

Why

Making sure that teams or groups function well is a key task for a leader. If a team is effective then productivity but also entrepreneurship and innovation will result.

What

A simple technique to make a group aware of stagnation and repetitive behavior and to find out how to proceed in a more productive or constructive way.

Also a useful technique for preventing tensions from escalating into conflict.

How

- Give your observations, e.g. people are distracted, make jokes all the time, fidget constantly, repeatedly look at their phones etc.
- Be neutral and factual. No interpretations, just mirroring.
- Don't mention any names. Speak in general terms.
- List everything you observe: emotions, behavior, body language, verbal statements, daydreaming etc.
- Wait: someone in the group will react.
- If the group remains silent then after a time you might ask: who recognizes what I've said?

When

When you observe repeated discussions on the same topic, people getting distracted, confusion, repetitious interruptions, indirect communication, repeated messages etc. When this happens an undercurrent can be felt that makes meetings/workplaces ineffective.

Skills and necessary training

Observation skills at a group level.
Separating facts from interpretations.
Courage.

Critical success factors

Timing and neutrality.

Possible workshop exercise

Practice and discuss the method.