

# Activity 2.4 Taking Risks<sup>1</sup>

*“Whatever you can do, or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power, and magic in it.” –Goethe*

## Description

This activity shows how collaborative groups will often need to take risks as they explore an issue. All too often groups will be timid in their thinking. As a result, the groups fail to identify possibilities which are bolder and more directed at longer term possibilities. This activity will demonstrate how groups can embrace risk taking.

## Learning Goal

- Participants will develop possibilities for an issue which might at first seem risky but when explored further offer bold and plausible suggestions for growth.

## Practice (60 minutes)

<b>Step One</b>	<p><b>As a group, review the following statement</b> (or insert a statement relevant for your group topic):</p> <p><i>Institutions of higher education need to rethink their role and how they deliver education. What do you think the future university will look like?</i></p> <p><b>As a group, take a few moments to generate responses to the question posed and write them down.</b></p>	<b>10 min</b>
<b>Step Two</b>	<p>Next, <b>take a few moments to hear from each person</b> and map these according to theme on a white board or flipchart.</p> <p>Challenge everyone to think bolder by asking them to respond to the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How might your concept change if higher education is required to make this change immediately, within the next two years?</li><li>• How might your concept change if higher education were required by law to be available to everyone?</li></ul>	<b>20 min</b>

<sup>1</sup> **Citation for this activity:** Jack Byrd (2023). Taking Risks. In Hartman, Britt, & Byrd (Eds). *The Interactivity Foundation Collaborative Discussion Toolkit*. Retrieved from <https://www.collaborativediscussionproject.com/module-2-creative-collaboration>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How might your concept change if all colleges and universities took on a corporate partner?</li> <li>• How might your concept change if all instruction became automated and offered via AI? Or, strictly online?</li> </ul>	
<b>Step Three</b>	As a group, <b>re-imagine what a future university looks like</b> once you have answered the above questions. Describe your future university in a series of bullet points.	<b>20 min</b>
<b>Step Four</b>	<b>Regroup and Debrief.</b> Examine common themes. Which ideas were outliers? Imagine the risks that a university would encounter in moving to this new model. <b>Make a list of these risks.</b> Then make a list of risks that a university would be taking if it didn't move to this new model when other universities moved in this bold new direction.	<b>10 min</b>

## Reflection Assignment

- A key to thinking boldly is to be aware of self-censorship. Why do you think you might self-censor? What steps might you take to limit self-censorship in group settings?
- How might you encourage others to think boldly and take risks in group discussions?

## Practice Journal

This week, pretend that you are a *creativity coach*. Your job is to encourage others to take risks, think boldly. Record at least one example of how you encouraged someone else to play with ideas and push their imagination to a more extreme end. What was the outcome? How did it feel to be a creativity coach?

## Dive Deeper: Additional Resources

- Jack Byrd, "Encouraging Risk Taking" (Forthcoming)