

Keep track of who wants to speak

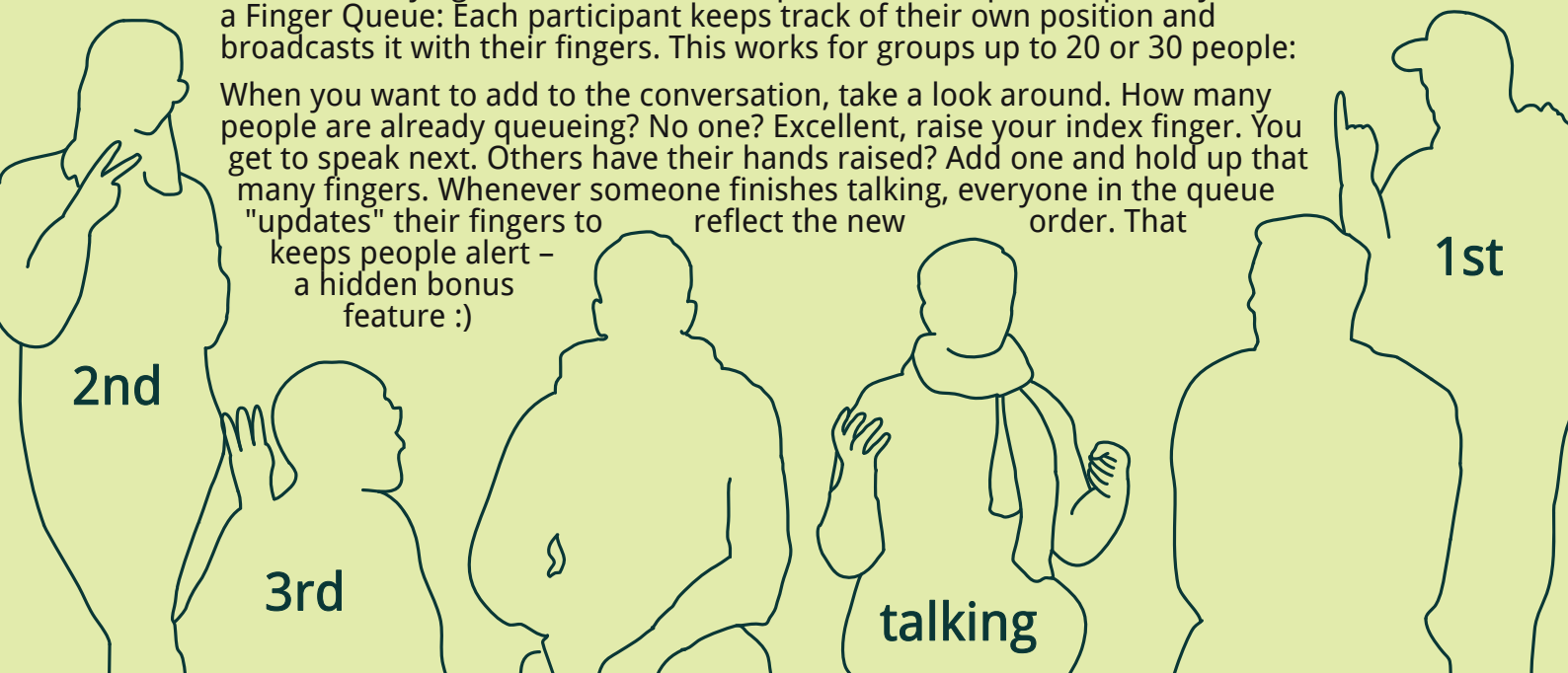
The bigger the group, the harder it can become to contribute. People that are trying to find an opening to add their 2 cents cannot listen with full attention. People who are uncomfortable interrupting others might stop talking altogether.

Just by keeping track of who wants to talk and in what order, frees up a lot of mental space and lessens anxiety. Participants can relax and let other people finish talking, when they can be sure that they too will have the opportunity to speak.

Self-Organizing Speaker List with the Finger Queue

Instead of relying on a facilitator to keep track of the speaker queue, you can use a Finger Queue: Each participant keeps track of their own position and broadcasts it with their fingers. This works for groups up to 20 or 30 people:

When you want to add to the conversation, take a look around. How many people are already queueing? No one? Excellent, raise your index finger. You get to speak next. Others have their hands raised? Add one and hold up that many fingers. Whenever someone finishes talking, everyone in the queue "updates" their fingers to reflect the new order. That keeps people alert – a hidden bonus feature :)



Additions

Some organizations agree on additional gestures. Two examples:

- Form an "o" shape to indicate an "outburst" – You just need to get something out and it takes less than 5 seconds.
- Hold the fingers indicating your position upside down – What you want to say relates directly to what is being said right now.

