

OPPOSE

Suggesting Alternatives



Suggesting alternatives is one of the Oppose style behaviors in the Sphere of Influence 360°.

Sometimes the first option isn't the best. To ensure all possibilities are considered, it can be useful to indicate alternative information, ideas, opinions, views, plans, and suggestions. This way, everybody can see the big picture.



“If you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change.”

- Wayne Dyer

Exercise 1: Generating alternatives

Reflect on a situation where a manager, employee, or colleague brought forward an idea, opinion, view, plan or suggestion. Write it down in the table below.

- Then write down a maximum of 5 possible alternatives for this idea, opinion, view, plan, or suggestion. Take some time to come up with as many alternatives as possible.

Their idea, opinion, view, plan or suggestion:



Possible alternatives for this idea, opinion, view, plan or suggestion:



Exercise 2: Opening the door

Timing and dosage are very important when suggesting alternatives. Before you offer others your suggestions, it is wise to assess and verify whether they are open to this.

Step 1: Assess the situation

Ask yourself:

- Is it the right time to suggest alternatives?
- Is the matter still relevant?
- Do you think your conversation partner is open to hearing your alternatives?
- Is now the right time to discuss alternatives (e.g., no deadlines, no other more urgent issues, etc.)?
- Is there enough time to discuss the different alternatives?

If the answer to one of the questions above is NO, you should consider keeping your suggestions to yourself. If you believe that it is the right time to share, or you are in doubt, continue with **Step 2**.

Step 2: Ask directly

As well as evaluating the situation by yourself, it is always good to check whether your conversation partners are open to alternatives. Just ask them directly!

“Can I suggest some alternatives?”

If their answer is **no**, it is wise to keep your ideas, opinions, views, plans or suggestions to yourself.

If they would like to hear your input, share the ideas, opinions, views, plans, or suggestions you listed in **Exercise 1**.

Evaluation:

How did your attempt to generate and suggest alternatives work out?



1



2



3



4



5

What did you learn? What insights did you gain?

What went well? What would you repeat?

What can you do to improve your performance?

What is your next step?