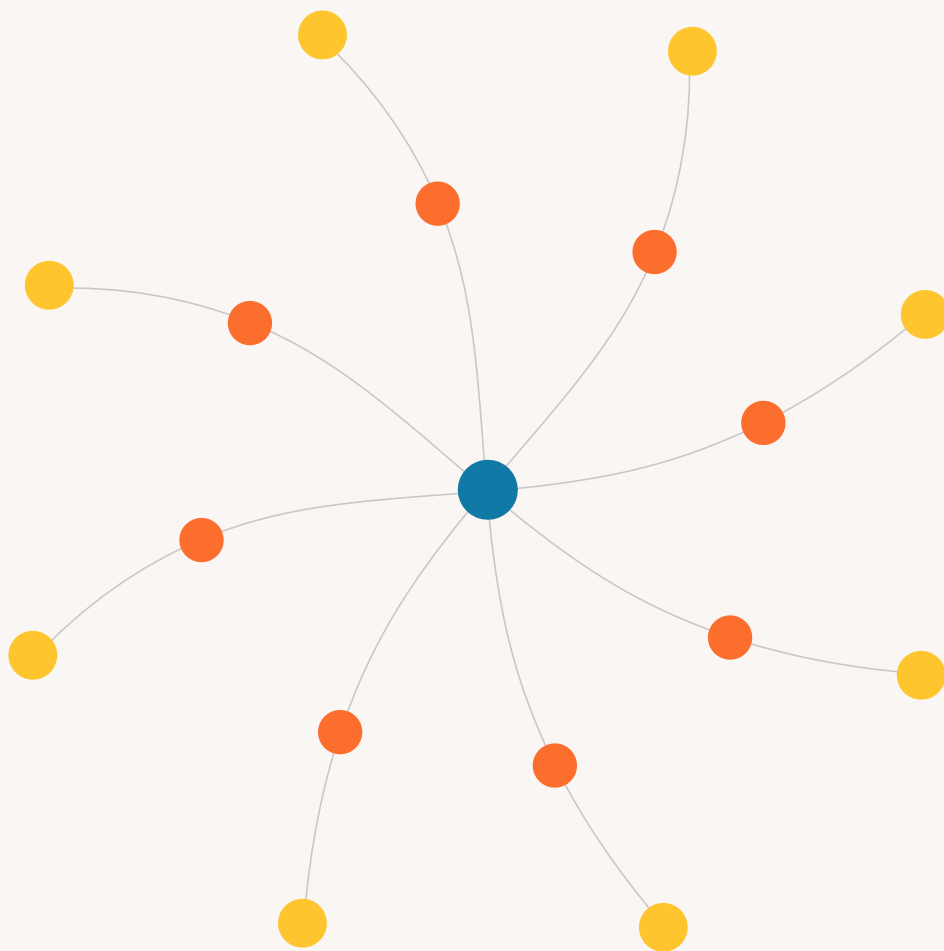
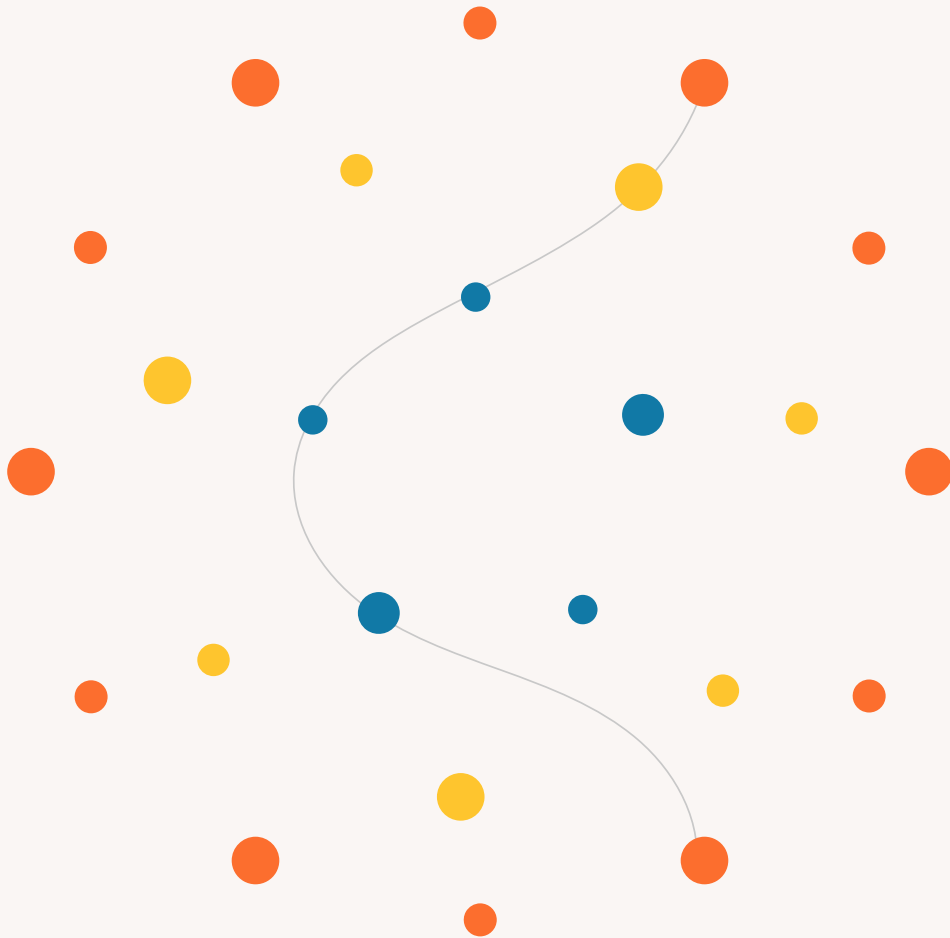


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Story Workshops Facilitations Guide

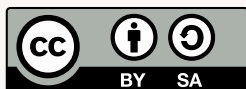
Rainer von Leoprechting, Fraendi





What is CADRA?

The CADRA project is a three year Erasmus+ co-funded initiative, running from December 2020 until August 2023. It explores leadership needs leadership development and focusses on delivering working tools and methodologies to help leaders navigating the challenges of our times.



How to work with Success Stories

With this facilitation guide you can conduct your own Story Listening sessions to collect success stories. You will be introduced to the methodology, get some examples of typical applications and a facilitation template that you can adapt to your own context and situation.

The origins of the Story Listening workshop and its role in CADRA

How it all started

A first version of this workshop was developed in 2004 by a team in the European institutions in Brussels who did research into the success patterns demonstrated by various people and in various roles in their work. People were invited to share their “secrets of success at work” and join a sharing session for 2-3 hours.

People attended the sessions in groups of 6. The facilitators offered a preparation sheet for people to think about a moment of success in their career and to note a few important dimensions, like:

- What was actually the success?
- What did you do yourself?
- What did others do?
- What were the conditions that enabled the whole story to take place?
- What has become possible by this achievement?

After this reflection and active memorising, speakers shared their stories one after the other. After each story those who listened offered some feedback on what they heard from the speakers.

The sessions were recorded, and over 50 success stories collected. After transcribing the stories and completing pattern analysis, the team found 26 distinct success types for working with the EU at the time.

How it all continued

Rainer von Leoprechting who lead this project continued to collect success moments from many people in their professional contexts along the lines of this first research design.

For the CADRA project, we developed an online workshop setting, trained facilitators and ran a number of story listening sessions. In this guide we share the practice in its form of an online workshop.

Our purpose was to elicit a broad range of life and professional stories. From this collection we built a database with success scenarios for the online self assessment tool. You will find more background

about the use of such scenarios as a Developmental Profile in the CADRA “Digitally assessing cognitive adult development with StoryMatcher” Report.

The Story Listening Method has very useful additional benefits:

The fact of bringing people together and inviting them to share something personal, like their individual strategies to be successful in an organisation, enhances trust, creates a refreshed sense of belonging and increases the awareness of the specific work cultures present in a given context.

Especially when a group of members of an organisation or community gather and listen to the variety of success moments shared, all experience a deepened sense of their own motivation and engagement with the work they do, and recognise more of the contributions of others.

Framing the workshop intervention

As we see from the many intentions possible to engage in a story listening workshop, the framing is very important. As we are inviting people to share something, which in many contexts is held as rather intimate information, the organising team needs to clearly set the context for the workshop and to formulate the invitation accordingly.

Besides giving a clear orientation for why the intervention is conducted, you will need to address concerns about confidentiality. Normally, we guarantee that the recordings will only be kept for the purpose of researching the questions that gave rise to the intervention, and that transcripts from stories will be made fully anonymous as the main interest is to illustrate what happens in the space between members of the organisation rather than focusing on special individuals.

In the template below we have left a few blank spaces for your specific framing to the context in which you operate.

The Process of the online workshop

The online Story Listening Workshops work in groups of 20 or more people on Zoom who then break out into Story Circles with groups of around four participants, in which individuals are invited to share experiences of success at work.

After a welcoming and framing of the session in plenary, the process of the story workshops in the breakout rooms is presented, and then the participants are sent into breakout rooms with up to four participants and a room host.

The introduction in plenary

We normally start this workshop with a “check in” to allow participants to participate right from the start. We also tend to speak to the online conditions and invite participants to adjust well to them. We share the framing from both the inviting organisation’s point of view and the more technical perspective of the story analysis that will follow the workshop.


We end the plenary by introducing the prompt for the success stories and let participants reflect in silence. We often allow for a “body check” so that people are aware of their state, and how they feel when remembering a true success.

Story sharing in breakout rooms

We have made the best experience by adding a trained host to each breakout session who facilitates the breakout sessions. The host ensures that people are focusing on a real success moment in their work, that they share it succinctly (about 4 mins for each person maximum) and cover the main dimensions to make it a complete story, and that timing is respected.

Facilitators can use this wording:

Remember a moment in the last month or year when you felt somewhat jubilant because you had achieved something special, or had overcome something difficult. Just one of the many moments ...



Reflect on what you did, what others did, the conditions for the whole thing to happen, what has become possible through your success...

Furthermore, they can set the tone on how to give feedback and respect the integrity of the storyteller. You find more detailed guidelines for breakout room hosts after the template.

In these conditions, the story listening breakouts with four storytellers can happen in approximately 30 minutes. The online setting eases the recording of the session.

Plenary closure

Participants come back to the main room from the breakout sessions. In this plenary, we let participants share how that experience was for them. This creates a common understanding of the usefulness and pleasure the sharing and listening of success moments were bringing to most if not every one.

We then give an outlook of what is to follow - we call it the “programme” in the template, with the opportunity for participants to share concerns or to ask questions.

As this work is dialogical, it is essential to provide continuous connection and conversation points for participants after this.

Applications for the Story Listening Workshop in the CADRA Project:

The story listening workshop as an intervention can serve a variety of purposes. In the CADRA Project we used it to collect success moments across a variety of contexts and from many different countries and cultures.

Creating scenario sets for a StoryMatcher instance

Beyond a one-off analysis from a collection of stories shared in a workshop or a series of workshops, a StoryMatcher instance can be built and provided to the organisation. This in itself can serve a number of purposes as well. The StoryMatcher could be used to:

- provide people with feedback about their capabilities based on a developmental reading of their scenario selections
- survey organisation members about their work preferences to gather insights for strategic orientation
- build a talent pipeline for various positions in a work organisation

If used as a survey in organisations, the StoryMatcher™ provides leaders and leadership teams with answers to the following critical questions:

- What are our company success drivers, and how do they differ throughout the organisation? Who and what is currently driving success?
- How do people connect, relate and get things done across our teams?
- What are the capacity levels present in the organisation?

Let's connect!

In the spirit of dialogue and connection, we welcome you to connect with us and share your ways of working with this practice. We engage to update this introduction and template regularly with your comments and practices. You can reach us at rainer@fraendi.org

Story Workshop Facilitation Template

Purpose

Purposes for the workshop are to

- Understand ways of working and the secrets of successful work in ...
- Connecting various people and parts of ...
- Collecting Success Stories from the Participants environment for a dedicated StoryMatcher database.

(You choose the relevant purpose for your audience and frame it accordingly.)

The process

We are embedding the StoryWorkshops into That is why the workshops will be conducted by ...

Brief from Organisation:

Text from Organisation

Brief from facilitators:

We are focusing on explaining our work with the Stories. After that we will give a short time to answer any urgent questions about the process. Then we will frame the breakout space, as explained in the “Breakout Host Guidelines” below. After everyone is back we will hear back from the group how the experience was.

Outline

This is an example outline of how the workshops could look like. The important piece for facilitators is in the Breakout piece below.

Approx timing	Duration	Session	Topics to be covered	Who
00:00	5 min		Walk-in	
00:05	10 min		Welcome We are in The NAME and welcome everyone. We are ... Tech brief on how to navigate Zoom and etiquette: + Turn off phone, email and other messenger apps + Be present here	Organisation/ Facilitators

00:05	10 min		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Be patient, we are in the Zoomiverse and things can go wrong + Listen deeply to the people sharing and speaking + Speak with intention when you are asking questions and are sharing + We invite you to use the chat for questions + Use the raise your hand function if you want to say something <p>Check-In</p> <p>To save time we will let everyone post their name, role and location in the chat.</p> <p><i>Your Name, location and field of research.</i></p>	Organisation/ Facilitators
00:15	10 min		<p>Intro Today</p> <p>Brief of the Programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Urgent questions <p>Brief on StoryMatcher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Urgent questions 	Organisation Facilitators

Approx timing	Duration	Session	Topics to be covered	Who
00:25	10 min		<p>Intro to Workshop</p> <p>Explaining the flow</p> <p>Sharing the Prompt in the chat.</p> <p>Asking for consent to record the breakout rooms</p> <p>Short space for urgent questions</p> <p>Collective body scan and time to think before jumping into the breakout room</p>	Facilitators
00:35	30 min	Breakouts	Story Sharing in Breakouts	Hosts
01:05	10 min	Listening back	How was this experience for you?	Facilitators
01:15	10 min	Presenting program	More detailed intro to the programme	Organisation
01:25	10 min	Q&A	Space for questions about today and the programme	Organisation / Facilitators
01:30	5 min	Closing	Reference to application and possible ways to connect.	Organisation / Facilitators

Breakout host guide

Number of Participants

3 or 4 people in a breakout room.

Welcome

Welcome participants and introduce yourself.

Remind them briefly of the task for the next 30 mins:

Recording

At the beginning of the session, ask for permission to record the stories

- Explain that the recordings are only for us so we can add their story to the story bank. It will be edited for brevity and to be used in the analysis. All this in a way that their personal identity will not be revealed.
- Start the recording on your computer and record the verbal consent of the participants.

Instructions:

Storytellers: Prompt people to prepare their story. “Remember a moment in the last month or year when you felt somewhat jubilant because you had achieved something special, or had overcome something difficult. Just one of the many moments ...

Reflect on what you did, what others did, the conditions for the whole thing to happen, what has become possible through your success...

- (paste these questions into the chat)
- Focus the stories on their work context (we need stories from this context)

Listeners: Before the 1st story is told, instruct the listening. People should listen to the story with attention and be able to summarize the deeper lesson or learning they take from it in one or two sentences.

After a story is told, let the listeners BRIEFLY share their insights, then move on to the next story.

Reflecting Back - 1 liner of the essence of what they learnt from the whole story.

There will be a message at 5 mins before the end of the session to tie things up.

After the session: upload the recording into the communicated G-Drive or send it via We-Transfer to ...

Important things to keep in mind:

- Depending on the room there can be

Tips and tricks for hosting:

- Welcome the participants with a smile and introduce yourself first
- the energy and feel you embody in this intro will frame the space.
- Remind everyone to turn off other programs and really arrive in the room.

Share Stories - 3-4 Min

Listening back - 2-3 min

Switch to the next speaker