Blind Object Assembly

Objectives

- To illustrate group problem-solving skills and challenges
- To provide a group with the opportunity to practice communication skills
  To experience EQ elements, Type preferences, conflict or motivational styles in action when used in conjunction with the corresponding assessment instruments

Trainer Instructions

Note: This exercise is best done at the latter portion of a half or full-day training. As the facilitator, you will pre-build a basic structure and bring it with you, keeping it concealed from the group until the appropriate time.

1. Mark out one circular area 15- 20 feet in diameter with the rope or tape.

2. Place the container of noisemakers outside the circle.

3. Give the team the printout of the "Blind Object Assembly Instructions" (at the end of this document) and review them.

4. Give the team their allotted planning time (15 minutes recommended). (An optional approach is for the facilitator to leave it up the team to establish the planning time needed in an effort to facilitate negotiation and goal-setting skills among team members).

5. At the end of the planning time, have the group who agreed to be blind folded step inside the circle and put on their blindfolds.

6. Reveal the pre-built structure to the sighted group.

7. Scatter the disassembled pieces of the object randomly on the floor within the designated circle. (The facilitator may choose to include ONLY the necessary pieces or include additional pieces to make the task more difficult).

8. Instruct the sighted half of the team that from this moment on, they must stop communicating verbally and can neither step into the circle nor touch any of their blindfolded team members.

9. The blindfolded people can talk to each other and ask questions of the people outside the circle.

10. Give the teams 15 -30 minutes to accomplish the task of constructing an object that matches the original structure.

Category

Group Problem Solving

Post Introduction to MBTI, EQ-i or other psychometric assessment tool

Exercise Stage

Basic stand alone, as part of a half day to a full day of experiential activities

Post-intro to an organization development instrument

Number of Participants

Minimum: 8 (possible for a small group to engage with this content— but the benefits of group-level interaction are missing)

Ideal: 10 -12

Time Required

Minimum: 30 minutes
Maximum: 60 minutes

Materials Needed

- A 150 ft rope or a roll of tape to mark a circle
- A selection of different types of noisemakers
- Blind folds for half the group
- 12-20 large LEGO blocks, Tinkertoys, or other easily assembled building toys (Two assembled sets of 7 or 8 LEGO blocks or Tinkertoys each is typically enough of a challenge for a team of 10 people).

> ### Processing Questions Specific to This Activity
>
> - In what ways does this exercise reflect your daily work?
> - What worked well – what are best practices – in getting the task completed?
> - Was there any confusion in communication?
> - What does that remind you of in a work context?
> - Were the blindfolded participants asking the right questions?
> - Did anyone micromanage?

Debriefing Instructions If Activity is Used After MBTI Introduction

Note: This is a great activity to see how Extraverts and Introverts manage issues around communication as well as how J and P issues surface around planning. This activity can highlight other issues around the Data Gathering Function and around the Decision Making Function.

1. Was everyone heard?
2. Was there enough "airtime" management?
3. Was there a definitive plan? To what extent was it followed?
4. Was there openness or resistance to new ideas or changes in the process?
5. Did everyone play a role?

Debriefing Instruction If Activity is Used After EQ-i Introduction

Note: This is a great activity to see how behaviors associated with many EQ elements manifest. Most commonly encountered behaviors associated with EQ elements on this activity are: Emotional Self Awareness, Emotional Expression, Assertiveness, Independence, Empathy, Problem Solving, Social Responsibility, Impulse Control and Flexibility. The list of questions to ask around EQ elements are numerous, but some common ones are:

1. Did anyone feel frustrated at some point?
2. Were you able to identify the feelings experienced and what was causing them?
3. How did you express or deal with that?
4. Did anyone dominate the conversation or speak incessantly?
5. Was anyone inhibited from voicing their opinion about how you should solve this problem?
6. How assertive were you?
7. Did people think of new ideas that had not been brought up before? Did they voice that?

8. How did your emotions, as you experienced them, help or get in the way of working together on solving the challenging environment of varying opinions and perspectives?
9. How flexible were you in adopting an idea and changing your views/emotions about it?
10. Were you able to approach the changing directions with an open mind or were you stuck on the "old way of doing things?"

Blind Object Assembly Instructions

TASK:

- To construct the disassembled pieces to look identical to the original structure.

PROCESS:
- The team has _____ minutes to plan before the construction phase begins.
- At the end of planning phase the team has _____ minutes to complete the task.
- The team needs to split into two groups of equal size.
- One group will be blindfolded. They will do the actual object assembly.
- The other group will see the pre-built object and facilitate the construction of the duplicate. They can see but may only communicate to the blindfolded group through non-verbal sound signals.

GROUND RULES/CUSTOMER REQUIREMENTS:

- The disassembled object's segments must remain inside of the circle.
- Blindfolded members are the only people who may touch the disassembled pieces.
- The sighted people may not touch or speak to the blindfolded people and may only use **non-verbal** sound signals.
- No paper or pencils may be used.

*You may only ask the facilitator 3 questions.

GOOD LUCK!

OKA