

Climate Conversations

Facilitator Guidelines for Breakout Groups

Our goal: Help participants practice communicating clearly and respectfully about climate change. Implement effective communication strategies like listening, encouraging dialogue, and making science easier to understand. Practice disagreeing without being disagreeable. Distinguish between communicating the scientific consensus, and drawing upon opinion/values to communicate about possible policy and action choices.

Role play:

- 1) Ask folks to browse the role play cards. Ask: “Have you ever been asked to respond to one of these, or a different argument? Discuss ~5 min.
- 2) Have everyone choose one.
 - a. Have people spend 5 minutes reading and then writing their own response for “their” card.
 - b. Model the role play by having someone respond to the argument on their card. It works well for facilitator to dramatically read the skeptic’s role.
 - c. After the model role play, help participants analyze the response. Try asking: “Which strategies did you notice so-and-so using in their response?” and “What other responses and strategies could be useful for this situation?”
 - d. Encourage the listener to give feedback about good strategies they saw used and ways to enhance the response.
 - e. If group is larger than 5, once all participants seem to have been able to practice, bring the group back together to share examples of using the communication strategies.
(If group is smaller than 5, have participants take turns role playing for the whole group until participants are ready for something different)

Giving relevant examples: Remind the group of the data that suggests that people are often more influenced by evidence of local climate change, or impacts to other areas important to them.

- 1) Have participants think of an audience they would like to speak to and what that audience may find particularly relevant. Take comments/ideas.

E.g. a family member, a student they teach. You might have them imagine trying to answer a general question posed by their audience like: “Why are you so concerned about climate change?”
- 2) Help participants analyze each response. Try asking: “Which strategies did you notice so-and-so using in their response?” and “What other responses and strategies could be useful for this situation?”