

Group work trouble shooting

You may feel nervous about working with a group for the first time or you may have run plenty of groups but none about money. Here are some tips we've picked up from our training courses around common challenges and how to respond to them. You may have picked up more in your own exercise.

The group contract or group understanding of respect will help and above all *don't worry, be happy!* **Your confidence will inspire the group.**

Issue	Suggested solutions
One person dominates the group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Thank you for your point</i> (offer 1 to 1 opportunity) • Think about positioning/focus attention on others? Think about how others feel • Car parking • Share it out/pairs etc. • Offer person role e.g. writing on flipchart
People reluctant to share	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take it in turns to answer questions • Smaller groups/pairs • Give people space to answer but don't pick on anyone • Accept that some people are quieter – can still be taking part
Helping people to explore whilst maintaining control over time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wear a watch/ time checks • Confidence • Sometimes you have to let people go and then regroup • Flexible plan • Group people's questions • Car parking • Time is also group's responsibility
Feeling I don't have knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make clear what you are trained to do & not trained to do • Use referring on and signposting sections • Try out games and exercises with colleagues to build confidence • Read up on topics before the course or offer to find out on their behalf
Dealing with language issues or interpreters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use pictures or add computer images if helpful • Have people support each other • Be prepared to require certain level of English if interpreter not available • Helpful if interpreter has previously done course/session

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim for no more than one interpreter • Be flexible • Time to support after – one to ones
Different levels of understanding in group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use different examples/ scenarios • Vary existing games, for example Jargon Busters pick a couple of words each week to learn • Get group to share their skills • Invite people to learn from each other • Find common ground – it's an opportunity to understand / empathise
People overshare/long winded narrative of their own stories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Break in with summary or "I know we've all experienced a lot of ..". • Group contract – timekeeping • Offer one one-to-ones. • Car park. • Break up group - pairs • Be prepared to move group on.
People expect too much – i.e., personalised debt relief.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make clear what you are trained to do & not trained to do • Manage expectations from the start • Use words such as "exploring" • Not offering solutions • Offer one-to-one (to sit with while ringing National Debtline for example) • Sign posting
Want to do more 1:1 sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play games in different ways • Some games can be used in waiting areas • Use handouts/spending diaries
People get bored/distracted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the games/icebreakers • Move on if something not working • Give real examples/stories • Ask open ended questions
People get upset or angry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show empathy, acknowledge • Check how they are in break • Allow them time to cool down outside
People using offensive/inappropriate language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group contract • Have your own understanding of what's acceptable, difference between swearing at something versus at someone • Be prepared to challenge