



Strengthening Success Team Purpose

Modified Hopes and Fears Protocol

An activity that acknowledges significant events and related fears in order to move a team forward while providing space for individual processing.

Modified Hopes and Fears Protocol

Purpose

To acknowledge the impact of a significant event and to create space for members to anchor themselves in the hopes they hold for their work together moving forward.

Timing & Grouping

This protocol can vary from 20 to 60 minutes, depending on the size of the group and the range of members' concerns. If the group is particularly large, the facilitator can ask table groups to work together and then report out.

Supplies

Newsprint/chart paper, sticky notes, writing utensils, markers

Agreements

- **Confidentiality** - Our personal stories stay in. Our shared commitments are socialized.
- **No judgment zone** - Different events impact people in different ways. We agree to listen to one another with a compassionate ear.
- **Solutions-oriented discourse** - While we are sharing our fears, we acknowledge that they can cause stagnation. Therefore, we commit to stepping into our hopes.

Steps

1. **Introduction.** The facilitator names the impactful event and asks members to silently write on a sticky note their greatest fear or concern about it. Then, the facilitator asks them to think about their greatest hope for the work moving forward and to write it on a separate sticky note.
2. **Pair Share.** The facilitator asks members to share their fears and hopes with a partner.
3. **Listing.** Members create a "Fears" column and a "Hopes" column on a sheet of newsprint/chart paper using their sticky notes. All fears and hopes are posted without comment or judgment.
Note: if the group is particularly large, create smaller groups for this step and assign a scribe.
4. **Processing.** The facilitator provides time for members to silently read the lists.
5. **Discussion Questions.** What trends or themes do you see in the fears? In the hopes? Based on the trends in our hopes, what 2 or 3 commitments can we focus on to propel our work together?

Modified Hopes and Fears Protocol (cont.)

For groups that have been divided into smaller groups -

6. Each group will discuss the questions in step 5 and report out one core theme around fears, one core theme around hopes, and one commitment. Facilitator scribes the commitments on newsprint/chart paper.
7. The facilitator asks, "Of the commitments listed, which 2 or 3 will we collectively agree to move forward?" Remind the team that the commitments anchor how we interact with one another to realize the hopes we hold for our work.
8. **Debrief the process.** How was this process helpful? In what ways did it challenge or push you? How might you use this protocol in your practice?

A Few Facilitation Tips

- The facilitator can participate by listing his or her fears and hopes as well.
- Do not skip steps! For some, just writing their fears and hopes is personally cathartic. For others, it is the collective consideration of the impact which will be powerful in setting commitments moving forward.
- Remember, the commitments made serve as an anchor for your work moving forward. In debriefing with the lead(s) of the team or group, explicitly ask how these commitments are embedded in the work.
- Thank members for sharing!