

The Monopolist

Predominant Behaviors

- › The Monopolist knows this trick, has seen it before, done it before, what is new?
- › He is continuously talking, taking the stage, and interrupting the contributions of others.
- › The Monopolist feels like he has more to say than the others, expects people to follow his opinion. If not, he continues on his own.
- › They are dominating the discussions at the expense of the other participants, which might generate some resentment.
- › He tends to praise and criticize individuals with the group rather than the group as a whole.
- › Resists stubbornly the group's wishes for personally oriented reasons.

Actions for the Facilitator

- › Focus the attention on the Monopolist and then divert the discussion to other people by asking their opinion. If the discussion is not coming to an end, break down the team in sub-teams and use methods such as dot-voting to come to an agreement in a fast and constructive way.
- › When possible, establish a procedure whereby each person contributes one idea to the discussion and then must wait until every other group member does the same before contributing again.
- › Interrupt the Monopolist, ask them to summarize the point quickly so that others can add their ideas too.
- › If this doesn't work, take the individual concerned to the side and discuss the problem in a positive and sensitive way.
- › Look for any aspect of their position that supports the group's ideas so that this person moves from being an 'outsider' to be a team's supporter.
- › Set guidelines and expectations at the beginning of the session and incorporate clear statements that regulate cooperation and interruptions: highlight the rule that all ideas will be accepted; the first time they criticize another person, reinforce this rule.
- › Silence the Monopolist by mentioning their name and what they said to confirm they have been heard, and move on with the discussion.

The Monopolist

Try with:

- › “Thank you for giving us all those ideas. Let’s hear from others in the group now.”
- › “As XXX said, it is important that... Does anyone want to add to this or has another view?”
- › “It seems like we may be forgetting the ground rules we set up as a group. Should we take a few minutes to revisit them now?”
- › “Only saying it is a bad idea is not enough. Could you please elaborate a bit more on why you don’t like it?”

The Observer

Predominant Behaviors

- › Observes quite passively and does not participate orally (just makes some notes for himself).
- › The Observer responds to questions only if asked and very shortly.
- › Keeps his hands in his pocket, sitting down, turning off the camera in online sessions.
- › Is somewhat shy and easily intimidated by others' opinions; avoids speaking up.
- › The Observer often is a follower and accepts what others say and decide even though he has not contributed to the decision or expressed his thoughts.
- › He might feel like he can't contribute to the workshop as he does not see his value and contribution to the workshop.

Actions for the Facilitator

- › Apply a positive and encouraging approach to get the Observer's input: they are unlikely to begin chatting, so you'll have to get him to participate in the discussion
- › Ask direct questions and solicit ideas to ensure their involvement. Tip: Keep a participant list next to you and check names to keep track of who contributed.
- › Break the group into sub-teams for some activities, so it becomes easier for the Observer to speak up.
- › Mingle with the team and plan some quiet storming activities to allow everybody to formulate their opinion, and no escaping is possible.
- › Try to engage with the Observer even more when you know the topic at hand is familiar to them, and they feel they can more easily contribute to the team's discussion.
- › Maybe once during the workshop/week, approach that person individually and ask if they feel comfortable in the group.
- › Send an engaging invite and state why THEY have been invited. During the workshop, repeat that every contribution is valued, and different perspectives are beneficial.

Try with:

- › "I have noticed that you haven't been as involved in the group lately. Is everything O.K.?"

The Joker

Predominant Behaviors

- The Joker is present but not with his thoughts and show very inconsistent behavior.
- The checks and starts answering an 'urgent' message, makes a phone call, and goes back and forth in and out of the workshop session.
- One moment, the Joker participates very actively and is very convinced about his opinion but then disconnects again.
- He uses group discussion as a fun time and does not consider those sessions 'real work'. In an online session, he might be walking around with your laptop and start doing other activities on the side.
- The Joker distracts other people by telling jokes, playing pranks, reading unrelated material while constantly whispering, giggling, and having private side conversations with another person.
- He likes to attract attention by acting silly, making excess noise, and directing members away from the task at hand.

Actions for the Facilitator

- Set guidelines and expectations at the beginning of the session and explain the ground rules (for instance, emails and phone calls can only be made during the breaks).
- When the Joker is in action and disturbing the teamwork, stop the discussion and comment that it is difficult for you to hear the other discussion or to concentrate on the topic at hand with side conversations.
- If this doesn't work, take the concerned individual to the side and discuss the problem positively and sensitively.
- Set the goal and expected outcomes of an activity upfront. This helps participants to understand the "work" behind it. Providing templates and referring to them helps to stay focused.
- In online sessions, ask participants to mute themselves while not contributing to the discussion and disable private chats.

Try with:

- "I am having trouble focusing on the discussion with the side conversations going on. Is anyone else experiencing this? / Can we agree that we will all focus on the main discussion?"
- "I sense we are losing people's attention and interest; can we do a check-in to see where people are on this topic?"