

# Effective and engaging summits

  
Cheat sheet

WORKZ

Summits are an effective way to reach a group of people and have their full attention for a time. But they are also a big investment - in terms of the costs of the event, the time spent by the participants and the credibility of the organisers.

This is a summary of our philosophy for designing effective and engaging summits. Use it as inspiration or as a check list.

## OUR APPROACH

At Workz we approach summit design this way:



- 1. Start with the theme and core story:** The summit must have a clear purpose and the participant must play a specific role. We use storytelling for this step.
- 2. Design the core process:** Design a process for the entire summit and schedule the programme to fit the process. Do not forget the process when you inevitably have to change the scheduling later on.
- 3. Make room for involvement:** Identify where you can give the participants real influence. Ask for input on targets or goals, let them plan how to reach those goals or just discuss how they will be influenced by the changes to come.
- 4. Use a variety of tools:** Use a variation of approaches for your scheduling. People and tasks are different and need different tools. Think beyond keynotes and workshops.
- 5. Base the identity on the core story:** Use the core story and the theme of the summit to inspire your visual identity and scenography.
- 6. Build a bridge back to home:** The summit is just the start of the journey. If you do not help the participants link the insights from the summit to their individual work context, a lot will be lost in translation on the way home.

## PITFALLS

These are five common reasons why summits fail:

- Irrelevance:** The participants do not find the programme relevant to them.
- Unclear process:** There is no clear red thread or sense of logical progression throughout the summit.
- Out of balance:** There is too much focus on one-way communication or too little substance and direction.
- Pseudo-involvement:** The organisers ask questions but are not really interested in the answers.
- Decoupled:** There is too little focus on linking the summit to what comes next.

## VALUE FOR PARTICIPANTS

Make sure the summit is worth the participants' time and attention. These are five ways you can provide value:

- Entertainment:** The summit is entertaining and engaging in it-self.
- Involvement:** The participants have actual influence. They feel their help is needed.
- New knowledge:** New tools, valuable knowledge or insider information is offered.
- Personal development:** The participants have a chance to learn new skills or develop themselves.
- Networking:** The participants have a chance to meet colleagues or other interesting people and exchange views.

## VALUE FOR PROJECT/INITIATIVE

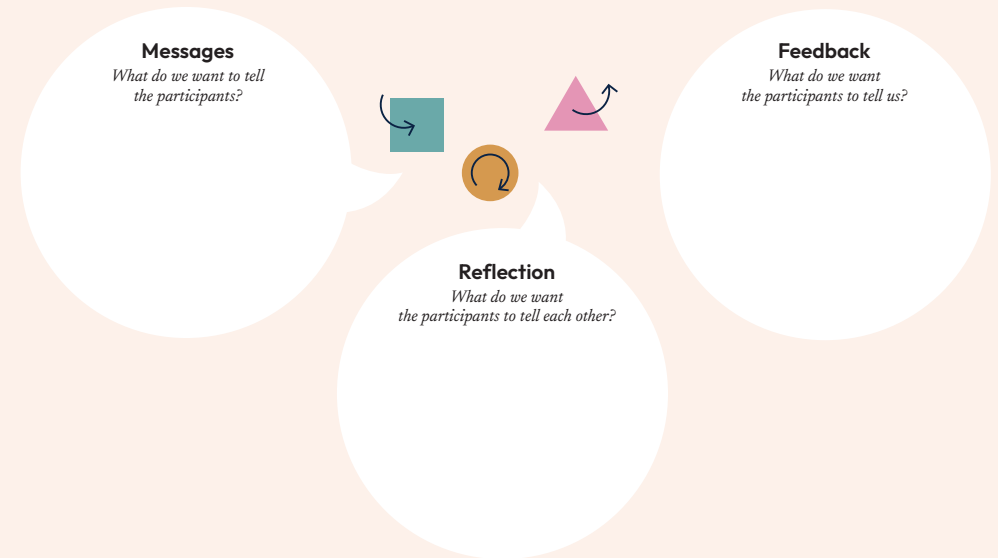
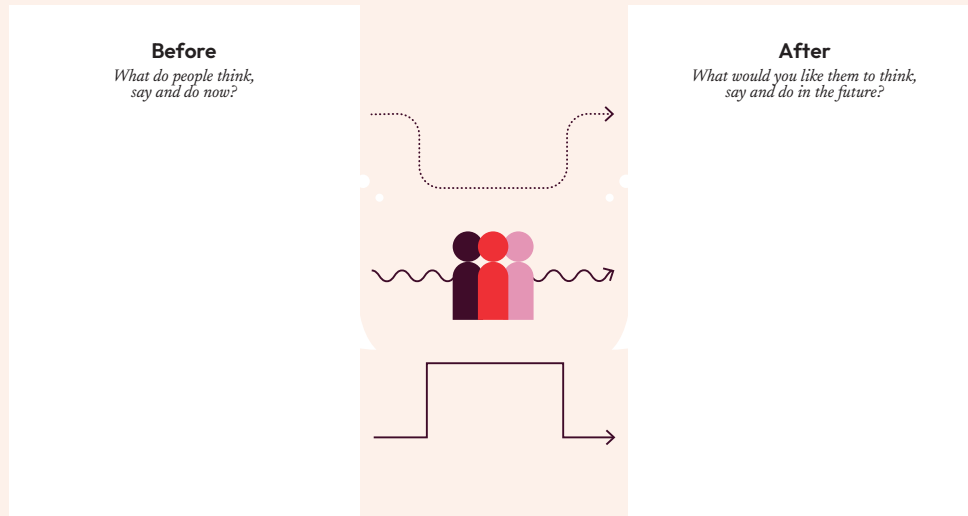
Make sure the summit is worth the costs for the organisers. These are five ways you can provide value:

- Clear direction:** The summit focuses on alignment and a shared understanding of the summit initiative.
- Engagement:** The summit turns the participants into change agents or ambassadors for the initiative.
- Input from participants:** The summit project gets valuable input from the participants.
- Innovation or problem solving:** Use the participants to create new solutions or ideas.
- Something to share:** There is an output that can be shared with people outside the summit.

# Summit design canvas

What are the change goals of the summit?

What is the conversation you want to have?



What is the core process?

