

Road Blocks

Type: Generating Ideas, Organizing Ideas, Sharing Ideas



What Is It?

Participants identify the barriers (road blocks) to something and identify solutions to the most important barriers.

Why Use It?

Identifies the barriers to an end result

Explores how those barriers can be grouped and how they relate to each other

Helps to identify solutions to the most important barriers

How to Use It

1. Use this activity to explore situations in which participants may face barriers related to the topic – for example, ‘obtaining funding for our project’ or ‘getting support from the local government’.
2. Give participants index cards or sticky notes. Ask them to draw or write one barrier on each piece of card. Explain that barriers are any problems or obstacles that may prevent them from reaching their goal.
3. Place the cards / sticky notes in a row on the floor so that they look like a series of road blocks.
4. Walk along the road blocks and discuss why each barrier has been identified.
5. Agree how to group the barriers. Examples of groupings might include organizational barriers, financial barriers, physical barriers (for example, lack of equipment), social barriers (for example, people’s attitudes), political barriers and so on.
6. Encourage the participants to identify the most important barrier of those they listed. Ask them to write the most important barrier in the middle of a large piece of paper.
7. Encourage the participants to identify possible solutions to that barrier. Ask them to write those solutions around the outside of the paper, with arrows linking them to the barrier. You may do this same exercise for several of the most important barriers.
8. When the activity is complete, encourage the participants to discuss what they have learned.
 - How do the different types of barriers link together?
 - Which are the largest barriers?
 - Which can be addressed most easily?
 - What type of people and organizations need to address the barriers?

Trainer Notes

Encourage participants to be specific about the barriers. For example, rather than ‘lack of resources’, they might write ‘lack of tools’, ‘lack of money’, ‘lack of electricity’.

This activity can be overwhelming if there are long lists of barriers. Emphasize that something can be done about every barrier and even small successes can make a big difference.