Practical Steps to Start a Broad-Based Discussion of Opportunity Gaps

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Broad-based

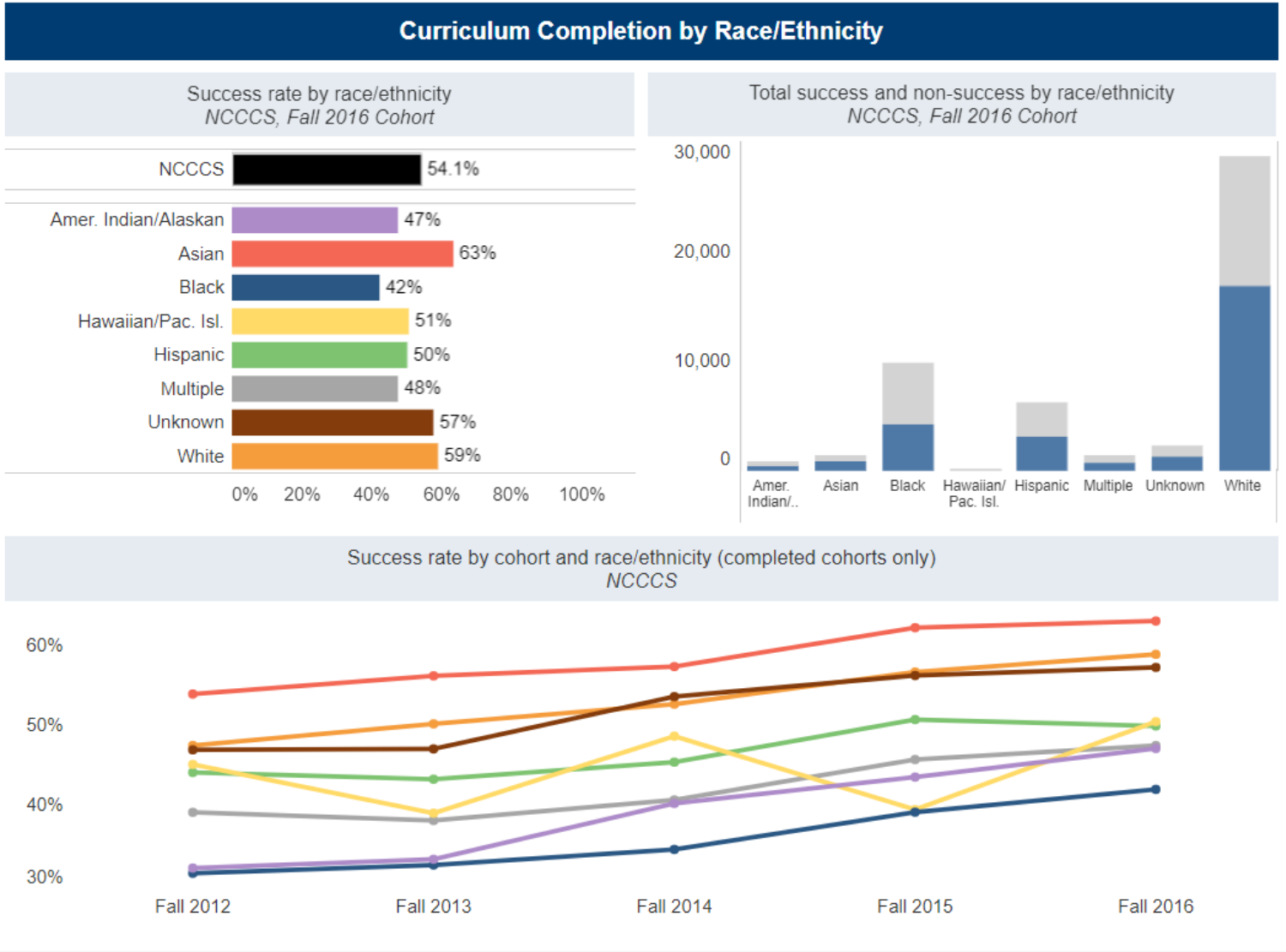
of opportunity gaps

in higher education

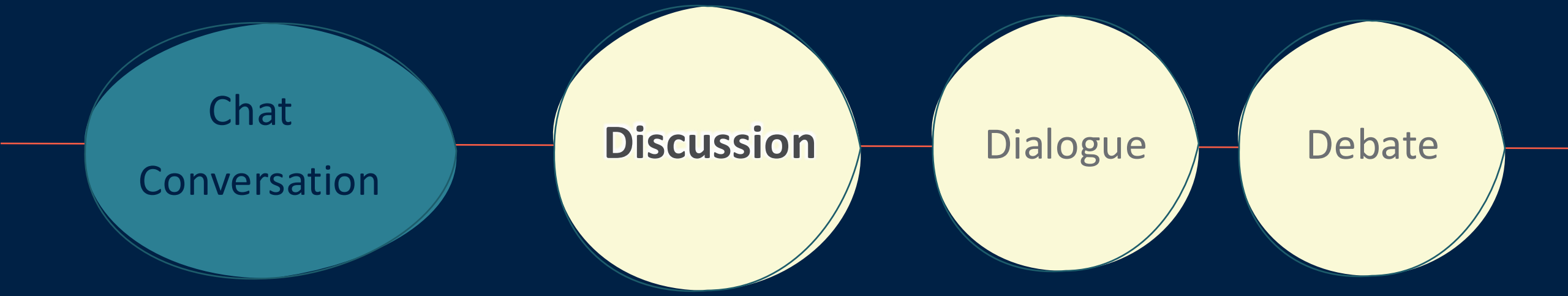
Discussion creates space

for equity sense-making.

Probably not this



Communication Continuum



Equity Discussion Agenda

Welcome

Purpose

Opening Data Activity

Circle of Voices Discussion

Closing

Follow up

Purpose

Discussion reinforces the interdependence needed for equity work.

A guided discussion, like this one, democratizes voices.

Successfully holding a guided discussion creates a shared, lived experience of how an equity discussion looks, sounds, and feels.

Opening Data Activities

Predict

Frame

Predict

Description: Participants predict service area demographics and compare predictions against actual results. The alignments and/or gaps help facilitate important discussions.

Descriptive Data for Service Area

Table 1. Demographics of Total Service Area Population

	Total Population	Ages 18 to 44 (%)		Poverty (%)		K-13 (%)		Partway Home (%)	
Buncombe County	257,607								
Madison County	21,746								
Service Area	279,353								
		Predict	Actual	Predict	Actual	Predict	Actual	Predict	Actual

air

Completion Rates

Prediction

Hispanic

Black

Asian

White

Actual

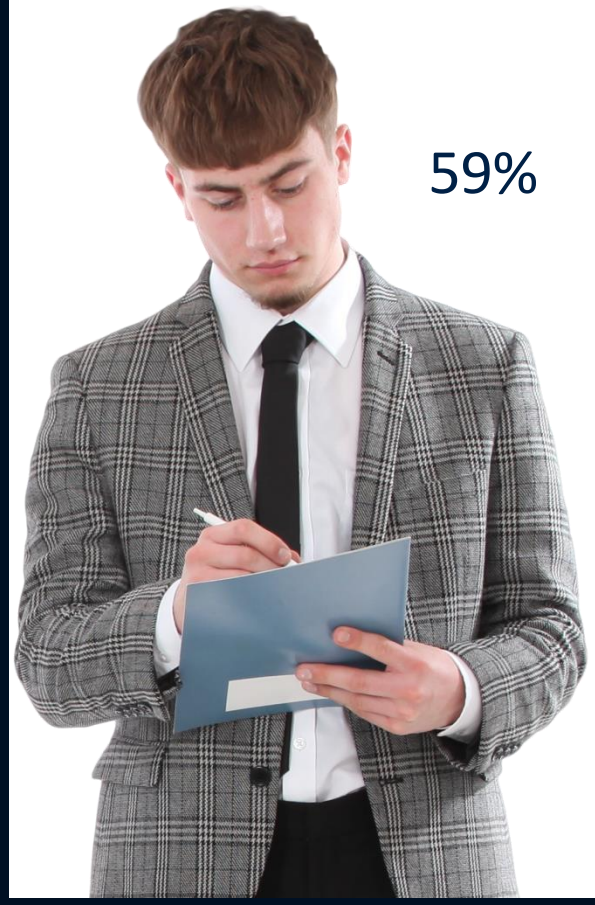
Hispanic

Black

Asian

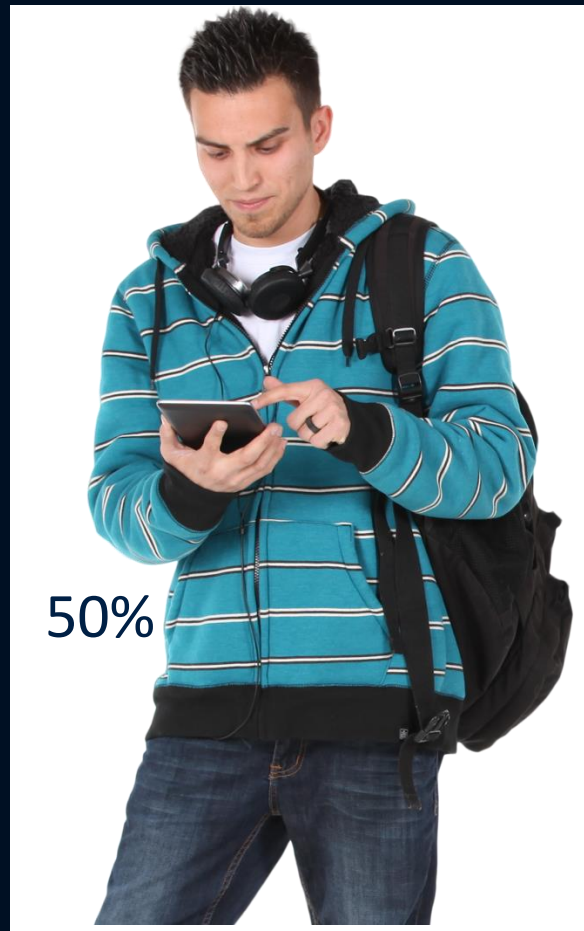
White

Why do Black & Latinx students drop enrollment and not return at a greater rate than White & Asian students?



59%

63%



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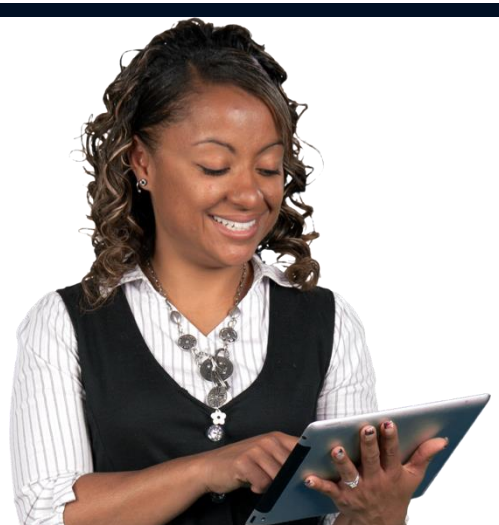

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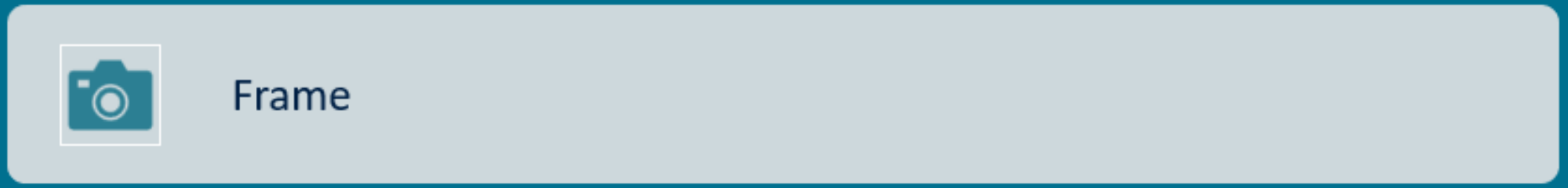
Opening Data Activities



FRAME

Handout #1

Guiding Question: Does the college's enrollment reflect the demographics of the service area?

Table 2. Population and Enrollment Trends by Race/Ethnicity

	Total	American Indian	Asian or Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	Black	Hispanic	Multi-racial	White
K-13 Enrollments	30,226	92	470	2,368	4,764	2,109	20,423
%	100.0%	0.3%	1.6%	7.8%	15.8%	7.0%	67.6%
Population Ages 18 to 44	97,068	403	1,917	6,430	7,668		80,650
%	100.0%	0.4%	2.0%	6.6%	7.9%		83.1%
Population Ages 45 to 64	75,294	337	986	4,249	2,718		67,004
%	100.0%	0.4%	1.3%	5.6%	3.6%		89.0%
First-Time Curriculum Students (Fall 2017)	525	4	9	41	68		403
%	100.0%	0.8%	1.7%	7.8%	13.0%		76.8%
Total Curriculum Students (Fall 2017)	7,092	45	125	375	651	215	5,681
%	100.0%	0.6%	1.8%	5.3%	9.2%	3.0%	80.1%

Notes: Totals are auto-summed based on the data in the columns provided in these profiles.The Multi-racial and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander populations are not reported for the First-Time Curriculum Students. The Multi-racial population is also not reported in the population estimates (Census data reclassifies Multi-racial among the other groups). Students with race and ethnicity unknown are not included in the data. K-13 Enrollments are from Academic Year 2019-2020. Cells marked "--" indicate unavailable data.

Frame Handout – Part 1

Population and Enrollment Trends by Race/Ethnicity

When I look at these population and enrollment trends, I am most interested in _____ (Select a population from the first column.) in _____ (Select a race/ethnic group from the top row.)

I observe that there is a total of _____ in this group overall. (Provide the total number for your selected population. See the second column named "Total".)

Frame Handout – Part 2

I also see that there are _____ (move to the right from the total to the # for your selected race/ethnic group), which is _____ % of the total. (Found in the row below the # in grey.)

This makes me wonder… (Complete this statement in the space below.)

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Circle of Voices Discussion

Closing

Follow up

Circle of Voices

Description: A structured discussion that ensures:

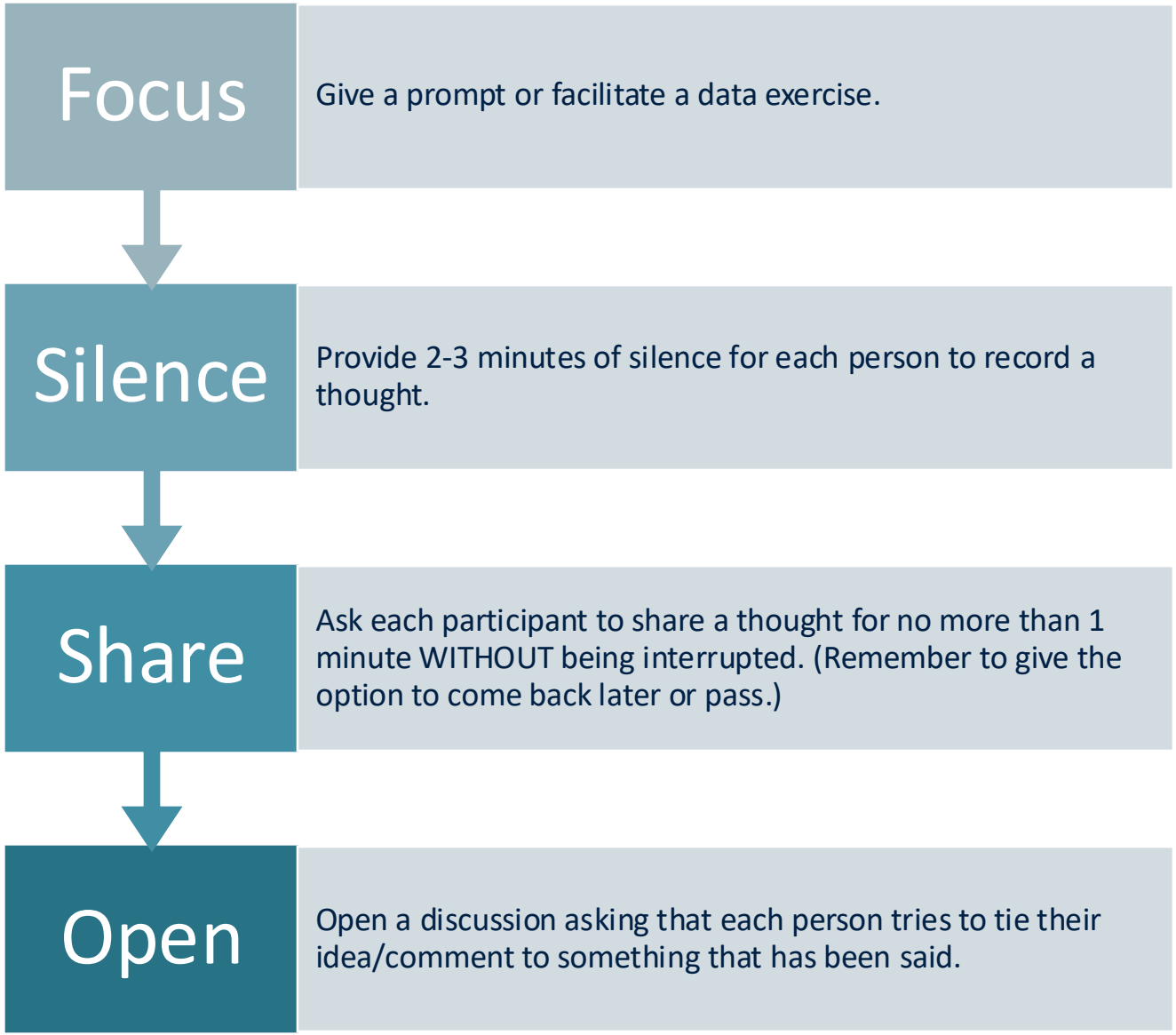
(1) each person participates,

(2) minimizes opportunities for one voice to dominate, and

(3) provides time for a focus to emerge, not be forced.

Circle of Voices

Instructions



Before Meeting

Do

- Plan time
- Clarify purpose
- Provide food
  - when feasible

Don't

- Start Late
- Go it alone
  - especially if online

air

Silence

Do

- Define discussion
  - ^= dialogue, debate
- Explain purpose
- Expectation to share

Don’t

- Forget thanking
- Assume comfort
  - with no noise

One-minute share

Do

- Reinforce agency
- Give options
- Take notes
  - even on passes

Don't

- Forget thanking
- Constant comments
  - especially if online
- Enforce 1-minute

Open Discussion

Do

- Give guidance
- Allow silence
- Pivot
  - when needed

Don't

- Forget thanking
- Force closure
  - Can't tie it up nicely
- Take the last word

air

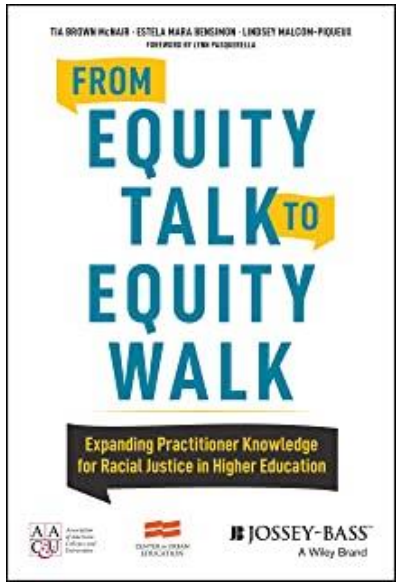
After

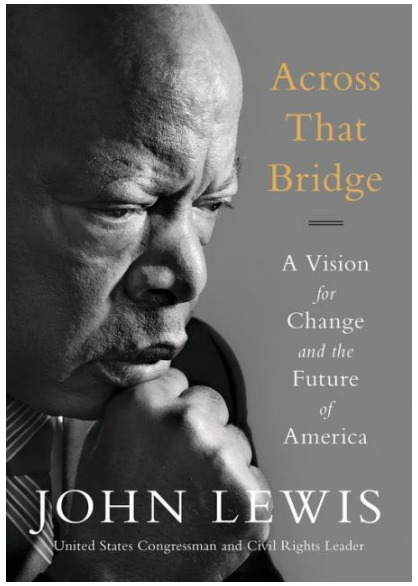
Do

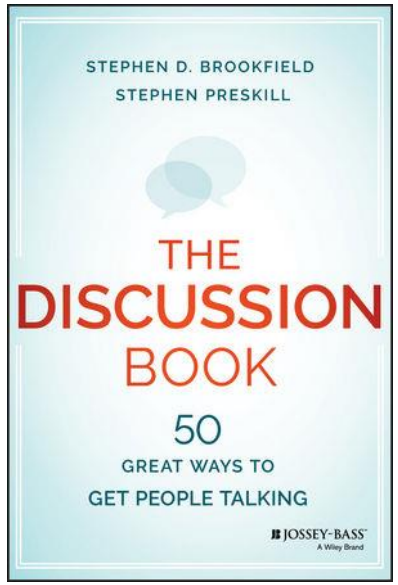
- Seek feedback
  - on the process
- Reflect & Amplify
- Connect on comments

Don't

- Quote others
- Summarize discussion
  - counterproductive







Resources and Inspiration

- From Equity Talk to Equity Walk
- John Lewis's last book: Across that Bridge
- The Discussion Book: 50 Great Ways to Get People Talking
- Black Violin's "Take the Stairs"