

Coat of Arms

Objectives

- To introduce and learn something about group members
- To kick-start group forming stage or re-norming for an intact group
- To aid reflection on the past or set goals for the future

Trainer Instructions

(Note: This exercise is best done at the early portion of a full day or multi-day program of experiential activities, or at the beginning of strategic planning or a group retreat. It is intended for participants to get to know each other on a deeper level in a structured way. This activity can be done in groups or as individuals. For a collective group, focus on reflection of past experiences; for individuals, focus on planning for future goals and strategies).

1. Facilitator distributes a copy of the shield shown, some pencils, and a variety of colored markers to the whole group or to each person. (For clarity, you may want to write the five items beside the compartments of the shield).
2. Instruct the team to reproduce the shield on flip chart paper and to represent their past experience (or future plans) in the five sections of the shield by drawing the following five items:

GROUP:

1. Your highest level of performance in this program
2. Your most enjoyable time during this program
3. A group logo that presents your best teamwork
4. The one thing your group is expert at doing
5. Something your group still needs to improve

or

INDIVIDUAL:

1. Your name (this is the only thing that can be written)
2. Where will you be or what will you have achieved in five years
3. Your ideal past time activity/activities
4. Your vision of ideal leadership
5. What you hold most dear to your heart

Variations: You can mix and match the above items, come up with your own, or ask the group members to generate a list of things they would be most helpful for them to know about each other.

Category

Group Intro/Forming Stage
Opener and Socializer activity
Launch of a multi-day program

Exercise Stage

Basic stand alone, as part of a full day or multi-day program of experiential activities

Number of Participants

Minimum: 2 (possible for a small group to engage with this content—but the benefits of group-level interaction are missing)

Ideal: 5-8

Maximum: 16

Time Required

Minimum: 30 minutes

Maximum: 60 minutes

(larger groups need more sub-groups, which takes more time, and the amount of discussion/process of exercise output is a variable affecting time)

Materials Needed

- Flip chart paper
- Markers

