation.*

### **PRIOR TO OFFICIALLY BEGINNING THE CONVERSATION:**

1. Make sure participants know where the restroom is.
2. Allow the Host to do a welcome to the conversation and explain why they decided to invite their guests to join them in this discussion.
3. Ask participants to complete the Pre-conversation Survey.

### **INTRODUCTION (10 MINUTES)**

Thank you all for coming this evening! We appreciate you being here tonight to participate in the ONE by ONE: Transforming Our Future Together campaign. This conversation is one of many very important conversations taking place (this year) to talk about our community, our schools and our future. The goal is to engage thousands of people across Jacksonville to bring their voice and their commitment to improving public education.

The Jacksonville Public Education Fund (JPEF) has rallied our community to lead this process with the belief that every person in our community has a story to tell and can bring solutions to the table when it comes to what's best for their children, families, schools and communities. JPEF is an independent nonprofit organization that works with our community to help Duval County Public Schools become one of the best school systems in the country. JPEF aims to drive civic action by connecting the voices of the community with best practice research and data analysis. They do so by listening carefully, as well as informing the community about changes that must take place.

The ONE by ONE Campaign kicks off with the powerful ONE in THREE exhibit, which you may have already visited. Then, as the exhibit travels through the city, small structured conversations, like this one, will help the community develop a shared vision for improving public education. Through these conversations, the community will be involved in the co-creation of an action plan in which there is shared responsibility for improvements in public education.

It is our hope that this conversation will spark many more conversations among you, your neighbors, colleagues, and friends. By increasing public voice, we hope to strengthen the relationship between communities and schools in Duval County.

# discussion guide:

## STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE



As we prepare to get started, we have a few ground rules that will help us make sure our conversation is productive tonight.

**1. HAVE A “KITCHEN TABLE” CONVERSATION**

Everyone participates; no one dominates

**2. THERE ARE NO “RIGHT” ANSWERS**

Draw on your own experiences, views and beliefs; you don’t need to be an expert

**3. KEEP AN OPEN MIND**

Listen carefully and honor differences in viewpoints and opinions.

**4. HELP KEEP THE DISCUSSION ON TRACK**

Stick to the questions; try not to ramble and monitor time

**5. BE RESPECTFUL**

Diverse opinions offer rich results; respect others as we share our aspirations and challenges.

**6. HAVE FUN!**

Are there any other rules you’d like to add before beginning the conversation?

Would everyone please turn off your cell phones or put them on silent?

We are recording the conversation to be available on the [onebyonejax.org](http://onebyonejax.org) website. But we will not start recording until **after** we introduce ourselves momentarily.

**Have everyone introduce themselves and say where they are from in the community.** (If all participants are parents, ask what schools they are connected to. Other quick introductions are acceptable.)

(Turn the recorder on)

The outline of everything we will discuss today is...

- 1. ASPIRATIONS FOR OUR COMMUNITY AND SCHOOLS**
- 2. SITUATIONS WE FACE AND WHY WE FACE THEM**
- 3. WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN AND WHAT CONDITIONS NEED TO EXIST**
- 4. REFLECTION ON KEY MESSAGES**

*Refer to troubleshooting strategies if there are any objections to recording....*

*DO NOT have participants introduce themselves by what they do (employment).*

# discussion guide:

## STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE



**CHART QUESTIONS**  
*and have post-its available.*

The goal of this discussion is to learn from you and about what you think and what you want. If you have a question that isn't directly relevant to the conversation but is important to you, please write it down on a "post-it" and put it over on the "Questions Parking Lot" posted on the wall.

We will gather unanswered questions from all conversations. At the end of this year-long process, JPEF will try to answer the most common questions in a report back to participants.

Are there any questions before we begin?

## PART ONE: ASPIRATIONS (15 MINUTES)

**CHART OUR COMMUNITY**  
*Use the Follow-Up questions here and throughout the guide to help develop what participants would like to see.*

*If people raise negative things about the community – ask "What would you like instead?" to get an aspiration.*

### ASPIRATIONS FOR THE COMMUNITY:

I want to start by asking you to think broadly for a minute. Imagine your ideal community. What are some of the important characteristics of your ideal community?

- Why is that important?
- What would you like the community to be like?
- What difference would that make?

### ASPIRATIONS FOR SCHOOLS:

Now think about the role of education in your ideal community. What are some of the important characteristics of your public schools?

- What kind of public schools would you like to have?
- Why is that important?
- What difference would that make?

**CHART SCHOOLS**  
*Be sure everyone has spoken by this point in the conversation.*

# discussion guide:

## STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE



### CHART SITUATIONS

## PART TWO: OUR CURRENT SITUATION (15 MINUTES)

### WHAT ARE THE CURRENT SITUATIONS WE FACE?

Now that we've envisioned where we'd like the schools in our community to go, let's talk about where we are today. What are the current situations?

- What is the reality?
- What challenges do we need to overcome?
- Why is the current situation important to you?

### CHART REASONS WHY

### WHY OUR CURRENT SITUATION?

Why do we face the current situations?

- Who's responsible or accountable?
- What role do you play in the current situation?

### CHART WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN?

## PART THREE: WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN AND WHAT CONDITIONS NEED TO EXIST? (15 MINUTES)

### WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN?

Now let's get to the action. Let's think about everything we've discussed thus far. What needs to happen, both in our community and schools to accomplish the vision for public education that we discussed earlier?

- What specifically needs to be done?

### CHART CONDITIONS THAT NEED TO EXIST

### WHAT CONDITIONS NEED TO EXIST?

In order for us to make these things happen, what conditions need to exist in Jacksonville?

- What relationships need to be built upon or created?
- Who must do what?
- What role will you need to play?



# discussion guide:

## STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE



### CHART REFLECTIONS

### REFLECTION (5 MINUTES)

Through this conversation, some of the themes I thought I heard are:

(review main 3-5 topics discussed).

- Does this resonate with you as the key messages desired by this group of citizens for the schools in our community?
- What, if anything is missing?
- Needs to be added?
- Needs to be taken away?

### CONCLUSION

Thank you for your time and participation.

So that we can continue to keep you informed about the ONE by ONE campaign, please make sure you'd provided your contact information on the sign-in sheet.

Remember the notes and key messages from this conversation will be included on the ONE by ONE website ([www.onebyonejax.org](http://www.onebyonejax.org)) within the next month. We look forward to working with you to improve public education outcomes in our community.

# conversation tools:

## TROUBLESHOOTING STRATEGIES

### IF...

*A few people dominate the conversation...*

*The group gets off on a tangent or someone in the group rambles on and on...*

*Someone seems to have a personal grudge about an issue and keeps talking about it...*

*People start arguing...*

*People never disagree or are too polite...*

*People can't agree on recording the conversation...*

### THEN:

Engage each person from the beginning. Make sure everyone say something early on. Ask, "Are there any new voices on this issue?" or "Does anyone else want to jump in here?" Be direct and say, "We seem to be hearing from the same people. Let's have some others weigh in on the conversation. Call on people by their name to answer.

Ask, "How does what you're talking about relate to our challenge?" or "What does that lead you to think about (the question at hand)?" Ask the person to restate or sum up what they said in a few words. If you can't get a person to focus, interrupt him or her when they take a breath and move in to another person or question. Then bring him/ her back into the conversation later.

Remind the person where the group is trying to focus. Ask him/ her to respond to the question at hand. Acknowledge the person and move on. Say, "I can understand where you are coming from, but we need to move on." If the person continues to be disruptive, interrupt them. Say, "We heard you, but we're just not talking about that right now."

Don't let it bother you too much- its ok as long as it is not mean spirited. Find out what's behind the argument- ask why people disagree, get to the bottom of it. Break the tension with a joke or something funny. Stop to review the ground rules. Take a break. Consider having a separate conversation to work through the conflict.

Play devils advocate. Bring up a different or competing idea (even if one of them comes from you) and see how people respond. Check it out- tell the group you've noticed that they don't disagree much and ask if everyone is really in as much agreement as it seems.

Explain that recording won't begin until after everyone has introduced themselves. Explain that the conversations are critical to the end result: creating a community agreement to improve public education. If majority votes to not record the conversation, respect their wishes.

# conversation tools:

## SCRIBE KIT LIST OF MATERIALS



### LIST OF MATERIALS NEEDED

1. CHART PAPER (GROUND RULES, QUESTIONS PARKING LOT, AND DISCUSSION PAGES)
2. MARKERS
3. TAPE
4. AUDIO RECORDER WITH EXTRA BATTERIES
5. NAME TAGS AND/ OR TABLE TENTS
6. POST-ITS
7. PENS AND PENCILS
8. DETAILED NOTES & THEMES TEMPLATE
9. SIGN IN SHEET & PRE-CONVERSATION SURVEYS

# conversation tools:

## CONVERSATION LEADERS HINTS & TIPS



### WHAT TO LOOK AND LISTEN FOR

As you lead the conversations, look and listen for these key concepts to help you better understand what participants are saying. The goal is not to just hear what participants are saying, but to understand why they are saying that (as well as what they might not be saying). Be sure to capture comments and perspectives that illustrate these concepts when reporting on conversations.

<i>Starting Points</i>	What are participants' initial thoughts and perspectives? How do their starting points differ from where they end the discussion?
<i>Language</i>	What words do participants use? How is their language distinctive?
<i>Body Language</i>	Are participants engaged or do they hang back?
<i>Emotions</i>	What feelings do participants bring to the table? How strongly do participants feel these emotions? What emotions prevail in the discussion?
<i>Common ground</i>	Where do folks agree? How strong are these areas of agreement?
<i>Tension</i>	Where do participants disagree? What is at issue for them?
<i>Ambivalence</i>	On what issues are participants torn and why?
<i>Contradictions</i>	Are participants saying something different from what they said earlier? If so, why? How do they reconcile these differences?
<i>Obstacles</i>	What emotional, factual, and perceptual barriers are preventing participants from moving forward? How intractable are these barriers?
<i>Connections</i>	What issues do participants seem to link together?
<i>Depth of View</i>	How deeply do participants hold their views and beliefs?
<i>Hidden Story</i>	What are participants not saying? What is going on beneath the surface that drives what people are saying?
<i>Turning Points</i>	Where were we able to break through in the conversation? What questions or issues triggered our ability to do so?

# conversation tools:

## TIPS FOR GETTING THE MOST OUT OF THE CONVERSATION



### WHAT TO LOOK AND LISTEN FOR

As you lead the conversations, look and listed for these key concepts to help you better understand what participants are saying. The goal is not to just hear what participants are saying, but to understand why they are saying that (as well as what they might not be saying). Be sure to capture comments and perspectives that illustrate these concepts when reporting on conversations.

#### DO:

- Prepare and practice.
- Draw people out. Dig deeper into what they say. Ask, "What do you mean by that?" and "Why do you think that?"
- Look out for contradictions and misperceptions. Play devil's advocate and push people to explain their views.
- Be flexible and imaginative. Look for answers to questions throughout the discussion. Go with the flow of the conversation.
- Remove your personal views from the conversation.
- Set the tone of the discussion. Show that you are interested by paying attention. Sit up and lean forward. Move around the room sometimes.
- Make sure everyone says something early on. Keep asking people what they think about what others are saying. Always check-in before a decision point.

#### DON'T:

- Wing it.
- Cut people off and after a few sentences. Assume you know what they mean when they use common words or phrases.
- Settle for easy answers. Try to make the conversation nice and enjoyable always.
- Follow the discussion guide word for word. Look for answers to questions only at "designated" times in the guide.
- Be overbearing. Lead people to give to give the answer or response that you are looking for. Tell people "good idea" or show your own biases in other ways. Finish sentences or thoughts for them.
- Look bored or overly relaxed. Be too concerned that people like you.
- Let a few people dominate the conversation. Let one strong speech speak for the group. Base your observations on what a few people say.

# conversation tools:

TIPS FOR GETTING THE MOST OUT OF THE CONVERSATION CONT.

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## DO:

- Frequently ask people how what they say connects to what they (or others) said earlier. Set up opposing views and ask participant what they make of them.
- After you hear several different views, summarize them. This allows you to check that you heard participants correctly and to juxtapose opposing perspective to see how participants really feel.
- Help people stay focused. Repeat questions throughout the discussion. Take quick impromptu breaks if necessary.
- Strive for conversation and use the 80/20 rule. Ask "is this something everybody can live with".
- Ask for folks to share their experiences and those of others. Work to imagine what others who aren't in the room might say.

## DON'T:

- Let the conversation wander, become too chatty, or be one-dimensional.
- Close down the discussion too soon, before people can digest it and respond.
- Let the energy in the room run down. Let people get lost or confused in the conversation.
- Use voting or facilitation techniques for prioritizing how folks feel about things.
- Create artificial scenarios or talk in hypothetical situations.

## ADDITIONAL TIPS

- Turn a negative into an aspiration – "What would you like instead?"
- Use follow-up questions – "Why is that important?"
- Resist summarizing – Don't use your own words. Use the participant's words verbally and on the charts.
- Stay on topic – Don't get into Q & A with participants. Restate the question.

# conversation tools:

## GUIDELINES FOR THE MEDIA AND OBSERVERS



### GUIDELINES FOR THE MEDIA AND OBSERVERS

Members of the news media and other observers are welcome to attend some or all of the conversations. In order to maintain an environment where participants feel comfortable sharing their views and listening to others' ideas, these are the guidelines for observers. Usually someone from the initiative will take care of sharing the guidelines with the observers. But feel free to let participants and observers know about them.

If media is present, a Conversation Leader should include the media/observers statement in the discussion guide after the ground rules are discussed.

**Here is a list of the guidelines for your reference; please also provide a copy to guests, observers and media onsite:**

1. Guests and media should introduce themselves and check-in with the Conversation Leaders (hosts, facilitators and scribes).
2. Guests and media are welcome to observe this dialogue, but must remain on the sideline and unobtrusive.
3. Guest and media must remain for the entire conversation.
4. To minimize distractions, guests and media should stay in one spot and not move around the room.
5. Guest and media should not participate in the conversation. Please remain silent.
6. Media may bring cameras and recording equipment, as long as it does not become a distraction.
7. In the event that individual participants do not wish to be photographed and/or quoted, we ask the media to respect their wishes.