

SAFE FOR THE OFFICE™



FACILITATOR GUIDE

ROOM SETUP GUIDE

The room you create shapes the conversations you get

Overview

The physical environment of a workshop directly affects how people engage. A room that feels collaborative invites collaboration. A room that feels like a lecture creates passive listeners — and passive listeners give you passive results. This guide covers every layout option available to most facilitators, when to use each one, how to adapt for remote and hybrid participation, and what experienced facilitators check before the first participant walks in.

You will find layout comparison tables, technology setup guidance, a complete hybrid room checklist, and a full pre-session checklist broken into three-time windows. There is also a one-page Quick Reference Sheet you can print and take into any room. Whether you are walking into a corporate boardroom, a hotel conference suite, or a repurposed break room, this guide gives you the tools to make the space work for you — not against you. Practical throughout. No theory for theory's sake.

NAVIGATION

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The Room Is Never Neutral

Most facilitators spend a lot of time thinking about what they are going to say. They prepare their content, rehearse their transitions, and anticipate the questions they might get. All that matters.

But the best facilitators also think carefully — sometimes obsessively — about where people are going to sit. Because the room is not a backdrop. It is an active participant in every session you run.

Think about the last time you walked into a room that had been set up with chairs in rows, all facing a screen at the front. You probably sat down and waited. You may have reached for your phone. Without anyone saying a word, the room told you: *You are the audience. Someone is going to present to you.* Now think about walking into a room where chairs were arranged in a circle, a flip chart was already uncapped in the corner, and sticky notes were fanned out on each table. That room told you something completely different: *You are expected to contribute. This is going to be a conversation.*

That is the power of the physical environment. It sets expectations before you have said a single word. It communicates formality or openness, hierarchy or equality, passive reception or active participation. And for a Safe For The Office™ session — where the entire point is candid, psychologically safe conversation — that environment matters enormously.

The good news is that room setup is entirely learnable. You do not need a design background or a large budget. You need intention. You need to walk into the space before anyone else does, ask yourself what kind of conversation you want, and then arrange the room to support that goal. This guide will show you exactly how to do that, layout by layout, detail by detail.

Whether you are working with a purpose-built training room, a borrowed boardroom, a hotel breakout suite, or a conference room that someone forgot to rebook — you can shape it. You may not be able to control everything, but you can control more than you think. Let's start with the fundamentals.

How Layout Shapes Behaviour

The Room Sends a Message Before You Speak

Every room communicates. The height of the ceilings, the position of the chairs, the presence or absence of a front-of-room focal point — all of it is read instantly by participants, usually below the level of conscious awareness. They walk in, scan the space, and within seconds have formed an expectation about what this session is going to feel like. Your job is to make sure those expectations align with what you want to happen.

When the layout suggests hierarchy — a head chair, a presenter's table, rows of seating — people default to more formal, more guarded behaviour. When the layout suggests equality — a circle, no clear "front," everyone at the same table height — people relax. They lean in. They speak more freely. For a session built around candid workplace conversation, that distinction is not a nice-to-have. It is fundamental.

Layouts That Invite Participation

The layouts that generate the most dialogue share a few common features. Participants can see each other's faces. There is no single focal point that screams "presenter lives here." The facilitator can move freely through the space without disrupting anyone. Tables, if present, are not so large that they create a physical and psychological barrier between people.

- Circular or horseshoe arrangements — everyone is visible to everyone else
- U-shape — eye contact across the room, facilitator can step inside
- Cluster/pods — small group energy, excellent for discussion-heavy content
- Any layout where the facilitator is not anchored behind a desk or podium

Layouts That Suppress It

Some layouts, regardless of how well-intentioned, work against open dialogue. Theatre-style rows create an audience mentality. Boardroom rectangles signal formality and establish a power dynamic at the "head" of the table. Even a U-shape can go wrong if it is too large — if participants are too far apart, side-conversations die and the room feels cold.

- Theatre rows — reinforces passive reception; people are reluctant to speak in front of a "crowd"
- Long boardroom rectangles — the person at the head dominates, everyone else defers
- Oversized U-shapes — physical distance suppresses energy and spontaneous exchange
- Any layout with a podium — implies a speaker and an audience, not a dialogue

The Facilitator's Position in the Room (Where You Stand Changes Everything)

Where you plant yourself sends a message too. Standing at the front of the room, behind a table, with a screen at your back — that is the teacher's position. It works if you want people to listen to you. It does not work if you want people to talk to each other. As a facilitator, your goal is usually the latter.

Try standing to the side. Sit in the circle with participants during group discussion. Move into the centre of a U-shape to redirect a question back to the group. When you are not anchored to a spot, the conversation is not anchored to you. That is exactly what you want. The screen is a tool. You are not a screen. Step away from it whenever you can.

What Participants Notice in the First 30 Seconds

You may be surprised how much participants absorb before a single word is spoken. Research into adult learning environments consistently points to the same cues. The items below are noticed rapidly and shape the emotional tone of the session before it begins.

- Whether there is a clear "front" — and where they should sit in relation to it
- Whether materials are already on the tables — signals preparation and professionalism
- Whether the space feels crowded, comfortable, or too sparse
- The temperature and lighting of the room
- Whether a welcome slide or visual is already displayed
- Whether the facilitator is visible, approachable, and ready — or still fussing with equipment

Layout Options and When to Use Each

Below you will find a practical breakdown of the six most common room layouts used in workplace facilitation. Each entry gives you a description of the layout, guidance on when it works best, and honest notes on what to watch out for. Following the layout entries is a quick-scan comparison table you can use when making decisions under time pressure.

U-Shape Layout

Tables are arranged in three connected sides of a rectangle — like the letter U — with the open end facing the front of the room where the facilitator and screen are positioned. Participants sit on the outside of the U, all facing inward and forward. The facilitator can stand at the open end or walk inside the U to get closer to the group.

Best For

- Groups of 10–24 participants where discussion and presentation are both needed
- Sessions that mix facilitator-led content with group dialogue
- Safe For The Office™ sessions where participants benefit from seeing each other's reactions
- Any session where you want to balance structure with openness

Watch Out For

- U-shapes can get too large — if the arms extend too far, participants at the ends cannot see or hear each other well
- People on the same arm of the U cannot see each other's faces without turning — consider slightly angling the end chairs

If the facilitator stays planted at the open end the whole time, it becomes a boardroom dynamic; move inside the U regularly

Pods / Cluster Tables

Small round or square tables are distributed around the room, each seating 4–6 participants. There is no fixed front of room — or the front is lightly indicated by a screen on one wall. Participants face their tablemates. The facilitator moves between tables. This layout prioritises small-group interaction over full-group instruction.

Best For

- Larger groups (20–50+) where small-group discussion is the core activity
- Workshop formats with multiple activities, rotations, or small-group work periods

- Sessions where you want participants to build psychological safety within a small cluster before contributing to the full group
- Innovation, ideation, and problem-solving workshops

Watch Out For

- Some participants will have their backs to the screen — ensure any full-group content is brief or supplement with individual handouts
- Energy can become siloed at individual tables; build in deliberate full-group moments to reconnect the room

Avoid placing tables too close together — pods need enough space around them for the facilitator to move freely and for people not to overhear each other's small-group conversations

Circle or Horseshoe

Chairs — with or without a small side table each — are arranged in a full circle or a wide-open horseshoe. There is no table barrier between participants. No clear front. No head position. Everyone is at the same level, facing each other. The facilitator sits or stands within the circle, becoming one of the group.

Best For

- Smaller, trust-based groups of 8–16 where deep dialogue is the goal
- Sessions focused on psychological safety, team culture, or sensitive workplace topics
- Check-in or reflective conversations where equality of voice matters most
- Coaching circles, peer learning groups, and values conversations

Watch Out For

- Participants who feel exposed without a table in front of them — some people use tables as a physical comfort barrier; acknowledge this gently
- This layout can feel intense for participants unfamiliar with dialogue-based formats; frame it positively at the start

Not suitable for sessions requiring significant note-taking or laptop use; participants need a surface

Boardroom / Rectangle

A single large rectangular table with participants seated around all four sides. There is typically an obvious "head" of the table, which carries its own power dynamic. The facilitator usually stands at one end. This is the default layout in most corporate environments and the one you are most likely to walk into when no one has given setup instructions.

Best For

- Smaller groups of 8–14 where the table is not too long
- Decision-making sessions, planning meetings, or any format where documents are being reviewed together
- Contexts where the organisational culture expects formality and a departure from it would feel jarring

Watch Out For

- The person at the head of the table will be perceived as the authority — even if that is not your intention as facilitator; consider sitting among participants rather than at the head
- Long tables create communication barriers; participants at opposite ends may struggle to hear or engage with each other directly

If you want genuine dialogue, this is rarely your best option — use it when you have no alternative and compensate with strong facilitation moves

Theatre / Rows

Chairs in straight or curved rows, all facing a screen and presenter area at the front. No tables. Maximum capacity for the space. Used widely for presentations, keynotes, and all-hands sessions. As a facilitation layout, it is the most limiting — but sometimes the only option available.

Best For

- Large groups (50+) where the primary mode is presentation, not discussion
- Opening plenaries before breaking into smaller facilitated groups
- Sessions where content delivery outweighs interaction — town halls, briefings, keynotes

Watch Out For

- Do not attempt deep facilitation in theatre rows — participation will be minimal; pair it with digital tools like Safe For The Office™ so participants can respond via their devices without the social risk of speaking in a large audience
- Participants in the back half of a theatre layout quickly disengage; keep energy high, move frequently, and use the screen actively

If you need this layout but want interaction, use tools that let people respond anonymously — Safe For The Office™ works especially well in this context

Cabaret (Angled Pods Facing Front)

Like cluster/pods, but tables are angled so that participants can see both their tablemates and the screen at the front without turning around completely. A practical hybrid of the pod layout and the theatre layout. Common in hotel conference rooms and training facilities.

Best For

- Groups of 20–60 where content delivery and group discussion need to alternate throughout the session
- Full-day or multi-hour workshops that mix plenary and small-group work
- Sessions where you want small-table energy without sacrificing screen visibility
- Any context where the room has been pre-set by a hotel or venue and you cannot move the tables significantly

Watch Out For

- Angling is only effective if you check it — walk to the back of the room and verify every seat has an acceptable sightline to the screen

Odd-numbered tables or irregular room shapes can result in awkward "blind" seats; reassign those participants before the session starts

Layout Selection Table

Layout	Group Size	Session Type	Discussion Level	Recommended?
U-Shape	10–24	Mixed: delivery + dialogue	High — full group	✓ Strongly recommended for SFTO
Pods / Clusters	20–50+	Workshop / activity-heavy	High — small group	✓ Excellent for larger groups
Circle / Horseshoe	8–16	Dialogue / trust-building	Very high	✓ Best for deep conversation
Boardroom / Rectangle	8–14	Formal / decision-making	Moderate	△ Use only when necessary
Theatre / Rows	50+	Presentation / keynote	Low — use digital tools	△ Limited — pair with SFTO digital tools
Cabaret	20–60	Blended delivery + discussion	Moderate–High	✓ Good flexible alternative

Technology and Screen Setup

Where Screens Go (and Why Most Rooms Get This Wrong)

The single most common technology mistake in facilitated sessions is placing the screen where the room's existing TV mount or projector screen already is — without considering whether that placement works for your layout. Most corporate rooms are designed for presentations, not facilitation. The screen is at the front, the camera (if there is one) is above it, and anyone sitting at an angle or to the side gets a compromised view. Take ownership of this. If the screen placement does not serve your layout, say so to the venue coordinator before the day.

The screen should be visible from every seat in the room without participants needing to turn more than about 30 degrees from their natural seated position. If any participant would need to rotate their chair entirely or crane their neck to see it, that seat will become a disengaged seat within twenty minutes. Move the table, move the chair, or — if neither is possible — do not seat anyone there.

Projection vs. Flat Screens — Practical Differences

Projectors produce a large image, which is great for visibility in a big room, but they require a darkened environment and a clean projection surface. Even moderate ambient light washes out a projected image significantly. If you are using a projector in a room with windows and no blackout blinds, your slides will appear washed out and text will be difficult to read. Flat screens (TVs or monitors) perform far better in bright rooms but are typically smaller in physical size, which limits their use to groups where no one is sitting more than about 4–5 metres away.

- Use a **flat screen** for smaller groups (under 20) in well-lit rooms
- Use a **projector** for larger groups where screen size is essential — and control the lighting
- For dual-screen setups (facilitator laptop + participant display), confirm output settings before the session
- Always bring your own cable adapters — HDMI to USB-C, HDMI to DisplayPort — venues rarely have every option

Ensuring Everyone Can See — Sightlines Checklist

Before participants arrive, walk the room. Sit in every seat. Look at the screen from each position. This sounds excessive but takes less than five minutes and catches problems that otherwise derail your session. Check the following:

- Can you read 24pt text on the screen from the furthest seat?
- Is any seat partially blocked by a column, door frame, or another participant's head?

- Does the screen placement require any participant to sit at an angle greater than 30 degrees?
- Is there glare on the screen from windows or overhead lights?
- If you are using a projector, is there anything on the projection surface that will distort the image?

Running Safe For The Office™ in the Room — What You Need

● Safe For The Office™ Setup Essentials

- **A facilitator device** — laptop, tablet, or desktop — with a modern web browser and a stable internet connection. This is what you use to run the session and see responses in real time.
- **A display screen or projector** connected to your device, showing the Safe For The Office™ interface to the room. Participants see the prompts and (where appropriate) responses on the shared screen.
- **Participant access via room code or personal devices** — participants join using a simple room code on any smartphone, tablet, or laptop. No app download required. No account needed. They are in the session within seconds.
- **A reliable Wi-Fi connection for all participants** — confirm with the venue that the guest network handles the number of simultaneous connections you expect. A hotel ballroom with one Wi-Fi access point will struggle with 40 simultaneous connections.
- **A fallback plan** — know in advance what you will do if the internet goes down. Have at least one printed activity ready. Experienced facilitators always have one.

Whiteboards and Flip Charts — Placement Tips

Whiteboards and flip charts are among the most underused facilitation tools — not because facilitators forget to bring them, but because they place them where no one can see them clearly. A flip chart in the corner behind the facilitator, or a whiteboard that is only partially visible from the far side of the room, might as well not be there. Place flip charts at the front or side of the room where they are visible from all seats. If you are capturing group input in real time, position yourself to the side of the flip chart so you do not block what you are writing. Have markers that work — test them the night before or bring your own set.

Remote and Hybrid Participation Setup

Designing the Room for People Who Aren't in It

A hybrid session — where some participants are in the room and others are joining remotely — is one of the most challenging formats to facilitate well. The most common failure mode is designing the room entirely for the people who are physically present and treating remote participants as an afterthought. When that happens, remote participants become observers rather than contributors. They cannot hear properly, cannot see what is happening, and disengage within the first twenty minutes. Designing a hybrid room means designing it for two audiences simultaneously.

Start by asking: *If I were joining this session from my laptop at home, what would I see, hear, and experience?* Then build the room around that question as much as you build it around the in-person experience. This may mean sacrificing some in-room aesthetics or convenience for the sake of camera angles and microphone placement — and that trade-off is always worth making.

Camera Placement That Actually Works (Eye-Level, Not Ceiling)

The default camera in most corporate meeting rooms is mounted near the ceiling or above the main screen, pointing downward at the participants. This gives remote participants a bird's-eye view of the tops of people's heads. It is disorienting, impersonal, and makes it very hard to read facial expressions — which are the primary cues for emotional engagement in a conversation. Wherever possible, position your camera at or near eye level. A laptop camera on the table, a webcam on a small tripod, or a dedicated conference camera placed at chest height will produce dramatically better results than a ceiling-mounted system.

Audio Is More Important Than Video

If you must choose between better video and better audio — and sometimes you do — choose audio every single time. Participants can tolerate a blurry or choppy video feed. They cannot tolerate audio that cuts out, echoes, or makes it difficult to follow the conversation. Poor audio is the single fastest way to lose a remote participant's attention and sense of inclusion.

- Use a dedicated speakerphone or conference microphone placed in the centre of the room, not the laptop's built-in mic
- Test audio from both ends before the session — sit in the remote participant's position and listen
- Reduce room echo by placing soft materials (tablecloths, flip chart pads, jackets over chair backs) if the room is particularly reverberant
- Ask all remote participants to mute when not speaking; even light background noise compounds over multiple open microphones

Ensuring Remote Participants Can See What's on the Screen

If you are showing a slide or a Safe For The Office™ prompt on the room's shared screen, remote participants need to see it too — and "share my screen" is not always enough. Screen-sharing compression can make text difficult to read, especially at smaller font sizes. Use large fonts on shared content (minimum 24pt for slide text), keep slides uncluttered, and verbally describe anything that participants are expected to read or respond to. Never say "as you can see on the slide" to a hybrid group — some of them may not be able to see it clearly.

The Hybrid Sightline Problem (and How to Solve It)

In a hybrid session, in-room participants are looking at the screen (where the remote participants' video appears) while remote participants are looking at their camera (which is aimed at the in-room group). This creates two misaligned sightlines: no one is quite looking at each other. This is a structural limitation of current technology, but you can minimise its effect. Position the camera as close to the shared screen as possible, so that in-room participants looking at the screen are approximately looking at the camera. Encourage remote participants to keep their video on. And periodically direct the room's attention explicitly: *"I want to make sure our online colleagues feel part of this — let's bring that thread back in."*

Quick Hybrid Room Checklist

Hybrid Room Setup — Before You Begin

- ☐ Camera positioned at or near eye level, not from ceiling
- ☐ Camera aimed at most of the in-room participants (not just the facilitator)
- ☐ Dedicated conference microphone or speakerphone placed centrally in the room
- ☐ Audio tested from the remote participant's perspective — someone called in and confirmed clarity
- ☐ Remote participants can see the shared screen clearly — font sizes confirmed at 24pt or larger
- ☐ Screen sharing confirmed and running before participants join
- ☐ Remote participants have received the Safe For The Office™ room code and joining instructions in advance
- ☐ In-room participants briefed to speak clearly and avoid side conversations that exclude remote attendees
- ☐ A second facilitator or tech helper assigned (if available) to monitor the remote participant chat for raised hands, questions, or issues
- ☐ Contingency plan confirmed — what happens if the video connection drops for one or more remote participants

The Details That Make a Difference

Temperature, Lighting, and Comfort (They Matter More Than You Think)

You can have a perfect layout and excellent technology and still lose the room because it is either freezing cold or stuffily warm. Temperature is one of the most reliable predictors of participant engagement — and one of the most consistently overlooked. A cold room makes people tense and physically uncomfortable. An overheated room makes people drowsy and restless. Aim for a temperature slightly on the cooler side (around 19–21°C), as groups tend to generate warmth as the session progresses and as energy rises.

Lighting deserves the same attention. Harsh fluorescent overhead lighting creates a clinical, interrogation-room quality that works against psychological safety. Where possible, supplement overhead lighting with warmer sources, open blinds to bring in natural light, or simply reduce overhead lighting intensity. If your session includes video conferencing, check that in-room participants are not backlit by windows — a participant sitting in front of a bright window appears as a silhouette to remote attendees.

Table Supplies: What to Have Out

Having the right materials on tables when participants arrive signals preparation and professionalism. It also gives people something to do with their hands during the first few minutes before the session formally begins — which reduces phone-checking and social awkwardness. Keep the table supplies purposeful and uncluttered.

- Notepads or paper — plain or branded, one per participant
- Pens — at least two per person; one always runs out
- Sticky notes — two or three colours if you are using them in activities
- Markers — for flip chart activities or table exercises
- Tent cards or name cards — if participants do not know each other
- Session agenda — printed and placed face-down if you want a reveal moment, or face-up for transparency
- Water — always; coffee or tea if the session length warrants it

The Entry Experience (What Participants See When They Walk In)

The first thirty seconds in the room are disproportionately powerful. Participants form impressions of the session quality, the facilitator's preparedness, and the likely tone of the day before they sit down. Design that entry experience deliberately. Have your welcome slide or a simple framing statement displayed on the screen before anyone walks in.

Play quiet background music if the venue allows it — it softens the silence that can feel awkward when people are filtering in. Greet participants at the door or within the room if your group size makes this practical.

A room that is clearly ready — materials out, screen on, layout clean and intentional — communicates competence and care. A room where the facilitator is still moving tables or fighting with the projector when participants walk in communicates the opposite. Aim to be fully set up at least fifteen minutes before the advertised start time.

Breakout Space Considerations

If your session includes breakout activities, plan the physical logistics in advance. Small groups sent to find their own breakout space without clear direction will waste five to eight minutes navigating. Designate specific corners of the main room, named areas, or adjacent spaces. Brief participants on where to go before you send them. If using adjacent corridors or hallways, check in advance that the noise level and furniture are workable — an empty corridor with hard floors and no chairs is not a breakout space, it is a frustration.

What to Do When the Room Isn't What You Expected

It will happen. You arrive to find the room is half the size you were promised, the tables are bolted to the floor, the projector does not work, or the room is being shared with a catering setup that takes up a third of the space. Experienced facilitators treat this as a normal part of the job rather than a crisis. Have a mental hierarchy: first, fix what you can fix in the time available. Second, adapt your layout and activities to the space you actually have. Third, communicate honestly with participants — a brief, confident acknowledgement of the room constraints followed by a pivot to "here is how we are going to make this work" lands far better than pretending nothing is different.

Facilitator Tip

Always arrive at least 60 minutes early. Not 30 — 60. The extra time is almost never wasted, and when it is, you get a calm start. When it is needed, you are grateful for every minute of it.

Room Setup Checklist

Use these three checklists to structure your pre-session setup. Print this page and work through it systematically. The goal is to be 100% ready — technically, physically, and mentally — before the first participant arrives.

60 Minutes Before — The Room

- ☐ Room layout confirmed and furniture arranged as planned (tables, chairs, spacing)
- ☐ Facilitator device connected to display screen or projector — image confirmed on screen
- ☐ Screen visible and readable from all seats — walked the room and checked sightlines
- ☐ Safe For The Office™ session loaded and room code confirmed — tested on a second device
- ☐ Wi-Fi connection confirmed and password available to share with participants
- ☐ Audio equipment tested — conference mic or speakerphone confirmed working
- ☐ For hybrid sessions: camera positioned at eye level, remote test call completed
- ☐ Whiteboard clean and markers tested; flip chart pages fresh and ready
- ☐ Temperature checked and adjusted; lighting set to appropriate level
- ☐ Breakout areas identified and (if needed) set up with chairs and materials

30 Minutes Before — The Details

- ☐ Table materials laid out — notepads, pens, sticky notes, markers at every seat
- ☐ Printed agendas or handouts placed on tables (face-down or face-up as planned)
- ☐ Name tents or name badges set out if participants do not know each other
- ☐ Water, coffee, or refreshments available and accessible
- ☐ Welcome slide displayed on screen — session title, facilitator name, any relevant instructions
- ☐ Background music playing if using (device and audio routing confirmed)
- ☐ Facilitator notes, run sheet, and timing guide personally reviewed — you know what comes first
- ☐ Room access confirmed — doors unlocked, any sign-in tables or directional signage in place

5 Minutes Before — You Are Ready

- ☐ Final walk-around completed — every seat has what it needs, nothing is out of place
- ☐ Tech confirmed one final time — screen on, session loaded, device plugged in and charging
- ☐ You are positioned in the room (not behind a device or at a table) to welcome participants as they arrive
- ☐ First activity or icebreaker ready in your mind — you know exactly how you are opening the session
- ☐ Phone on silent; personal distractions set aside — you are present and ready to facilitate

Key Takeaways

- **Arrange** the room to reflect the kind of conversation you want — layout is a facilitation tool, not a logistical afterthought.
- **Choose** your layout based on group size, session type, and the discussion level you need; use the Layout Selection Table as a quick reference.
- **Walk** every seat in the room before participants arrive and check sightlines to the screen from each position.
- **Position** yourself away from the front of the room during discussion — move inside the U-shape, between tables, or into the circle to encourage peer-to-peer dialogue.
- **Prioritise** audio over video in any hybrid session; poor sound destroys remote participant engagement faster than any other single factor.
- **Place** cameras at or near eye level for hybrid sessions — ceiling-mounted cameras produce impersonal, disengaging video for remote participants.
- **Design** the entry experience deliberately — have your welcome slide up, materials out, and yourself visible and approachable before the first participant walks in.
- **Arrive** sixty minutes early — not thirty — to give yourself enough time to absorb, fix, and adapt to whatever the room looks like.
- **Communicate** honestly when the room is not what you expected; a confident acknowledgement and a clear pivot lands far better than pretending nothing is wrong.
- **Use** Safe For The Office™ to bridge the participation gap in layouts — like theatre rows or large boardrooms — where speaking up in person feels risky; anonymous digital responses equalise the room.

Quick Reference

Room Setup Sheet *(Print this page. Take it into every room. You're already ahead.)*

U-Shape: You need both delivery and discussion — groups of 10–24

Pods / Clusters: Small-group work is the core activity — groups of 20–50+

Circle / Horseshoe: Deep dialogue and trust-building are the goals — groups of 8–16

Cabaret: You need pod energy, but participants must see the screen — groups of 20–60

Theatre: Large group, content delivery focus — use digital tools for participation

Tech Setup Essentials

- ☐ Facilitator device connected to screen or projector — image confirmed
- ☐ Safe For The Office™ session loaded and room code tested on a second device
- ☐ Wi-Fi available and strong enough for all participant devices simultaneously
- ☐ Audio confirmed — dedicated microphone, not laptop built-in
- ☐ Cable adapters packed — HDMI, USB-C, DisplayPort; do not rely on the venue

Hybrid Room Musts

- ☐ Camera at eye level — not mounted on the ceiling
- ☐ Conference microphone centred in the room — tested from the remote end
- ☐ Remote participants received the room code and joining link in advance
- ☐ Screen sharing confirmed — remote participants can read all text clearly
- ☐ In-room participants briefed to speak clearly and include remote colleagues

Room Setup Timeline

60 min before

- ☒ Layout set, tech connected, screen visible from all seats
- ☒ Hybrid tested, sightlines walked, temperature and lighting set

30 min before

- ☒ Materials on tables, welcome slide up, refreshments ready
- ☒ Run sheet reviewed — you know exactly how you are opening

5 min before

- ☒ Final walk-around done, tech confirmed, phone on silent
- ☒ You are in the room, visible, and ready to welcome participants

The room is ready. So are you!