

# DIG.INT

## Digital International Trainers

Intercultural communication :  
Deep Democracy method

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Deep Democracy is an approach to facilitating **group discussions and decision-making processes** that emphasizes the importance of **including and considering the perspectives and contributions of all** participants, including minoritized voices that might otherwise be not or hardly be heard.

## Important characteristics

- ✓ Inclusive participation
- ✓ Wisdom of the Minority
- ✓ Roles and tensions
- ✓ Significance of emotions
- ✓ The edge
- ✓ Conflict and resolution
- ✓ Consensus and consent



no one has a monopoly on the truth



we engage in conversation to deepen our relationship



we are willing to learn together



we will occasionally slow down the pace of the conversation



we need each other to become better listeners



talking and listening are human



we assume that it will be chaotic at times

Here you find 1 technique of the Lewis Deep Democracy method for inclusive decision making.

It has five steps and could be used and improved in classroom practice.

①

### Collect all the perspectives and ideas

②

### Look actively for 'the alternative(s)'

Do not go to the decision making yet after step 1. Summarize the ideas first and ask explicitly for other ideas.

③

### Disseminate 'the alternative' idea(s)

Check this alternative idea among group members. This makes the space safer and avoids ostracizing the one with the alternative idea. E.g. '*Does anyone feel similar?*', '*Does that resonates with you?*'

④

### Add the wisdom of the minority

This is the step where the decision is taken. The group members vote for the different ideas that came out step 1, 2 and 3. If there is no consensus, the choice of the majority wins. Importantly, those who did not vote for that idea will be asked what they need, would like to add to the decision to go along with it as well as possible. The wisdom of the minority idea(s) will be added to the majority idea.

⑤

### Work with the undercurrent

The decision is taken but the work is not done. In this last phase, the *undercurrent* or things that have not been said and what lives beyond what is apparent or known will be explored. The Lewis Deep Democracy has different techniques to work with the undercurrent.

# More information

- Kramer, J. (2018). Deep democracy: de wijsheid van de minderheid. Management Impact.  
→ A book of Jitkske Kramer
- <https://diversiteitenverandering.wordpress.com/2012/02/23/deep-democracy-sabotage-en-terroristen-gedrag-in-groepen/>  
→ Jitske Kramer's blog
- <https://www.lewisdeepdemocracy.com/where-are-we>