Toolbox
Methods for collaboration, teamwork and facilitation

Mission Impossible

What is this method?

The Mission Impossible is a fun way for a group to bond by solving a challenge together. At the same time the challenge can be tailored to the purpose and content of the workshop. Most frequently used at the beginning of a workshop after the check-in.

How does the process look like?

1. Intro "We will now do a challenge. Who knows the Mission Impossible movies?" - "so many? Cool! Now we will get to solve our very own Mission Impossible!"

2. Read the challenges on the flipchart (prepared in advance), have the time covered with a post-it so people don't know how much time they have (yet). Don't hesitate to make it really challenging (up to 7 challenges or more).

Examples of challenges

- How many stair-steps are in this building?
- 30 reasons why it is better to be here than on holidays
- 20 things we have in common
- 1 drawing that summarizes your current situation as a landscape
- 20 things you could start doing together now
- Learn all names by heart
- Come up with a slogan that represents your team-spirit and learn it by heart in the most exotic language present
- Give everyone a high-five and make each other a compliment
- Create a Love-story in 4 scenes (like in the journal Bravo). Take a picture and send them to xyxy@gmail.com - or show them at the end

3. Disclose the **time** they have directly (8-12min) or let them guess how long they'll take for the challenge, and then disclose how much time you are willing to give them.

4. Play ["Mission Impossible Theme Song (10 hours)"](#) on Youtube and say: **"Your time starts NOW!"**

5. While people are solving the issue, you can observe the dynamics:

- How are they making choices?
- Who (if anyone at all) is in the lead?
- What are the coordinating mechanisms?
- How are they as a team building on each others strengths (e.g. some challenges require more of an extrovert attitude

6. When the **time is running out**, make people aware of how much time they have left. As a facilitator, you may also want to shorten or extend the time accordingly to the speed of the group (not too much though).

7. Debrief: For the debriefing you can go through each challenge and help the group appreciate their success as well as facilitate a meta-reflection at the end:

What did we learn through this exercise that we want to take with us for the rest of the Workshop?

8. Learnings:

- This exercise enables a team to learn something about their team-dynamics and collaboration-patterns.
- It breaks the ice and gets people in a can-do mindset.
- If the challenges are chosen well, the exercise can beautifully help people land in the topic and come up with the right framing of the theme themselves. It activates the mind to already think in associative ways about the challenges at hand.
- Different people have different preferences of action.

Practical information (time needed, amount of people etc.).

- Time: 20-45min
- Material: Flipcharts, markers, music, more material is optional according to the challenges you choose to come up with
- People: between 6 to 23