

A whimsical illustration of a beaver wearing glasses and a red briefcase, standing on a large, stylized map of a landscape. The map features rolling green hills, a winding river, various houses, trees, and small figures of people and animals engaged in different activities like hiking, cycling, and boating. The background is a solid teal color.

OVERVIEW

Aim

Players gain insight into sustainable transport policies and can give their views. Researchers can learn about public opinions on sustainable transport.

What happens

After an introduction round during which players select the strategic goals that are most important to them (Phase 1), players take it in turns to choose policies from a selection proposed by other players (Phase 2), leading to a final set of 5 policies.

Duration

Approx. 90 mins playing time. Allow 2 hours to include intro, arrivals etc.

Number of players

Up to 5 per group.

During the game players select 5 Policies so 5 players is ideal so they each get a turn. Other numbers of people can be catered for by allowing people to have extra turns. A group of 6 could be catered for by allowing them to select 6 Policies and borrowing an extra set of 6 Goal cards from another copy of the game.

You will need

1. Otter Power game set containing:
 - Facilitator instructions card
 - Goals placeholder board
 - Goals scoreboard
 - Otter with stand
 - 6 Instructions cards
 - 5 Cheat Sheets
 - 35 Policy cards
 - 30 Goal cards
 - Foldable cardboard Policy Holder
 - A3 paper map
 - Coloured dot stickers
 - 2 whiteboard pens

2. One facilitator per group
3. A piece of A4 paper per group for the group to write their summary on
4. Audio or video recording equipment to record the session

Set-up

Set the game up using the diagram on the Facilitator Instructions card.

What happens

In this game players take turns playing the Policy-Making Otter. The rest of the group propose Policies and the Otter gets to choose. The group then explore the impacts of the Policies chosen. In detail:

- Phase 1: players are introduced to the game and select the 3 strategic Goals that are most important to them.
- Phase 2: players take it in turns to choose policies from a selection proposed by other players, creating a final set of 5 Policies.
- Phase 3: players evaluate the Policies, looking at their impacts on the Goals. This gives them a score for each of the 6 Goals.
- Phase 4: players evaluate the Policies, looking at the impact on particular places. This creates a map with the impacts marked on it.
- Phase 5: players create a summary paragraph or drawing of their plans.

Facilitator's role

The facilitator should take a passive role in the first two phases as the game will "facilitate itself", and then help to shape the discussion in during the evaluation of the policies (Phases 3-5).

Recording

It is useful to number the tables and then number each participant using the numbers on their instruction cards. These numbers can then be attached to wildcards etc. written by particular people. If recording video, the numbers can be on post-its on the table visible in the video.

It would be useful to set up a video camera to record the session (with participants' permission). If this isn't practical, take notes during the session or record audio, and photograph the cards on the table at the end of each phase.

PHASE 1: GAME INTRODUCTION (~10 MINS)

Aim

To familiarise the players with the game rules and identify the three Goals which are most important to the players.

What happens

Players are led through this phase by following the instructions on the numbered cards in front of them, starting at 1. These are as follows:

1. Introduction of the Policy-making Otter
2. Looking at the 6 strategic goals and prioritise 3 (individually, then as a group). These are placed on the Goals Board.
3. Introducing the scoring system on the Policy cards
4. Introducing the Synergies on the Policy cards
5. Showing how Phase 2 works and starting the game

Facilitator's role

- Intervene as little as possible.
- Answer any questions addressed to you but let the group figure things out themselves.
- Correct any serious misunderstandings of the rules if you see they haven't been noticed.
- When choosing goals, bring the discussion to a close if it is becoming less useful.

PHASE 2: OTTER POWER (~30 MINS)

Aim

To learn about the Policies available and their impact, and choose a set of 5 preferred Policies.

What happens

1. One player has the Policy-making Otter (in the first round, this is the player who had instruction card 1). This player can make any changes to the rules they like (e.g. swapping cards).
2. The other players each propose a Policy (or second another player's Policy), placing the card in the middle of the table. They do not need to take turns to do this.
3. Once everyone has chosen, the Otter asks the players one by one to justify their Policies or comment on other Policies.
4. The Otter chooses their favourite Policy and adds it to the Policy holder.
5. The Otter standee is passed to the next player and play continues until 5 Policies have been chosen.

Facilitator's role

- Intervene as little as possible.
- **Players don't like their cards?** Suggest asking the Otter to allow swapping. Remind players that they can write on the cards or use the wildcards.
- **Too little discussion?** Suggest that the Otter asks questions. Remind players about the Synergies.
- **Too much discussion?** Remind the Otter they have the power to make others be quiet.

PHASE 3: SCORING (~15 MINS)

Aim

To see the impacts of the policy set, compare them with the group's chosen Goals and potentially adjust the policy set.

What happens

1. You will lead the game more now.
2. Briefly summarise the Policy set chosen or ask the group to do it in their own words.
3. "Now we'll score this set of Policies to see what kind of park they might create."
4. Put the chosen Policies, Goals board and scoreboard in the middle.
5. Explain scoring (e.g. "Go through the Policies one by one and move the counters for each impact: left for negative impacts and right for positive impacts, and one space for each plus or minus. Where you have a Synergy bonus, turn the card over to see which Goals get bonuses. Move the counter one space for each bonus.")
6. Leave players to score Policies.
7. Prompt discussion where necessary (e.g. "Which Goals are met by your Policies?" "To what extent do these Policies achieve the Goals you chose?" "Are there any surprises here?")
8. Allow swapping (by consensus) (e.g. "Now you've seen this, would you want to swap any policies?").

Facilitator's role

- You will need to lead more than in previous rounds using the guide above.
- A goal here is to help the participants move from individual Policies to understanding the overall impact of the whole set.

PHASE 4: MAP (~15 MINS)

Aim

To start to visualise how the Policies might look in practice and identify impacts on particular people and places.

What happens

1. Introduce the map and point to key features (e.g. "This is a fictional park with large towns, small towns and remote areas, with a connection to a trunk road at the edge of the park.")
2. Give instructions (e.g. "Use the stickers or pens to mark the good and bad impacts of each Policy on the places and people in the park on the map.")
3. Prompt discussion and answer questions:
 - **Impacts outside the park?** Mark on blue area of the map.
 - **Mainly showing physical infrastructure not impacts?** Remind the group to think about impacts.
 - **The group are stuck?** Ask "Who would oppose or support this Policy? What impacts would it have on them?"
 - If the group mention particular people encourage them to label or draw them on the map
1. Allow swapping (by consensus) (e.g. "Now you've seen this, would you want to swap any policies?")

Facilitator's role

- Again, lead the discussion where necessary.
- Consider fixing the map to the middle of the table so one player doesn't "hog" it.
- Some groups find it useful to assign one colour to each Policy and use that colour to mark its impacts on the map.

PHASE 5: SUMMING UP (~10 MINS)

Aim

To summarise the chosen Policies and their impacts to share with other groups.

What happens

1. Players are given a sheet of paper and asked to write or draw a summary of the Policies they have chosen and their impacts.
2. In a workshop with multiple groups this is shared and discussed with the wider group.

Facilitator's role

- Encourage a holistic view ("What type of park have you created?") rather than a simple list of the Policies chosen.
- Revisit synergies if necessary and think about the impact of the Policies as a set.

Packing up

- Photograph any writing or drawing done by players and then wipe off the cards that have been written on.
- Label and file away consent forms, maps and summaries.
- Sort the Goal cards into sets containing one each of the 6 Goals and secure with rubber bands.
- Pack everything back into the box.