



The Deliberate Creative Podcast with Amy Climer Transcript for Episode #058: How to Get Input From Every Team Member December 8, 2016

Amy Climer: Welcome to The Deliberate Creative Podcast Episode 58. In today's episode, I am going to give you six ideas on how to get input from everyone on your team, even the quieter ones. This is the third of three episodes where I walk through different ideas for how you might structure and design your team meetings to help your team be more effective. I mentioned in [Episode 056](#) that these episodes were inspired by my clients. Recently I was working with a client in Madison, Wisconsin and they brought up the question, "How do we get input from everyone? Some people are more talkative than others and how do we make sure that every voice is heard because we want every voice and we value them, but some people are just more inclined to share than others."

You all have seen this. It does not happen in every team, but the bigger your team gets, the more likely this is going to happen where there are some people who are just more talkative than others and then that means that there are some who are less talkative. Sometimes those who are more talkative overshadow the less talkative ones and you do not get to hear from them as much. Yet they often surprise us because sometimes they have such rich comments it is like, "Oh my gosh! We need to hear from them more often." So I am going to give you some techniques on how to hear from them more often.

I have six ideas here that I will share with you. And there are many more. This is really just the beginning.

1. Send Out the Agenda [02:16]

The first one is to actually send out the agenda at least a day ahead of time. If there is any question that you think you will ask the group, indicate those on the agenda. Be somewhat

1





specific. Do not just put as a line item on the agenda that says “budget,” but what about the budget? Are you assessing the current status and where adjustments need to be made before the year is over? Is this about designing the next year’s budget? Was there a problem with the budget? Are we over budget on something? What is it about the budget?

Some of you may have heard [Episode 051](#) where I interviewed Lee Caraher and Lee was talking about this whole idea of sharing the topics and the agenda ahead of time. One of the things that she mentioned was that they tried this within their company and Lee said she is very good at measuring everything within their company. They measure all sorts of things. So they started sending out the topics of brainstorming meetings the day before they were actually leading the meeting and what they found is the people that before had been fairly quiet all of a sudden had a lot to say. It just gave them an opportunity to think ahead of time and to prepare and to show up ready to share. That was something that she had not thought of because that is not her style. She even said, “I don’t even read the brief ahead of time, I just show up ready to go,” because it did not work for her to think about it ahead of time, but it did for other people.

Creating a detailed agenda is going to give people enough information so they can show up prepared. It can help those who might tend to be a little quieter. They will have time to think and reflect so they are going to be ready to go. So that is the first tip - write an agenda and share it at least a day ahead of time.

2. Ask Everyone’s Perspective [04:18]

Another technique, which is so simple but I do not think it is used very often, is just go round and ask each person to share their perspective. Often, what happens in a meeting is it is just whoever is loudest or whoever raises their hand or jumps in is the one that talks. If you really want to know everyone’s perspective, just ask a question and ask everyone to share. It could either be going around the table or maybe they toss a ball or it can be sort of popcorn style where they pop up when they are ready, but no one talks a second time until everyone has talked once. Again, super simple but probably not used as much as it could be.

You can set that up in a variety of ways; you might give everybody 30 seconds and you can even have a timer, like pull out somebody’s phone or get one of those fun little sand timers.



Thirty seconds each and they get to share their perspective or maybe it is a sentence that they share, something to get people started.

3. Turn and Talk, Then Share Out [05:20]

The third technique is basically a turn and talk. Whatever your topic is that you want them to talk about, maybe have a question or a prompt and have them turn and talk to their neighbor and share their thoughts around that with one other person. Then invite everyone to share as a full group. Sharing with one person is fairly low risk and it is not that difficult, whereas sharing with a full group is riskier, at least for some people. Having that opportunity to share with one other person is a way to test an idea out. So if somebody has something they are thinking about or a perspective and they just share it with one person, that person is like, “Oh wow, that’s a great point. I really hope you share that with everybody,” that is going to give that person some energy and confidence to then share with everybody. So a simple turn and talk and then a share out.

4. Use Climer Cards [06:19]

The fourth technique is use to [Climer Cards](#). I have mentioned this tool in the previous two episodes. They are a simple deck of cards with drawings on them. They are images I created, that are designed to elicit conversation and to help people go deep around a certain topic. You can use them in the middle of the meeting when you want input from everybody. You lay out the cards, image side face up, and you ask each person to select a card that is a metaphor or a symbol for whatever you are talking about. For instance, “select a card that is a metaphor for the current state of our budget or a metaphor for how you think we are approaching the budget.” Someone might say, “I think we are being really reckless,” and they select a card that represents that to them and that comes out. Someone else might pull out a card that they feel like they are being kind of conservative.

It does not matter what card they select, but what happens is after they select a card and they go round and share is you get this perspective that you might not have seen otherwise. So a quick, easy tool to use. You can get your own deck of [Climer Cards](#) at www.climercards.com and I will put the link in the shownotes. You can access the shownotes at www.climerconsulting.com/058.



5. Post-it notes [07:51]

The fifth technique you can use are Post-it Notes. I am a huge fan of Post-it Notes. I think they are a brilliant invention. I'm so glad that 3M produced them a couple of decades ago. There are so many uses for them, but one of the great uses is that it is a way to get input without people actually verbally sharing and it can be somewhat anonymous. Here's how it works. Everybody gets a little stack of Post-it Notes. Give everybody a fine-point Sharpie marker or something that is a little bit thicker than a ballpoint pen because it just makes it easier to read later. So everyone has a Post-it and a marker and then have people share their thoughts about something. Again, it might be about the budget, whatever the topic is. They share one thought per Post-it Note and then those Post-it Notes can get placed upon a wall or on the table where everybody can then read them. So you are not getting necessarily verbal input from everybody, but you are getting everybody's perspective and ideas. And then from there you can sort them, you can maybe categorize them. There are many different ways you can use the Post-it Notes, but the idea is that it is just another way to get people's input.

6. Create a Drawing [09:12]

This may feel a little bit unconventional, but give everybody just a plain piece of paper, printer paper or any kind of plain paper. Then have each person draw something. It might be to draw how you see the problem right now. Maybe you have some markers or crayons around and ask everyone to draw how they see the problem and then have them present it to the group. There is something about having to put it visually first that helps people work through some of their thoughts and then they have this presentation, essentially. Everybody is looking at the drawing rather than them so much and it is kind of this third point that everybody can focus on and it still gives them an opportunity to present to the group.

If you do that, please stress that it is not about their ability to draw. Stick figures are fine, simple basic circles, squares, triangles, squiggle lines, that is about the extent of drawing ability that they need. It is not about their ability to draw. It is about their ability to visually represent the problem or issue or topic that we are talking about. So play with that, see what happens. I think you might find that it can be very powerful way to get more input and more perspectives from everybody on the team.



So those are six ideas about how to get input from everyone on your team, even the quiet ones. I am just going to do a quick review;;

1. Send out the agenda.
2. Ask each person's perspective.
3. Before sharing as a full group, allow people to do a turn and talk in pairs and then share as a full group.
4. Using Climer Cards.
5. Using Post-it Notes.
6. Have each person create a drawing.

The Weekly Challenge [11:19]

Your weekly challenge this week is to try one of these techniques with your team. At your next team meeting, use one of these at some point during the meeting, even as simple as sending out the agenda the day ahead, a quick turn and talk. All these techniques are quick; depending on the context, the situation, the size of your team, less than 15 minutes. Some of them take five minutes or maybe only a couple of minutes. They do not have to be long and extensive, but I think you will find that you will have some really positive results with your team and you are going to get everyone's input. Everyone is on your team for a reason so make sure that you are using them to their full potential.

If you want to see the links for this episode, you can go to www.climerconsulting.com/058 and I also will have there a free download where you can download just a quick cheat sheet of all the ideas from this episode as well as the previous two episodes. I have put all that together into one document so you can reference it as you are designing your meeting.

I hope this was helpful. I hope that you will use these techniques and try them with your team because I think you will find you will see some really positive results. If you have any questions about this, let me know and I would love to get an email or a Tweet or contact me on

5



Facebook and let me know how did it go? What happened when you tried this? I love getting your feedback. And if you have any issues that you want me to cover in a future episode, let me know and I would be happy to.

Thanks everyone. Have a wonderful creative week. I will see you next time. Bye.