

Power of Participation

Session IV: The Power of Representation

Facilitator Guide

The Power of Representation



Snapshot



Session Purpose:

To build awareness of the gender, race, and ethnicity makeup of the U.S. and the degree to which elected representatives do not reflect the current U.S. population and how that affects policy priorities.



Session Goals:

- To help participants become aware of the current demographics in this country and in GA
- To help participants become aware of the current gender, race, and ethnicity demographics in the U.S. Congress and the GA General Assembly
- To allow the group to identify the issues and priorities that are most important to them
- To allow the group to see the relationship between their agenda and the agendas of the Trump Administration and the GA General Assembly
- To increase awareness that voting matters, and that the more that people like us vote the more likely it is that we'll be able to elect representatives that reflect our interests and are accountable to us
- To increase motivation and long-term resolve for voting
- To deepen the sense of connection among the participants, and from the participants to 9to5



Session Punchline:

- *For the most part elected officials don't adequately reflect the diversity of the country, or the interests of people like us.*
- *If we want to work for change, and to resist the direction our country is going in, voting is critical.*
- *And we need to make sure more people run for office who reflect our interests and are accountable to us, rather than special interests and big money.*

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Prep & Set-Up

Materials/handouts needed:

- U.S. demographic statistics and representation
- GA demographic statistics and representation
- Top priority issues for Donald Trump
- Top priority issues for GA General Assembly
- Kim Schofield and Stephe Koontz
- Evaluation forms

Equipment/supplies needs:

- Easels
- Flip chart paper
- Markers
- Tape
- Sticky notes (lots)
- Fine tip Sharpie pens for participants

Room Set-up:






- Easel(s) with flip chart paper easily accessible for facilitator
- Chairs in a circle
- Work tables outside the chair circle
- Wall covered with flip chart paper for People's/Our Agenda
- Representative democracy definition on flip chart paper (covered)
- US demographic stats on flip chart paper (covered)
- Guiding questions (covered)

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Section I—Introductory Activities

15 mins





Key Components:

 2 mins	Welcome
 2 mins	Introduction to 9to5 (if needed)
 4 mins	Participant introductions (if needed)
 4 mins	Series and session purpose overview Review of key punchlines from Sessions I & 2
 3 mins	Group agreements and answer to any questions

Section II—Core Activity

60 mins

Key Components:

 10 mins	Activity I—Definition review
 20 mins	Activity II—Demographics analysis
 15 mins	Activity III—Develop people's agenda
 15 mins	Activity IV—Review elected officials' agenda

Activity I—Definition review (10 mins)

Set up

- We're going to spend the next 60 minutes or so taking a look at the current gender, race, and ethnic make-up of the U.S. and GA, and who represents us in Congress and the GA General Assembly.
- And we're going to identify the issues and policies we care about and whether they're being addressed adequately by our current representatives

 Uncover the flip chart paper with the definition of representative democracy.

Before we break into small group discussions let's look at the definition of the kind of democracy we have in this country—a representative democracy.

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Representative democracy: *A representative democracy* is a system where citizens of a country vote for government *representatives* who undertake legislation and lawmaking on their behalf. Authentic representation depends upon:

- Candidate choices that reflect the interests and demographics of the electorate
- Connection—the ability of the people to make their wishes known to their representatives
- Accountability—the knowledge that the men and women elected will act, foremost, in the interest of the electorate rather than in response to big money

➡ Uncover the U.S. demographics on the flip chart paper but keep the percentages covered.

- Ask participants to pair up and come up with their best estimates for each category.
- Reveal the actual numbers.
- Ask participants to comment on their estimates and how closely they reflect the actual numbers.
- Group discussion: Were there any surprises? Did anything particularly stand out?



Facilitator Comment:

An important thing to be aware of is that in 1965 12% of the U.S. population were people of color; today the number is close to 38%.

Activity II—Demographics analysis (20 mins)

Break room up into small groups of 3 to 5 (depending on # of total participants)

Explain the process for each of these discussions, which is:

- Spend about 5 minutes discussing each the handouts
- Take notes as you answer the guiding questions

➡ Reveal the Guiding Questions on the flip chart paper.



Guiding Questions:

- Identify 3 or 4 key points from the handouts.
- Do the gender, race, and ethnic compositions of the U.S. Congress and the Georgia General Assembly reflect the demographics of the nation and the state?
- How might things change if we achieved true representation?

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 (8 mins)

 Distribute Current U.S. Congressional representation handout

 (8 mins)

 Distribute GA demographics and General Assembly representation handouts

 (4 mins)

Informal report back key points from small groups to full group (Have people **very briefly** identify some of the things they discussed.)



Facilitator Summary:

- *It's quite obvious when we look at the elected officials at the national and state levels they don't reflect the current demographics in the country.*
- *Women and people of color are not even close to being fairly represented.*
- *White men in particular are way over-represented—especially at the national level.*

Activity III— Develop people's agenda (15 mins)

The People's Agenda – Our Agenda

Set up:

- Have a big space on the wall covered by sheets of flip chart paper, with the heading The People's Agenda
- Designate one area for the National People's Agenda and another for GA
- Hand out sticky notes and sharpie pens

Set up this activity by letting participants know we're going to be identifying the issues and interests that *we* think are most important and that need to be addressed on the national and state levels. We're going to create a People's Agenda that represents the interests of this group.

Individually:

Ask participants to think for a few moments about the issues they care most deeply about and that they would like to be priorities at the national or state levels. Ask them to try to think both about issues that need to be addressed on the national level by Congress, and also ones that can be addressed by the GA General Assembly.

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Ask folks to write each of their priorities on a sticky note—separate notes for each issue. When they've written all of theirs ask them to put them up on the People's Agenda Wall either under National or Georgia.

As a group:

Ask the group to:

- Cluster the sticky notes into categories that seem to go together
- Comment on what they're seeing on the wall
- Identify anything that seems to be important and is missing
- Comment on anything that stands out to them

Closing facilitator question for this activity:

Do you think what we've got on the wall reflects the priority issues for Trump Administration and the GA General Assembly?

Activity IV— Review elected officials' agenda (15 mins)



Facilitator Comment:

Now we're going to take a look at how well our agenda lines up with the priorities of the Trump Administration and the GA General Assembly.

Ask participants to go back into their small groups.

Explain the process for these discussions, which is:

- Briefly discuss the handouts
- Take notes as you answer the guiding questions



Guiding Questions

- *How well do the priority issues for the Our Agenda line up with the priorities reflected in the handout?*
- *Are there priorities in the handout that weren't identified in Our Agenda that you now think should be up there?*
- *What are your takeaways when you compare Our Agenda with the agendas of the Trump Administration and the GA General Assembly?*

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 (5 mins)

 Distribute Trump's 2018 Top Priorities

- Discuss
- Identify key points
- Answer the guiding questions

 (5 mins)

 Distribute the Top issues for the GA General Assembly in 2018

- Discuss
- Identify key points
- Answer the guiding questions


 (5 mins)

Informal report back key points from small groups to full group (Have people **very briefly** identify some of the things they discussed.)



Facilitator Summary:

- This will have to be developed spontaneously and reflect what people said during the activity.

 Distribute Kim Schofield and Stephe Koontz handout and remind people that we talked about these elected officials in Session II. Suggest that we need to get out there and elect more representatives like them.

Section III—Discussion & Punchlines

15 mins

 10 mins

Still in small groups:

- Identify things we can do build the power we need to move our agenda?
- Put your ideas on sticky notes – one idea per note
- Post them on the wall

Full group:

- Ask everyone to get up and look at everything that's been posted
- Ask for quick comments/reflections

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Individually:

Go around the group and ask everyone to identify one or more things that they see up there (or something they think of on their own) that they'd be willing and able to do.

 5 mins



Facilitator Punchlines

Core Session Punchlines

- For the most part elected officials don't adequately reflect the diversity of the country, or the interests of people like us.
- If we want to work for change, and to resist the direction our country is going in, voting is critical.
- And we need to make sure more people run for office who reflect our interests and are accountable to us, rather than special interests and big money.



Closing Comments by Facilitator

Our votes, and the votes of people like us, can make a huge difference. We need to get out and vote and persuade others to vote too!



Closing Questions (Raise Hands)



- Do you plan to vote more regularly in the future?
- Are you interested in participating in other 9to5 activities?



Section IV—Reflections & Evaluation

10 mins

Key Components:

 5 mins	Reflections/feedback from participants
 5 mins	Fill out evaluation forms