

# Activity:

## Notice, Own, Cede Power



### Purpose

Adults and students will understand the four components of ceding power: Notice, Own, Advocate, Cede. They will also make each person's power visible to themselves and others.



### Audience

This activity can be used with a group of any size and can be done with youth and adults. In larger groups, discussions should take place in small groups.



### Suggested Time

15-30 min



### Materials

Flipchart or whiteboard, markers, sticky notes, pens or pencils, projector or screen (optional for presenting key ideas), handouts or slides with the two graphics related to power



### Pre-Work

Prepare the room with chairs arranged in small groups. Print handouts or create slides with power dynamics. Create a welcoming and respectful environment where participants feel safe sharing personal experiences.

Topic (minutes)	Details
Introduction (2 min)	As a group read this statement below from <a href="#">Equity Meets Design</a> . (See "Graphic 1" at the end of this table)
Small group discussion (5 min)	Ask each participant to consider this statement and write down one thing that was an "Aha," one thing that was "Affirming," and one thing that left them "Wondering." Discuss what they wrote in groups of three.
Independent reflection (5 min)	<p>Introduce the next graphic to the group. "This graphic from Equity Meetings Design shows 11 ways that power might show up on teams. The assumption is that in our culture, the characteristic on the top is given more power in most spaces."</p> <p>Ask participants to spend time independently noticing and owning what power dynamics they might bring to this space. Consider those that are listed as well as power dynamics that might not be listed.</p>

Topic (minutes)	Details
Whole group or small group discussion (10 min)	Share out. In a small group (less than ten people), remain as a whole group. Each person shares their potential power to make them visible. "In this group, my potential power comes from being _____." In a larger group, form breakout groups of any size from three to ten people.
Independent reflection (5 min)	Reflection. Ask people to reflect individually on something they learned from this activity or a commitment they want to make as a member of this team. After personal reflection time, sharing should be optional.



**Follow up**

Consider setting up a dedicated time for participants to continue to share experiences and support each other as they reflect on their power in relation to the group.

Plan a follow-up session to continue learning about and disrupting stubborn power dynamics.

If we have found ourselves engaging with or leading a design process, we are likely experiencing having unearned power. In order to cede power: **Notice** what kinds of power, power dynamics and power differentials currently exist and where they came from, **Own** our own (often unearned) power and the implications and impact of that power on others, **Advocate** for the redistribution of power towards a more equitable reality which includes first having a vision for what an equitable and appropriate power distribution is for a given situation and then **Cede** our own power to shift us towards that reality.

EquityXDesign

Graphic 1

## Make Power Dynamics visible.

light skin	rich	male	college educated
dark skin	poor	female	non-college educated
english first	gender conforming	straight	documented
english second	gender nonconforming	lgbtqia+	undocumented
young	able bodied	christian	
old	disabled	non christian	

Source: equityXdesign

Graphic 2