

How to Host and Lead your own Street Wisdom event



First, a big Thank You!

When we were designing Street Wisdom, our vision for this social adventure was that it would be easy and enjoyable for anyone around the world to host and lead their own event.

It's an idea that's becoming a global movement.

So thanks for downloading these instructions. We're excited about what's possible. And we are glad you are too. And thanks, in advance, for running what we know is going to be a great experience.

The Street Wisdom Team.

Street Wisdom is a registered Community Interest Company no. 9848643

Before we begin...

Street Wisdom is a learning technology that has taken many years and many miles on many streets to develop. Because we want as many people as possible to experience it, we are offering it on a freeware basis. You can find a copy of the freeware license on our site within the Ts&Cs at www.streetwisdom.org/sign-up

We're delighted you want to run one of your own. We would only ask you to respect the following conventions:

You're welcome to run your own SW event if you

- let us know in advanced when and where it is taking place
- make clear reference to Street Wisdom as the source of the technology
- use our logo, Twitter and our website details on all and any materials

Note: If you can, try to experience a Street Wisdom event yourself as a participant before you lead one, or download the audio guide from our site. If that's not possible, don't worry, just follow the instructions – and get in touch if you need help.

When you run an event

- please follow the facilitating instructions. It's all very simple - but only when you know how. If you do make modifications or enhancements which work well please let us know, in the spirit of 'open source'.

After the event

- let us know how things went using the blog function on our site and/or links to your own blog. Pictures/video are very welcome. We consider your stories fair exchange for use of our technology. They help us learn more and will inspire others to take part.

The money bit...

The **community version** of Street Wisdom is offered free to those that take part; *you don't pay fees you pay attention*. The spirit of generosity is very important to us. We are offering it without cost to you and ask that you do the same with your participants.

We are well aware that Street Wisdom has commercial potential and many companies work with us on a **paid-for** basis. We create bespoke experiences for businesses and have a team of experienced Street Wizards that work with us to deliver them. Do get in touch if you'd like to know more.

If you are planning to use Street Wisdom as part of an event or programme where there is a **financial transaction** (eg. a fundraiser, as a coaching tool or part of a professional event) we ask that you contact us to arrange a fair donation – usually 25% but we are happy to negotiate. *The income earned from the professional use of Street Wisdom enables us to cover our running costs and keep the community version of Street Wisdom free.*

And if you're keen to learn from and connect with other Street Wizards – and us - please join our **Street Wizard Members Club**. You'll find more information on our site.

OK, a bit of general stuff about Street Wisdom

What is it?

Street Wisdom is an enjoyable, powerful and free way of using the streets to learn something new.

How does it work?

It's a simple idea, based on the proposition that the environment and people around us are full of wisdom we largely overlook or ignore. Street Wisdom allows us to tune into the rich stimulus and learn all that latent wisdom. As our strap line says - *answers are everywhere* – you just have to ask.

Who is it for?

It's for anyone who has questions about their life and/or work and wants some fresh answers. It is relevant for anyone tackling a challenge in their working life, figuring out what's next, struggling with the day-to-day stuff or seeking that inspirational breakthrough.

What does it cost?

There is no charge for the community version of Street Wisdom. At a time when education is becoming increasingly commercialised we wanted to offer something, which is completely free. We like to say it's a place where *you don't pay fees, you pay attention.*

So what's the deal?

We are offering the technology as free shareware to you and anyone else who wants to run a community Street Wisdom event. In return we'd ask you and your participants to let us know what happened and what you learned. Please post your stories, pictures and video files on our website and on social media. We think this is the simplest way of stimulating more people to run and attend one. You can submit blog posts through the password protected organisers' area on the site.

Who is behind it?

Street Wisdom is a non-profit venture and registered Community Interest Company (no. 9848643) conceived by [David Pearl](#) who experimented with the idea for several years before teaming up with fellow creativity honcho [Chris Barez-Brown](#), the rest of the Street Wisdom team – and a bunch of wonderful volunteers who are now taking it out into an unsuspecting world!

How to Set Up Your Event

When to hold the event?

While many events are held at the weekend, it's actually designed to fit easily into the working week where it can provide amazing stimulation and refreshment for all us busy folk.

To keep catering costs down and organisation simple Street Wisdom is designed to fit *between* meals; e.g. between breakfast and lunch or between lunch and dinner. Favourite times are 0930-1230 or 1400-1700.

And where?

Street Wisdom is designed to draw out the magic of ordinary streets – so it works pretty much anywhere. That said, we have found it works best where:

- there are enough people and activity to provide stimulus and allow the participants to disappear into the crowd. Hustle and bustle is good.
- there isn't too much traffic so participants are not dodging cars all the time. Market streets seem to work really well. So do pedestrianised city areas.

It is good to restrict your “playing area” to a few streets and to tell people if they reach a major road, they have reached the boundary and not to cross.

Where to start and finish?

While the action of the event takes place on the street, it’s great to have somewhere undercover to gather at the end to share what’s been learned. Cafes, restaurants, the lobbies of hotels, parks (in good weather). They can all work. Usually it’s worth having a word with the proprietor in advance.

You can start and finish Street Wisdom at the same place. Or you can gather in one part of town and end at a different gathering point. (Note: If you choose the second option, it’s nice to give each participants the name and address of the end point on a piece of folded paper and tell them not to read it until 15 minutes before the gathering time. The mystery adds to the sense of adventure and releases participants from the itinerary-mindset.)

How many people attend?

Street Wisdom was originally designed for groups of between 10-15 people. You can create larger events if you have some people to assist you (budget on one assistant per extra 10 participants). And if you want to run a really large event (50+ participants) do get in touch and we’ll explain how this is done.

What about the weather?

We’ve run events in blazing sun and driving rain. As long as people come appropriately dressed it doesn’t seem to matter. All weather works.

How to Run and Lead Street Wisdom

Event Structure

Think of it as a three-hour experience in 3 x 1 hour sections. In the first section we sharpen our senses so we can pick up the signals the street (and indeed life) is sending us, instead of hurrying past. In the second section, each participant goes on their own individual quest in the street - each asking a question they want an answer to. In the third section we meet and share what the street

taught us. There's more detail below, but that's basically it. If you remember Sense: Learn: Tell - you can't go wrong.

We've broken down the flow into the key steps we recommend you follow.

Step 1. Welcome (5 min)

Make it clear on your invitations where you are meeting and when. Get a list of people who are coming so you can keep track of attendees and latecomers.

Anticipate the inevitable delays by scheduling your welcome 10 minutes before the event itself is due to start.

Begin with a short welcome, including little bit about Street Wisdom and how it's structured as a three-stage experience (Tune your senses: Ask the street a Question: Share what you learned).

Explain that it's an opportunity to ask a question and see what fresh answers the street gives them. If they want to know more about what question they should ask here's the kind of thing you can say...

Any question you like. About work, life or both. It can be anything you'd value some fresh ideas about. Here are some of the things people have asked in the past

- *where should I buy a new house?*
- *how to solve a problem at work?*
- *how can I have more fun?*
- *should I take the new job or stay with the old one?*
- *what new product could I invent?*
- *how can I turn my hobby into a business?*
- *I want to learn something new – what should it be?*
- *how can I make more friends?*

- *what is the meaning of life?*

That last one is a good example of a question that's a bit too wide and general for Street Wisdom. To get the best results chose something that's specific, meaningful and you'd really appreciate an answer to.

Sometimes people arrive with questions that are personal and which they don't wish to share with the group. That's ok – if they'd like help from you in shaping

their question, just take them to one side and reassure them that they don't have to share anything they don't feel comfortable with.

Step 2. Warm Up (5 min)

It's always helpful to break the ice by helping the participants to get to know each other a little and get over the slight awkwardness that a group often feels at the start. We encourage participants to spend a few moments in pairs answering the following two questions

"Which is your favourite street in the world and why?"

"Where do you have your best breakthroughs?"

Step 3. Tuning The Senses (60 min)

This is the first phase of Street Wisdom proper where the participants sharpen their perception so they can pick up messages the street is sending them.

NOTE: From this point it's PHONES OFF or participants will be in danger of being distracted by lots of messages the street is NOT sending them.

How Street Wisdom tunes the senses is by asking participants to walk along the streets bearing a simple instruction in mind. The instruction will be something simple and is designed to heighten the participants' awareness of what is going on around them.

There will be four short walks – each of 10 minutes – each with a different instruction.

Participants do not know the instructions until you tell them. E.g. they are not written down. You tell them the instruction for ONLY the walk they are about to do. This means at the end of ten minutes they have to return to you for the next instruction.

That's four mini-walks of ten minutes each – 40 minutes – plus 5 minutes between walks to get the next instruction. Total one hour. (You can shorten this section if you are running a behind schedule by reducing the time between walks.)

The mini-walk instructions are:

Walk One (1st ten minutes): **Be drawn to what attracts you**

This is designed to enhance physical awareness, to engage the body in the exercise and awaken its inner compass.

Walk Two (2nd ten minutes): **Slow... Right.... Down**

This is designed to enhance mindfulness and clear the mental chatter. It's vital people really slow down. You can explain to participants that this means radically slowing the rate they walk, breathe, blink...even the speed their hair grows.

Walk Three (3rd ten minutes): **Notice the Patterns**

This is designed to enhance and stimulate the meaning-making part of the mind. An alternative you might want to try instead is *Sense the Story*, which helps participants see the street as an unfolding narrative.

Walk Four (4th ten minutes): **See the Beauty in Everything**

This is designed to create a warm, loving connection with the environment. We like to say if you love the environment it tends to love you back.

These four questions are designed to have a cumulative effect on participants who return from the walks with a somewhat altered sense of reality – and stupidly big grins.

Step 4. Street Quest

Now you have helped your group tuned up their senses, explain it's time for the Street Quest, the part of Street Wisdom where they ask a question and see what answers the street has for them.

Check they all have a question. And encourage them to share these briefly with each other before they set off on their quest. It's a good opportunity for the group to interconnect and the individuals to focus. If they aren't clear, you might want to repeat your instruction about the kind of question they could ask (see above). But don't put anyone under pressure. A general sense is more than enough.

Now give them the following instruction (in your own words of course):

Now you have your question in mind, start to wander. That's it. Keep the question in mind and just wander. There's nothing practical to do except be at [PLACE] at [TIME].

As you wander, use your sharpened senses to pick up anything that looks like it might be relevant to the question you are asking. It could be a phrase you see on an advert, a smell that triggers a memory or something surprisingly relevant you overhear in a shop.

Ideas could be sparked by things you see on the street and also people you meet in it. Don't be shy about asking strangers what they think. It's amazing what perspectives complete strangers can have. Answers are everywhere and so are teachers!

If nothing much seems to be happening, don't force anything. Just keep noticing what's happening. Sometimes wisdom doesn't shout – it whispers.

Step 5. Share what Happened

The final hour of Street Wisdom gives participants a chance to reflect on and share what happened in their Street Quest. We suggest you facilitate this by asking the participants to sit in small groups when they return from their question and ask the following questions in the following order:

- Q.1 What Happened?
- Q.2 What Did You Learn?
- Q.3 How can you use what you learned?

The first question encourages people to tell the story of their experience. This is the most fun for others to hear. The second encourages participants to conceptualise their experience and the third, to apply it.

If there's space and time, it's really nice to finish this session by asking a few people to share their stories with the whole group.

Many people take pictures on their smart phones and use these to illustrate their stories. If they have, please ask them to post to our site or Twitter (@Street_Wisdom). Our Instagram account is @street.wisdom (note the 'dot'). They can also tweet out on #streetwisdom.

Please explain the nature of the Street Wisdom 'deal' - free shareware in exchange for stories – and encourage your participants to share their experience on the website. The big red buttons on our homepage are an easy way for them to take action – where they can Share their Story, Donate or Run their Own.

One last thing – everyone who experiences Street Wisdom is now a potential Street Wizard like you. In order for us to spread this wonderful technology as far and wide as possible, please do encourage your participants to get in touch and run their own events. It's simple!

That's it. You did it. You ran a successful Street Wisdom event. You are officially a Street Wiz. Well done!

Let's Be Street Wise

People taking part in Street Wisdom are looking, in one way or other, to become more conscious. It is worth reminding participants to stay sharp and look after themselves/their possessions while they are taking part in the experience. Street Wisdom is taking place in public spaces where not everyone is as awake or generous as we are all trying to be.

Just to be clear, participation is at your own risk and neither Street Wisdom (nor its creators) will be liable for any damage or losses arising from the programme, or your participation in it. This is something you might also want to make clear to those taking part.

Thanks again and enjoy Street Wisdom

The Street Wisdom Team

Street Wisdom

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