

Helping Teams to have effective conversations – The 4-Player Model

1. Introduce 4-Player Model (see attached Handout)

Say:

There are 4 “moves” people can make in team conversations.

Write on blackboard: Initiate, Follow, Oppose, Bystand (observe)

These moves can be made at different times by different people.

A well-functioning team balances these moves to have effective conversations in which there is a direction set, critical thinking, action and perspective.

Four Moves:

Initiate: Set direction, propose new ideas

Follow: Accept the idea or proposal for action and support it actively

Oppose: Question the direction, ask critical questions

Bystand: Observe what is going on

Ask for positive and negative aspects of each move - you can write these on the board:

Role	Positive	Negative
Initiate	Gets action started	Dominates
Follow	Supports movement of action	Mindlessly agrees
Oppose	Thinks critically	Obstructs
Bystand	Reflects and gives feedback	Acts passively

2. Team Exercise to practice using the moves in a team discussion.

Write a compelling question on board that will start the team discussion, i.e.,
“What are the most important results our team needs to produce?”

Assign one person in each team to be the “Observer” – who will note down the moves that the team makes (4 moves).

If you can, choose a strong “initiator” for this observer role.

Let the teams talk for ten minutes and then debrief how the process went.

Ask the observer what it was like to listen only.

Debrief how the moves went for each team

Discuss how each of us can take on different moves.