



# BarCamp / Unconference

An un-conference where attendees self-organize agenda, input and exchange on the spot with the rule that any attendee isn't a spectator only but participates actively.



**Information Ideation Consultation**  
Co-Decision



<15 people  
15-30 people  
**30-100 people**  
**100-250 people**  
> 250 people



**Preparation:**  
1-3 months for invitation of the participants etc.  
**Implementation:**  
½-3 days  
**Follow-up:**  
1-2 days for analysis and documentation



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Resources for a conference



**At least two persons** for preparation, moderation and documentation

## The Method: What is it, when to use it and what outcome to expect

A BarCamp is a self-organized conference free of formal processes that focusses on participants instead of invited speakers: The discussion sessions and their content as well as the procedures are organically arranged and conducted by the participants present. Except for the workshop location, necessary infrastructure and theme of the BarCamp, nothing else is pre-defined.

BarCamps aim to exchange knowledge and experience, or to develop strategies, action plans, services or projects. Today, they are regularly run in any industry for any topic from education to public matters and political organizing.

Decision-makers and NGOs can expect interactive, open, and intense exchange between very involved participants, a high networking factor, and activated participants at the end.

## The Process: How to conduct it in an in-person setting or online using a PC/laptop with video option

The method follows six steps:

- 1. Preparation:** Organizers settle for a (virtual) venue, promote the BarCamp and prepare a blank schedule with (virtual) room information on (virtual) whiteboard.
- 2. Welcome:** Organizers introduce themselves and the rules of the BarCamp. Participants introduce themselves in three words.
- 3. Session planning:** Each day of a BarCamp starts with the coordination of the input and discussion sessions of the day, using a central (virtual) whiteboard: Anyone participant who wants to hold a session, writes down the topic and his/her name in a presentation slot on the board until all slots are filled. There might be queuing – a facilitator may help.
- 4. Session pitching:** The session hosts explain their topic in short time.
- 5. Session running:** Session hosts get ready and participants chose sessions freely.
- 6. Plenum session:** All participants get together, are presented with impressions of the day (verbal, photos, tweets etc.) and share feedback.

### Blended participation

It is possible to organize parallel virtual and in-person sessions. This requires more coordination and planning and should therefore only be considered if a real added-value is expected (e.g. if a number of participants can't join in person and another group doesn't have online access).

### Digital communication

- Useful to reach and activate potential participants and to inform the broader audience about the results as well as follow-up action.

### Good to know

- Principles:
  - A participant cannot be a mere observer but needs to contribute actively by giving an input, posing questions, comment online etc.
  - Anyone is allowed to participate and contribute
  - Promotion or advertisement is discouraged
  - A session may run 45min or as long as it can
  - Each session should be documented and made accessible on the web so anyone can profit
  - As many parallel sessions as facility-wise possible
  - Further rules:
    - <http://barcamp.org/w/page/405173/TheRulesOfBarCamp>
- BarCamps are similar to Open Space Technology but are even looser organized
- Read further:
  - <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BarCamp>
  - <https://participation.net/method/4938>