



HOST MANUAL

Thank you for agreeing to be a host for the Day Of Dialogue! As discussed in the FAQs for hosting (attached here for reference), hosting is meant to be a simple process for you. But there are some details you will need to look after, so please read this (very short!) manual all the way through to make sure you have everything you need.

Contact Info:

If you *ever* have additional questions, need to double-check anything, or just need a pep-talk or sound off ideas, we're here for you. You can email us at: info@daysofdialogue.com or check our website: www.daysofdialogue.com which will also have lots of helpful information for you.

Hosting is a Big Responsibility! --But It Should Also Be Fun

We've all had that anxiety: What if I throw a party and nobody comes? Or too many people come and I run out of food? What if I'm having a dinner party and no one talks to each other? How can I make sure people are actually having conversations?

We're here to help. We want your party to be a success, and this is a checklist to help make sure that happens. This guide will walk you through four basic steps to prepare.

Step One: Deciding the Theme

Step Two: Inviting Guests

Step Three: Preparing the Room

Step Four: Party Games, or, how to make sure people have a good time

As you think about your Day of Dialogue, it's important to remember that this sounds easy, but will actually be an unusual and meaningful experience for many of your guests. You will be talking *with* each other, instead of *at* each other in a well-facilitated setting. You will be talking about issues of substance, sometimes with very personal applications, not the latest person voted off *American Idol*. You will be among a diverse group of people who have different points of view, not a table full of people who agree with you.

This is what makes Day of Dialogue so special, and this simple fact already makes your party a success!

Knowing that you are already creating a space where people come to talk to each other, not to listen to experts, to ask questions and be heard, let's talk through the four steps in more detail to address the nuts and bolts of your Day of Dialogue.



Step One: Deciding the Theme

The core activity of any Day of Dialogue is people talking in small groups of five to ten people. This small group is facilitated to ensure that everyone gets to speak and the conversation moves forward in a coherent way.

With that basic format in mind, there is still room for you, the host, to customize your event depending on how many people will be coming in total, and how complex you want your party to be. Keep in mind, the more complex, the more responsibilities you will have to make sure everything is in order. Buying a cake at the last minute is easy, but getting a cake in the shape of a car with Tinkerbell and Buzz Lightyear dancing the limbo is going to take some advance planning!

We have four basic formats for a Day of Dialogue, outlined below. We'll start with the most basic, and build from there.

Model 0: One Small Group (basic party)

This format is for a small group, and will feel the most like the familiar process of people talking. Think an excellent dinner party, a late-night college dorm hallway, or an afternoon with friends. The difference is that there are some ground rules established at the beginning, and there is a designated facilitator. We have a discussion guide to help start the conversation and move dialogue along, and some basic question topics that will keep your group more or less aligned with the conversations happening around Los Angeles. Once you get too far over ten people, the group size will be too large for productive conversation, so we'd ask you to think about moving to Model 1.

Advantages:

- easy to organize, creates strong group

Challenges:

- you will need to find/designate your own facilitator

Responsibilities:

- Return questionnaires/evaluations from participants to Days of Dialogue
- Make sure that people can see and hear DVD presentation

Model 1: Multiple Small Groups (basic party, with balloons)

Here's where we start to help you more! With more than one small group, we will send facilitators to help guide the small group discussions, and make sure everyone gets a chance to speak. As the host, you should welcome everyone and get the groups started. At the end of the dialogue session, you should also bring everyone back together again, and have a few groups (or all, depending on how many groups you have) share some highlights of their conversations.



Remember, we're all having our own dialogues, but the beauty of this event is that we're all in it together!

Advantages:

- reasonably easy to organize,
- Days of Dialogue provides the facilitator(s)

Challenges:

- more promotion/outreach required

Responsibilities:

- **Return questionnaires/evaluations from participants to Days of Dialogue**
- Make sure that people can see and hear DVD presentation
- Make sure that microphone and amplification systems works so speakers addressing the group can be heard

Model 2: Multiple Small Groups Plus Polling (basic party with balloons and a pinata)

Again, as things get more complex, we offer more support! This model follows the same basic structure as outline above, but adds in whole-group polling. This offers the room two chances during the dialogue to do an activity all together. Basically, at the opening of the event, handheld polling devices are distributed, and the lead facilitator leads the group through some survey questions, asking participants to respond. This generates instant feedback, and illuminates the diversity and commonality in the room, which is a great starting point for dialogue! It's anonymous (no hand-raising), so tends to be more honest. As the small group dialogues conclude, the lead facilitator will bring the groups together again for some closing questions and instant responses. This is an excellent way to quickly share overall impressions of the day, conclusions, and highlights, and will lead into verbal sharing of highlights from the small groups as in the model above.

Advantages:

- Days of Dialogue provides the facilitators
- stronger connection to the larger group/whole room,
- greater understanding of the diversity of opinion in the room regarding important issues

Challenges:

- need for Technical Logistics Manager (we provide the training, you provide the person)

Responsibilities:

- **Return questionnaires/evaluations from participants to Days of Dialogue**
- Make sure that people can see and hear DVD presentation



- Make sure that microphone and amplification systems works so speakers addressing the group can be heard
- Send us an email by February 22 so we can send you a response email allowing you to download free polling software on PC-compatible laptop by February 23
- Attend logistics manager training on February 24 (12pm – 1:30), where polling system functions will be tested
- Pick up set of audience polling devices
- On day of program, confirm polling system works in dialogue room
- Working with facilitators, retrieve set of polling devices from participants
- Facilitate return of polling devices to DoD

Group Model 3: Multiple Small Groups with Plus Customized Polling (basic party with balloons, piñata with your name on it)

This is basically the same as Model 2, with the small groups and instant polling. However, in this model the survey questions at the end are not pre-set questions, they are customized to your party. During the dialogue sessions, the facilitators take careful notes which are analyzed and distilled towards the end by the Themes and Ideas team. For the end of session polling, the questions will include people's opinions about the specific ideas that emerged in discussion.

Advantages:

- Days of Dialogue provides the facilitators
- stronger connection to the larger group/whole room,
- greater understanding of the diversity of opinion in the room regarding important issues
- greater awareness of specific prospective solutions or action items and their priority to the whole room

Challenges:

- need for Technical Logistics Manager (we provide the training, you provide the person)

Responsibilities:

- **Return questionnaires/evaluations from participants to Days of Dialogue**
- Make sure that people can see and hear DVD presentation
- Make sure that microphone and amplification systems works so speakers addressing the group can be heard
- Send us an email **by February 22** so we can send you a response email allowing you to download free polling software on PC-compatible laptop by February 23
- Attend logistics manager training on **February 24** (12pm – 1:30), where polling system functions will be tested



- Pick up polling devices
- On day of program, confirm polling system works in dialogue room
- Facilitate return of polling devices to Days of Dialogue
- Make sure that Themes and Ideas teams has a separate workspace in the dialogue room
- Attend the Themes and Ideas training also (February 24, 1:30-3:00)

Step Two: Inviting Guests

As discussed in the FAQs, some hosts will keep it to their own organizations members, staff, constituents, and/or clients (private). Others will simply provide a space and then open their doors to the general public (public). Or you may choose to reach out to your own people and open it to the public (semi-private). Whatever you decide, here's how to invite people to your party.

Private: Thanks for throwing a party! Simply download our flyer [here](#), and customize it with your own time and location information. We trust you to do your own outreach and registration, just keep us posted on how many people you expect, and what model you will be using so we can send the right support.

Public: Thanks for providing people a place to meet! We'll handle the outreach and promotion. We'd be happy to have your support posting and distributing materials around the event in your space, as the more the word gets spread, the better! Guests will register through the Days of Dialogue website, and we'll handle the details and logistics. Please be patient though, as people will know that its your house, so as much as we may direct them to Days of Dialogue, they may still call you for information. Please just re-direct them to us and we'll take it from there. We'll also ask you to help us out with signs on the Day itself, so people don't wander into the wrong rooms!

Semi-Private Event: Thanks for allowing us to invite more guests to your party! We'll count on you to do your own outreach (download the flyer [here](#) and add in your own time and location) for the core audience, but we'll also be listing your location as one of our public sites. If you would like to handle registration, please send us a link to your registration page, and we'll direct public rsvp's to you. If you'd rather we handle the registration, then simply make sure your outreach materials send people to our registration page ([www._____](#)).

Once you have started to get rsvp's, please let us know how many guests you expect! Send an email to info@daysofdialogue.com so we can prepare and make sure you have what you need. Just to be sure, expect to hear from us February 23 for an initial count and on February 28 for a final estimate of participants so we can send the right number of facilitators and polling devices.



Step Three: Preparing the Room

The most important thing here is to make sure you have told us how many people you are expecting. Beyond that, setting up the room is pretty straightforward. The room should be set up with groupings of ten (tables and chairs, or just chairs), an a/v projector at the front, and a mike (if it's a large group) so everyone can hear when you welcome people, bring them back at the end, and when the groups are sharing the highlights of their discussions. If you are using the polling devices, you will need the laptop and display screen.

You will probably want signs up, directing people to the right place, and a registration table so people can check-in. Additionally, you may want to think about providing food. Snacks and water are fine, but any good party is one where people are fed!

Step Four: Party Games, or, how to make sure people have a good time