

A Chalk Talk can be an uncomplicated silent reflection or a spirited, but silent, exchange of ideas. It has been known to solve vexing problems, surprise everyone with how much is collectively known about something, get an entire project planned, or give a committee everything it needs to know with no verbal sparring.

1. The facilitator explains VERY BRIEFLY that chalk talk is a silent activity. No one may talk at all and anyone may add to the chalk talk as they please. You can comment on other people's ideas simply by drawing a connecting line to the comment. *It can also be very effective to say nothing at all except to put finger to lips in a gesture of silence and simply begin with #2.*
2. (15-20 minutes) The facilitator writes a relevant question in a circle on the "board".
3. The facilitator either hands markers to everyone, or places many markers at the "board". The participants then write answers to the question. People write as they feel moved. There is likely to be long silences -- that is natural, so allow plenty of wait time before deciding it is over.
4. (15-20 minutes) The group then talks with each other about the work and issues presented.

Guiding Questions:

What did we "hear"?

What did we "hear" that we needed to know more about?

What do we think about the answers, questions and issues presented?

How the facilitator chooses to interact with the Chalk Talk influences its outcome.

The facilitator can stand back and let it unfold or expand thinking by asking questions and making connections.

When it is done, it is done.