

The heart of FORB 15 min



EXPLORING FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF

BRAINSTORM

BUZZ GROUP EXERCISE

About the exercise

TARGET AUDIENCE

Any. Easily adapted to different audiences.

PURPOSE

To check participants' understanding of the core knowledge on freedom of religion or belief (FORB) and reinforce key learning points.

DESCRIPTION

A quick buzz group exercise that helps the facilitator to gauge a group's level of understanding prior to or following an input, adds energy to a knowledge input and encourages peer-to-peer learning.



Instructions

RESOURCES

- Flipchart sheet/whiteboard and markers in two different colours.
- A timer, phone, or other device with an alarm function.

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE EXERCISE 1 MIN

Explain that the group is going to do a quick brainstorm exercise to think about what FORB means. Ask participants to get into pairs or threes (depending on the number of participants) with the people sitting closest to them.

HOW TO RUN THE EXERCISE 10 MIN

Tell participants that they have just three minutes to answer one important question. Ask: What are the three main things that freedom of religion or belief protects? Shout GO and start the timer for 3 minutes.

When the time is up, ask one group to share their three answers. Write answers on the whiteboard/flipchart putting things related to inner freedom (the right to have, adopt and change a belief) in one colour to the left and things related to the outer freedom (practice and expression of one's religion) on the right in a different colour.

Ask the other groups if they have anything to add. Write up their suggestions under the inner/outer freedom lists.

HOW TO CONCLUDE THE EXERCISE 4 MIN

Review the suggestions with the group and correct any misunderstandings of the right. Restate the following points.

Freedom of religion or belief gives us the right to:

- Have a religion or belief of any kind including traditional, non-traditional, new or old religions, major religions or smaller and new religions or a worldview or belief system with no deity, such as atheism (inner freedom).

TIP! Creating time pressure with an alarm or buzzer makes the exercise more fun and helps participants to focus their attention on the task at hand.

- To change religion or belief. If one day I want to change religion, or if people around me want to change religion, they are fully entitled to do so, even if that saddens us. It also gives us the right to stop having a religion altogether (inner freedom).
- To manifest or express one's religion or belief through worship, teaching, observance, and practice – both privately and in public, alone and together with others (outer freedom).

**ALTERNATIVE METHODOLOGY**

Extend this exercise by returning to buzz groups to discuss the follow-up questions below. This can be a useful way for participants to learn more about each other and to build trust within the group. Allow an additional 10 min for this.

- How important are the rights to have, to change and to manifest for you personally?
- Do you know anyone who converted or changed beliefs/stopped being religious?
- What kind of reaction did that person face from those around them or the State?

Source

Stefanus Alliance International, <https://www.stefanus.no/english/>