


# FISH BOWL

## WHAT

Discussion facilitation tool. Combines an inner circle of experts and an outer circle of observers. Combines detailed discussion in a small group with involving and informing a larger group.

## WHEN TO USE

- **Stage(s):** Demonstration, commercialisation & scale-up
- **Goal:** Think ahead & find solutions to address challenges/problems, apply knowledge
- **Type:** Participation & co-creation tool
- **Time & Effort:** 1 - 2 hrs 

## HOW TO USE

- Use this tool to discuss a hot topic with the entire group in a dynamic way. Groups can range from 6 to 30 people.
- Introduce the topic and methodology to the group.
- Make a small circle with 6- 8 chairs and a second larger circle around the small one with the remaining chairs.
- A group of experts on the topic at hand take a seat in the inner circle and leave one chair open. The experts discuss the topic and the outer circle (observers) listen and observe in silence. They note down questions or remarks.
- Observers can move in and sit on the open chair if they want to contribute. They should rotate regularly.
- After +/- 1 hour discussion finish with a 30 min debrief where everyone can speak freely. Provide a document with key learnings.

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## STRENGTHS

- Allows an in depth expert discussion in a larger group setting.
- Brings transparency in the discussion at hand.
- Increases trust and understanding on complex issues.
- Stimulates a dynamic conversation.

## WEAKNESSES

- The experts must be open to discuss the topic in an open way and aim to make it understandable for the entire group.
- The observers must remain silent, if they want to contribute a lot it might mean that they are not listening to the inner circle any more.

Source

Fish Bowl – MSP Guide

Knowledge Sharing Tools and Methods Toolkit - Fish Bowl ([kstoolkit.org](http://kstoolkit.org))

Fishbowl Discussion - YouTube