

4 plus 1 question's



The 4 plus 1 question's person-centered thinking tool is powerful when used in lots of situations such as: review meetings, staff supervision meetings, team meetings and individual work with families. It is also useful when looking at a particular aspect of someone's life. The 4 plus 1 questions tool is a great way for people to come together and look back over a period of time and think about what has been tried and learned and then use the information to decide what to do next.

It focuses discussion on four main questions: **What have you tried? What have you learned? What are you pleased about? What are you concerned about?** The answers to these questions lead to the **'plus 1' question – based on what we know, what should we do next?**

It is typically used with a group of people who support a person, but you can use it to reflect on any situation. For example, you can use it at the end of a project to reflect on how things went. This person-centered thinking tool gives a structured way for everyone to be listened to and describe what they have learned.

It can help you to both, review how things are going and plan further actions.
It helps us stop what is not working and continue with the things that are.
It can help develop more detailed descriptions in each individual support plan.

What it does

It can help people to think about a particular challenge or situation and plan for change. Because the 4 plus 1 question's are answered by more than one person, it groups together learning from different perspectives.

How it helps?

It can be used to review a project or plan. It is a quick way to work out better ways of supporting people or working together.

How to use the 4 plus 1 question's:

If you are using this tool in a group then decide on the best people to invite – who has knowledge and learning about the issue? Make sure that people come prepared to share their knowledge.

One way of using this tool in a group situation is to write each of the questions on a large sheet of paper and ask people to write down their thoughts under each heading. It's important to make sure that everyone feels comfortable writing; let people know that spelling and grammar do not matter. If someone feels that they can't write, then someone else can write for them. If the person being supported is at the meeting then they must be supported to have his or her thoughts posted as well. If they are not there, then any best guesses that you make on their behalf must be checked out before action is taken. Remember, the person's point of view is central to the completion of all person-centered thinking tools.

What have you tried?

- In this section you need to describe exactly what you have tried. Make sure that you give enough details

What have you learned?

- Don't confuse what you have learned with what you are pleased about. Learning is about finding out new information that might be useful to know in the future

What are you pleased about?

- It's great to share and recognize successes. This section is all about taking time to celebrate achievements and identifying what's working. It's also an opportunity to take actions that will safeguard what people are pleased about. Particularly if it is an unforeseen consequence of what has been tried.

What are you concerned about?

- Sometimes it can be difficult for people to find an opportunity to express their worries about a situation. This section of the tool encourages everyone to think about and discuss those things that concern them and identify what changes need to happen.

What do we need to do next?

- After everyone's thoughts have been captured, look together at the answers and ask people "given what we now know, what do we do next?"
- Then develop SMART actions (who, what, when, etc) for what people decide to try. Ensure that what you have learned is added to the individuals support plan.