

Collaborative Monsters

Facilitator's Guide

What

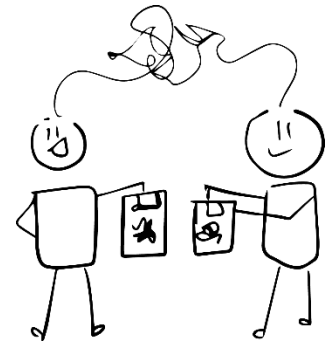
Collaborative Monsters is a design warm-up activity in which participants work together to quickly create a collaborative visualization of a monster which they will then craft an identity for.

Duration: 10-20 minutes

When

This warm-up works well when you need to scaffold any of the following behaviours or concepts:

- Drawing or sketching to communicate quickly and without worrying about perfection
- Building on the ideas and strengths of others
- Thinking quickly/not overthinking
- Encouraging creativity through imagination and storytelling
- Courage to be a bit silly/vulnerable in front of colleagues
- General laughter and teambuilding



How

Supplies required by facilitator:

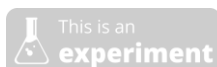
- Per individual: 1 piece of paper, clipboard or flat surface, coloured marker
- Per facilitator: whiteboard or flipchart paper and corresponding marker

Step 1: Start your monsters

- Have everyone write their name on their paper
- Then have everyone practice passing their board one to the right (this step is key as it is inevitably the hardest part to coordinate once the activity is in progress)
- Have participants reclaim their board and then quickly draw one small feature of a monster on their paper (eg. eye, leg, antenna, tooth) and then pass their board to the right

Step 2: Do the Monster Mash (pass and repeat)

- Have the next participant add another feature and then pass again
- Repeat until the boards have made it completely back around the circle and have returned to their original owner.
- Boards should be passed every 5-10 seconds. You can speed up or slow down depending on how the group is doing. You want it to be fast enough to be a bit uncomfortable but not so fast that you get a back-log of boards at one person.
- Once their board has returned, have each person quickly (30 seconds) give their monster a name and an occupation.
- Turn the monsters outward and have each person share their monster creation.



This tool presented at MIC2019 by Erin Dumenko, City of Calgary.

For more information on this tool and how it is used, please contact civinnovationyyc@calgary.ca

Modifications

- If you have a small group (8 or less), you may want to have the boards go around more than one time to ensure a good sketch
- Try choosing other subjects to sketch depending on what kind of work you are scaffolding. Groups at the City of Calgary have experimented with neighbourhoods, houses, mythical creatures, among other things.
- Depending on the drawing object that you choose, you can use the debrief to introduce the work that follows. For instance, we often ask staff in our lab sessions to assign their monsters jobs at the City of Calgary and then use what they create to guide a discussion of the complexity of the system within which we work and how many humans must collaborate for us to deliver great services.

Debrief

- Once complete, have the group reflect on the behaviours they demonstrated and benefits they gained as a group from that exercise. Document on a whiteboard or flipchart.
- Guide the discussion as required to have group identify things like:
 - o Combining individual contributions into a collaborative effort
 - o Letting go of control and overcoming anxiety
 - o Working at a quick pace and quick thinking
 - o Being present and focussing on the task at hand
 - o Plussing ideas and being part of a bigger picture
- Sample questions to ask to guide the conversation:
 - o What behaviours did you notice yourself displaying during this activity?
 - o What surprised you about this activity?
 - o Where would you find parallels between how you had to work in this activity and your day-to-day work?
 - o What was the most challenging part of the activity?
 - o What were you most comfortable with? Least comfortable?
 - o How did you work through discomfort in this activity?

