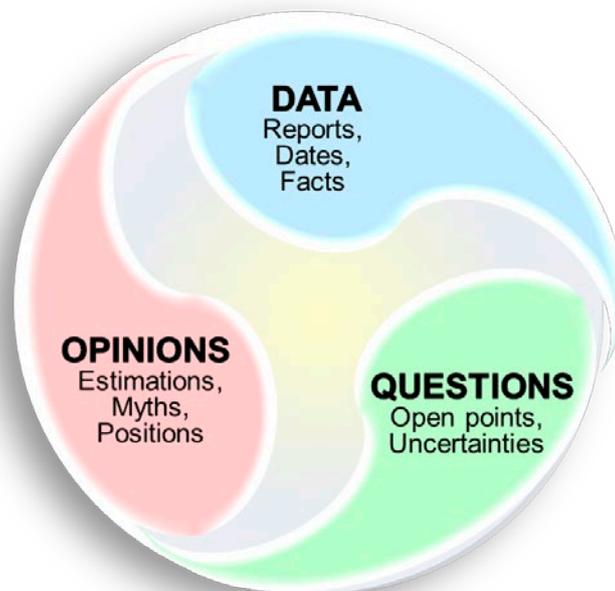


Information Exchange

By using information exchange participants provide each other information about a certain topic. This can take place in the beginning of a discussion, a workshop or a project as card inquiry, with several flipcharts, and other written formats or as an open discussion. Everybody creates this way the best common knowledge base. It is crucial to group the information into the following areas and to integrate similar statements. That way the participants exchange objective facts (data), subjective statements (opinions) and questions, obtain a common understanding and a joined evaluation of the existing Information.

Information exchange divides into three areas: data, opinions and questions.



- **Data**
Data consists of objectively comprehensive information that can be examined anytime and is relatively undoubted. Such information can be reports (e.g. status reports, investigations, and publications), historical or planned dates (e.g. project history, meetings, milestones) as well as generally admitted facts (e.g. definitions, regulations, common knowledge).
- **Opinions**
Opinions **cover** all statements that are not objectively comprehensible, but the respective person consider them as true and/or relevant. They cover estimations (e.g. personal evaluations, findings, and consequences), myths (e.g. cause-effects, prejudices, assumptions) and positions (e.g. personal opinions, assumptions, views).
- **Questions**
Questions are aspects that should be examined additionally (e.g. basic conditions, adjacent topics) that question the topic (open points) and/or express uncertainties of any kind (e.g. basic criticism, vague discomfort).

Externalizing the thoughts by all participants creates a common starting point in the beginning of a discussion. Everyone unveils the perspective of the other participants. In some cases, the point of views aligns to each other and potential differences are eliminated in this early phase. This facilitates an emotionless alignment of the initial situation (information exchange) separated from the following, self-interest driven debate.