

## The Enquiry Chauffeur

One of the difficulties of P4Cing, is remembering the sorts of moves you can make as a facilitator at the same time as attending to a live enquiry. This (over?) extended metaphor may help those moves come to mind more readily.

### Brake!

Slow things down if multiple threads of discussion get tangled, or a few people are dominating.

- Give the keenest contributors 3 lives, or promise them “Famous Last Words”, a chance to have the final say in the enquiry but to observe and think until then.
- No girls (or boys) allowed for a few minutes if one gender is dominating
- Have each speaker pass on a “conch” to the next. It focuses the listening and can lead to fewer, longer contributions. A scarf with a knot in it can be thrown easily, unfurls in the air, and is easy to catch.
- Have a (temporary) rule, such as that contributions must start “I agree/disagree with x because...” or “No opinion without a reason”. It can become artificial but it encourages good listening.

### Accelerate!

If the energy level drops off too much, or the discussion goes round in circles or settles into a complacent consensus, step up the pace.

- Ins and Outs. Back into pairs to discuss a point that arises during the enquiry. Then one person from each pair puts their foot into the circle. Choose ins or outs to report back. Or put thumbs together, and it's the person in the pair with the biggest/smallest thumb.
- Get physical. Seize on a potential disagreement and do a quick round of “human dividing line” or “philosopher's fruit salad” to get people out of their seats and showing their thinking.
- Be provocative. Offer an extreme example or counterexample, or conjure up a character who doesn't understand why they all agree – such as a visiting alien who does things differently on his own planet.

### Change gear!

Discussions can sometimes get stuck in one particular world. By inviting thinking in different contexts, you can move the enquiry on and get different insights.

- Personal experience.
- Stimulus (including previous stimuli as well as the current one)
- Fictional worlds including text and TV
- Real world now – is anything going on in the news that is relevant?
- Historical examples
- Imaginative worlds – creating thought experiments and scenarios
- Concept world – how do these concepts under discussion relate to each other. An interesting way to do this is to imagine them as Greek gods. How would they behave? (Thanks to Dea Arjona for this delicious idea).

### Refuel!

When your enquiry splutters and stalls, and no amount of turning over the engine will bring it back to life...

- Move on to the question that got the next most votes
- Try some speed philosophy: a minute for each question that did not get picked (or thirty seconds for each vote cast, gathering pace towards the briefest ones). It's not the most profound way to investigate a question, but it's energising and a positive finish if an enquiry has been unsatisfyingly flat.