

Change Game for creating a shared understanding and situational picture



“A game in which everyone reveals their cards in order to reach the same page”

What situations is the game intended for? For teams, working groups and any group of people making a change together. The game helps you create a shared situational picture and build a shared understanding.

Why? The game helps you discuss the change in a constructive way from different points of view and identify the dimensions of change for which there is no shared understanding yet. The game also helps you articulate the emotions and thoughts associated with the change. After playing the game, it is easier for the team to start taking action in relation to the change.

What's needed? 3–6 players and a facilitator. Equipment: A deck of cards for each player and a board. The time spent on a game varies depending on the subject of the change and how deeply the players wish to address the various dimensions of change. You should reserve approximately one hour for reviewing all dimensions.

If you want to add game-like elements, you can introduce an hourglass and use it for limiting players' time to speak and a dice for randomising the order of the dimensions.



The game was jointly developed by a “Capacity for change” working group of Sitra alumni in

Rules and how to play:

How do you prepare for the game? Decide the subject of change that will be the theme of the game, select a facilitator who will not participate in the actual game play. The game can also be played without a facilitator, if the players so decide. Deal a deck of cards for every player: all decks have the same 40 cards. The players sit around a table with the board in the middle. The facilitator writes down the subject of change for everyone to see. The theme of the game should be as concrete as possible and relevant to every player. Before starting the game, it is a good idea to review the rules of constructive discussion.

How does the game start? If the time available for the game is limited, the players can start by discussing together which dimensions of change (the eight sectors of the board) are the most important and where to start. The facilitator can then decide on which dimensions to include and their order based on listening to the players and considering the subject of change. The game can include all dimensions of change or just some of them. We recommend that you start with the dimension “The Nature of change”. The Cynefin framework was chosen as the theoretical background of the game. A more detailed description of framework can be found in the facilitation instructions.

You have now agreed which dimension to start from. What happens then? Each player selects from the cards related to the dimension (five colour-coded cards) the one that best matches their own thoughts regarding the change. There are four options for each dimension and a joker card, which you can set on the table if none of the options feels suitable. You can put the joker card into words in any way you wish. Each player can interpret the images in their own way, and there are no right or wrong answers. After giving it a thought in silence, each player selects a card and puts it on the table, face down.

Everyone has their cards on the table – now what? You turn all the cards face up and see if the players have chosen the same card or if their impressions differ. Each player is allowed to briefly explain their thoughts on the dimension of change using the card they selected as inspiration. The facilitator facilitates the discussion. Once each player has been heard and there has been sufficient discussion, you move on to the next dimension and repeat this process.

How does the game end? It is useful to summarise the game once all of the dimensions have been covered. The facilitator can pose questions for the players to help them summarise the game and encourage the team to put the result of the game into words and describe what will happen next.

Who wins the game? There are no right or wrong answers in the Change Game, nor are there winners or losers. If they wish, the players may, however, decide before the game that the winner will be the player who succeeded in inspiring new points of view or thinking among the other players or, for example, constructively discussed the change. At the end of the game, each player writes down the name of the player they nominate as the winner on a piece of paper. The facilitator collects the pieces of paper and announces the winner.

In conclusion: This is the first version of Change Game, so we would be happy to hear your feedback, user experiences and development proposals. It would be great if you could spend a moment giving feedback after the game at sitra.fi/changegame.sitra.fi/muutospeleli.

You can also share your experience with the game on social media: [#changegame](https://twitter.com/changegame) [#capacityforchange](https://twitter.com/capacityforchange) [@Sitrafund](https://twitter.com/Sitrafund)

Facilitator's guidelines and auxiliary questions for the different dimensions of change



Underlying the Change Game's underlying idea is that we can influence change together, and no one makes a change alone. The attitude towards change and shared understanding of it also influence the direction and outcome of the change. The Change Game develops individuals' and group's understanding of the factors that influence change and thereby also develops capacity for change.

Start the game by reviewing the ground rules for a constructive discussion:

- Listen to the others – do not interrupt or start additional discussions.
- Relate what you say to what the others have said and use everyday language.
- Tell about your own experience.
- Be present and respect the others and the confidentiality of the discussion.
- Work on the emerging conflicts boldly and look for what remains hidden.

Supporting questions for the facilitator for the different dimensions of change:

The nature of change: What kind of change is concerned? Are the problems and situations associated with the change primarily clear, complicated, complex or chaotic? See *Cynefin framework* below.

Time: How urgently is the change needed? When will the change begin? When will it end or be complete?

Actors: Who are the key parties in making the change? And who does the change concern?

Emotion: What kind of emotions does the change bring up? Excitement, joy, relief, worries, griefs, fears, questions... Something else?

Motivation: What motivates and inspires to make the change? And what prevents it and flattens its success?

Direction: How do we know the direction of change? What is the destination? Who or what shows the direction? What is our direction and point of view for approaching the change?

Impacts: What are the impacts of the change? If the change takes place, who or which parties will be the losers and who, on the other hand, will be the winners? In other words, who will benefit and who will lose something?

Methods: What kind of methods are needed for the change to succeed? Do old structures need to be demolished or is it necessary to build gradually on the old foundation?

→ **Cynefin framework:** One commonly used method of parsing complex problems is the framework developed by **David Snowden**, dividing problems into four different contexts. Different circumstances require different operating and problem-solving models. Many of our problems are still **simple**. They are predictable and clear by nature. The problems can be identified and taken apart. Such a situation could be described as a straight road toward the chosen destination. Problems can be reacted to and addressed with ease.

Other problems are **complicated**, requiring expert analysis to identify the different options. Such problems can be identified and analysed, after which they can be addressed. Solving complicated problems is like a labyrinth, requiring analysis to find the correct route.

Nowadays, problems are increasingly **complex**, meaning that the associated causal relationships are not visible or predictable. Solving complex problems is like a jungle, with navigation through it being a continuous path of trial and error. In this kind of situation, problems are addressed by trial. Only after that can the problems be identified and reacted to.

In the worst case, the complexity of the surrounding problems leads to a world that is perceived as **chaotic**. Such a world blazes like a forest fire. Perceiving causal relationships is difficult. In order to cope in this kind of world, it is necessary to focus on putting out fires and reacting. In a chaotic world, problems are solved through action by identifying and responding to them.

At the end of the game: questions to support the summary discussion

- How do you feel now, after the game? Do you share an understanding, direction and means to achieve the change or is there still something that you should discuss together?
- Which dimension of change did you agree on the most? Which dimension was the most disagreeable in your thoughts and the way you put them into words?
- Thinking about your change, did you learn something new about how the other players' think about it?
- And did you learn something new about what you think yourself?
- In order to achieve the desired change, how should you now proceed?
- What is each of you prepared to do for the change?
- Can you summarise and crystallise the outcome of your game together?