

Facilitator's Guide for Delivering Workshops

# Not Quite Right

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‘Not Quite Right’ can be used as a basis for all sorts of events aimed at addressing the challenges of trying to achieve change in healthcare systems. It is well-written, with sharply-drawn characters creating a good balance of humour and seriousness of purpose.



**Each scene has both an educational and a narrative purpose. In order to deliver a successful workshop using the text, it is worth thinking about the following:**

**Be clear about objectives**

It is obvious, but very necessary. Our expertise as a theatre company is in drawing out ideas, questions and challenges from the workshop participants. Consequently, we have to know what the workshop organisers want to achieve, what questions they wish to ask and how much time we have to deliver at the event. We are then able to debrief against these objectives & questions.

### **Think about logistical considerations**

Our issues are usually very practical:

- a What is the size & style of the venue, and what size is the performance space?
- b How many participants/audience members do they expect?
- c What kind of technical facilities are available? (Lights, sound, projection)
- d Will there be someone on hand to assist us in the setting-up, and who will that be?
- e How do we get to the venue? (If we can drive, we will bring blocks as our set. If we go by train, we will use any armless chairs provided at the venue). If we're able to drive, where do we park our van?
- f How much time do we have to set-up in the space and what access do we have to a separate space to prepare/rehearse?

### **Choose an appropriate facilitation method for your workshop**

We have adopted a forum theatre approach to workshops, using the play as our 'model' or 'provocation'. Forum proves really helpful in engaging and entertaining people in equal proportions, which helps keep any workshop alive. The forum approach also makes it challenging for the participants: we ask them more and more questions, in order to hone in on the thorny issues that arise as part of our discussions.

### **Introduce the play with the questions that the workshop is setting out to address**

This creates a prism through which the audience/participants can critically view the play.

### **Focus on play**

Playfulness is important: it's one of the ways to create an atmosphere in which people feel confident enough to throw in ideas and responses to the action. Although the intent is serious, and we value people's time, our approach allows participants to both think and feel. We are, after all, exploring human interactions with each other and with systems – keeping a sense of fun and play at the heart of the process is vital to its ability to engage.

### **Create a shared space**

Whether you adapt forum theatre, or use another approach, the use of the play serves a critical purpose – it creates a tangible reality to which participants respond. Such a shared experience means that there are specific narratives, characters and events to unpick. It means that the workshop does not rely on participants' individual experiences and circumstances. Rather, it allows them to bring that experience to bear on a fictional situation. The workshop's dynamic inevitably leads them back to their real worlds, but creates imaginative space in which to think and play. It creates opportunities to 'try out' ideas – some may work and have traction, others will not.



# Considerations for staging

## **Ensuring that there is an identifiable ‘playing space’**

This may sound obvious, but many venues will be conference rooms without a stage or clear performance space. Part of an audience’s enjoyment will depend upon how much theatrical artifice we can bring to the performance. In the more drab/un-theatrical venues, we have to work much harder to create an identifiable playing space – but it’s always worth thinking how to create the best aesthetic and best environment, without being precious, unrealistic or overly demanding.

## **Set – our set comprises 9 identical grey wooden blocks**

The actors bring these on and change them for each scene – they create a couch, a set of stairs, a receptionist’s desk, and an ambulance among many other things. Part of the playfulness is in figuring out how, where and when the blocks are placed. When it’s not possible to bring the blocks with us, we ask for 9 identical armless chairs to be available. They are less theatrical, but perfectly useable.

## **We use minimal, but necessary, props and costume to delineate character, role and setting**

Each scene is introduced via a projection which tells the audience the time and location. We use music to introduce the play and within each scene change to help make the changes as entertaining as possible. We work with these elements to develop a set of conventions which give the performance a stylistic framework.