

# Most Significant Change

The Most Significant Change (MSC) technique is a qualitative, participatory approach to evaluation. In simpler words, it's a storytelling and active listening exercise. The technique identifies common themes around the changes that participants experienced as meaningful and significant. The MSC is not just about collecting stories but having processes to learn from them – in particular, to learn about the similarities and differences in what people value, as well as the intended and unintended impact.

There are three basic steps in using the MSC:

- 01 Deciding the types of stories that should be collected (stories about what - for example, about practice change or health outcomes or empowerment).
- 02 Collecting the stories and determining which stories are the most significant
- 03 Sharing the stories and discussion of values with stakeholders and contributors so that learning happens about what is valued.

Resource linked:

## IONS MSC Example:

### Purpose

- To gain a deeper sense of the impact the four-day work week has had on your staff and your organization (through individual impact stories and group sensemaking).
- To capture the stories of impact to support communications and policy change for your organization and the broader Community Impact Sector.

### Session Duration

Plan for ~two hours (based on 5-6 participants. Add 10 minutes per additional participant).

### Preparation

In advance, participants write a 3-minute (400-500 word) story that responds to the following question (note – the written stories will also be compiled for your use and for IONS use, as agreed and consented to by participants)

**Looking back over the last X months (pilot duration), what was the most significant change (for you, your work, or the organization) because of the Four-day Work Week?**



## Follow up

- IONS will shareback all stories shared
- A narrative capturing themes that emerged during the sensemaking process



## Proposed Agenda:

Time	Activity
10 min	Welcome and check-in question
5min	Purpose and Most Significant Change framing
60 min <i>(add 10min for each additional participant)</i>	<p><b>Storysharing Circle:</b> Appoint up to four 'listening lenses' (what people are listening for)– i.e. listen for personal change, justice and equity, healthy workplaces...what else? Each listener will have one of these lenses for the story, and the rotate to a different lens for the next story.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual shares story with group (3 minutes)</li> <li>• Go round of themes emerging based on listening lenses (5 minutes)</li> <li>• Continue until all stories have been shared</li> </ul>
10min	Break
35min	<p><b>Group sensemaking:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What themes are we seeing emerge?</li> <li>• From among these significant changes, what do you think was the most significant change of all?</li> <li>• What does this mean for your organization?</li> </ul>
5min	Explain follow up activities
5min	Check out

## Most Significant Change Listening Template:

Looking back over the last X months (pilot duration), what was the most significant change (for you, your work, or the organization) because of the Four-day Work Week?

Storyteller's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Listener	Listening Lens	What are you hearing? What feels significant? What themes do you see?
 <p>Maria</p>	<p>personal change</p>	<p>Struggling with feeling lost, stuck, overwhelmed. Future didn't feel sustainable. Mental health challenges were on the rise. Four day work week felt like a Bandaid at first but noticed changes right away: more rested, less exhausted. Able to make personal changes to feel better and less stuck at work and home.</p>
 <p>Alice</p>	<p>justice &amp; equity</p>	<p>Culture of burnout {capitalism}. Resisting external pressures, and a "letting go" of the culture that is fueled by colonialism. More than a day off, it's the values and philosophy that are a core part of our organization.</p>