



Fail Fair / Failure Panel

What it is?

Failure is quite possibly one of our greatest “missed” learning opportunities. Using a great deal of humor, and seven short rules listed under Instructions, share your story with fellow colleagues or complete strangers. The purpose, as borrowed from the World Bank, is “to draw lessons from experience and see how it may be useful for other colleagues who are working on similar projects and to foster more open dialogue among staff about how to identify and respond to project challenges of various sorts, in the hopes of making them more successful.”

When to use it?

A Fail Fair is most useful when the objectives of your meeting include sharing lessons learned. This can be used as the quarterly pause & reflect exercise, reserving 90-minutes for sharing and discussion or **part** of a meeting, such as a specific panel during a larger meeting. It helps to elicit questions and answers and is extremely helpful when onboarding new team members. TCI East Africa used this approach as part of their new staff orientation.

Instructions

1. No names (i.e. you can't talk about other people by name or directly name a project or organization).
2. No blame (you can't blame others).
3. No recording (including no webcasting, no blogging, no live Tweeting of identifiable information, no archiving of presentations on the Intranet).
4. You can only speak about projects you worked on.
5. Information shared during a Fail Fair **MUST NOT** be used to the detriment of any person, place, or thing. Trust must be maintained.
6. 7-minute time limit per participant – for either a panel discussion or a presentation.
7. Audience participation required.
8. Afterwards, produce a short (1-2 page) write-up on the Fail Fair, describing the activity conducted, learnings gained, and any resultant action steps planned, and include in the quarterly Hub report.

Key questions

1. *What went wrong?*



2. *What were some of the underlying factors that led to the failure?*

3. *What would you do differently if you could?*

4. *What advice would you give someone else facing similar challenges?*