

REDUCING OPTIONS

# PHYSICAL COMMITMENT

Quickly pinpoint the most popular ideas and form teams of interested people who will work together for the next stage. For larger groups.

<b>Duration</b>	<b>Preparation:</b> Coraling is used when you already have ideas on the wall, so it needs no preparation. A Floor Gallery will need a few minutes to lay out the papers or prototypes on the floor. Each exercise takes about 3 to 5 minutes, plus some additional time for adjustments if necessary.
<b>Physical requirements</b>	A Floor Gallery needs the items for selection and some space where the items can be laid on the floor and everyone can stand and move around a little. The Coraling method also needs some space, but the items – usually clusters of sticky notes – can be left on the wall.
<b>Energy level</b>	Medium to high
<b>Facilitators</b>	1
<b>Participants</b>	Groups of more than 10 people
<b>Expected output</b>	Groups of people who share a common interest

In these methods, participants vote with their bodies, so everyone can always see who is in which group, and any changes are quick, easy, and obvious.

In the Floor Gallery version, participants stand in groups around the items they like. Use this version when the items to be chosen are fairly large and might take a little time to read – like elevator pitches, idea sketches, or service ads.

In Coraling, they form lines and branches like coral growing from an item on a wall. Use this variant for clusters of sticky notes, or anything which cannot be easily removed from the wall.

Use these methods when you want to decide which ideas to work on next, and quickly form new workgroups. Use them to split up the group for the next task of a workshop, not to form long-term teams for a project.

## Step-by-step guide

- 1 For a Floor Gallery, lay out the items on the floor, and ask the participants to walk around and familiarize themselves with all the items while thinking about which one they would like to invest some time in. If they are drawn to an item, they might start to wait there. If they are sure, they will stop there and put their foot on that item. In Coraling, the items can stay hanging on the wall. If someone would like to work on an item (or cluster of sticky notes, or whatever), ask them to put their hand on it. The next person will put their hand on the first person's shoulder, and so on. Depending on space, they may form a chain or a branching "coral."
- 2 In both cases, people who are unsure can look at the groups forming and decide where they can be most useful, or they can hang back and let the facilitator allocate them.
- 3 Now invite the participants to look at the groups they have formed. Are they viable? Depending on the next exercise, are they too small, too large? Who might be persuaded to change groups and help out elsewhere? Which groups are simply too small and must fold?

## Method notes

- These methods will often form unbalanced groups, where similar people group together and where skillsets might not be evenly represented. This is not a problem if the groups are just being formed for the next stage of a workshop, and in fact sometimes a group of specialists can push an idea very far, very fast. (It would be a different story if they were to be longer-lived project teams.) If a certain mix of skills or viewpoints is important for the next step, address this when adjusting the groups, or ask participants to consider this when forming groups. Badges showing skills or background can help.

- In a Floor Gallery, encourage people to stand on (not near) the papers which interest them. The papers will get torn and dirty, which will help the teams to leave them behind and move on happily.
- Often you will have one item which the group agrees is very important and promising – but when the groups form, no one wants to work on it. Stop the selection process and reflect with the group on the project's goals and responsibilities. Can we really go on without this option?
- These exercises put people in close physical proximity. While this can really help group dynamics, it might not be appropriate in some cultures. ◀



- A** Coraling to form workgroups. Participants at a workshop start to choose clusters which interest them and place hands on others' shoulders to "join up."
- B** In a Floor Gallery, the options are spread out on the floor, and team members stand on the ones they are interested in.