

WHAT'S OUR FOCUS?

Team Building Cards were shared on a FUNdoing.com/blog post - March 9th, 2014. The behaviors and definitions are from Mia MacMeekin. With permission, they were put into a set of print-n-play cards by Chris Cavert.

FACILITATED OBJECTIVES:

Explore behaviors related to team building (those revealed on the cards), reaching consensus, appropriate communication, and healthy conflict. Explore concepts of consensus building, compromise, conceding, and team building – What is team building?

NEEDS & NUMBERS:

Copy and cut out the set of Team Building Cards provided for each group of six to twelve participants (see Variations for an idea on working with larger groups). For long-term use laminate the printed pages before you cut out the cards.

TIME:

15 to 20 minutes.

PROCEDURE:

Circle each group you form around a table, or on the floor or ground. Lay out all the Team Building Cards, face up, in the center of the group so all the words and definitions are visible.

Tell the group(s) that, *each large word on the cards is a behavior or quality related to working together as a team – using/focusing on these behaviors in a positive way might help you achieve the goals you have set for yourself.*

Feel free to adjust your introduction to meet the needs/objectives of your group.

Here is what I like to say:

Your objective, in the next ten minutes, is to choose three of these behavior/quality cards [adjust this number based on the number of groups you have formed] that you would like to focus on, or be mindful of, as you start working together on the activities I will be presenting to you. Please know that this is one of your team building activities, so consider how you are communicating with each other, how are you contributing to the conversation, and what attitudes you are showing your group. After any questions you have about the task, you can begin.

Icebreaker/Warm-Up

Activity Objective

Using a set of Team Building (behaviors) Cards, the group works together, at the beginning of a program, to determine what three behaviors they want to focus on as they start their work on the challenges ahead.

SAFETY:

Consider the emotional safety of your group(s) during this one. I don't use this activity with groups that have not been together very long, like a classroom full of eight-graders that are working with me at the beginning of the school year. I use this with groups that have developed some level of trust with each other and are willing to talk with each other and listen to each other's ideas and thoughts. If you present this activity too soon, there might be some "storming" behaviors you will have to manage.

FACILITATION:

After presenting the objective of the task, I sit down with my group (or wander from group to group if there is more than one) to listen in on their process. When appropriate I will provide some coaching around the idea of consensus and sharing talk time so that everyone has the opportunity for his or her voice to be heard. If I'm being the "facilitator" I will not provide any answers for my group. If I decide that being a coach or "teacher" is necessary to come to some sort of conclusion, I will provide ideas and/or alternatives for the group to consider so we will be able to move on into our program.

In the end, you want everyone in the group to DECIDE on something they want to focus on during their work together – if it's one, two, or three Team Building Cards (behaviors/qualities), that's great. If the group ends up deciding on something other than the behaviors or qualities on the cards, that's even better. Whatever they "own" there will be more investment.

OBSERVATIONS/QUESTIONS:

- What experience have you had making decisions with other groups? What's been good about your past experiences? What has been bad about your past experiences?
- How does this experience, choosing the cards, compare to your past experiences making decisions with other groups?
- What was good about the way you communicated with each other? What was bad about the way the communication went during the task? How are any of the cards you chose related to communication? What, specifically, do you want to remember about communicating with each other as you move forward?
- Tell me what you know about these three ideas/concepts: Consensus, Compromise, and Conceding? Where did you fall, as a group, within these concepts? How about, as an individual – where were you by the end when a card or cards were chosen?
- Was there any conflict during the task? What did it look like? What did it sound like? How did you/the group manage this conflict? When/If conflict arises in the future, what do you want to do about it? How do you want to handle it?

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- This was a team building activity. How do you think you did working together on this task? If it was good, share some specific things that were good in your eyes. If it was a bad experience, what things were bad for you?

VARIATIONS:

- When working with larger groups, provide a set of Team Building Cards for each group of six to twelve participants. Give each group the same amount of time to agree on one (or two) behaviors they believe will be important to focus on during their program (I suggest ending up with no more than four behaviors – cards – during a program since other dynamics may show up that will need the group's attention). After the decision time is over have all the groups come together to share what card(s) they chose.
- Provide some blank cards to write out other behaviors and definitions that might arise.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION GRADE LEVEL OUTCOMES:

(www.shapeamerica.org/standards/pe/)

- Middle School: S4.M1 – Exhibits responsible social behaviors; S4.M5 – Cooperates and problem-solves with a small group of classmates.
- High School: S4.H2 – Uses communication skills and strategies that promote team/group dynamics; S4.H4 – Accepts other's ideas.

21st CENTURY LEARNING:

(www.p21.org)

- Creativity and Innovation: Be open and responsive to new and diverse perspectives.
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving: Analyze and evaluate major alternative points of view; Reflect critically on learning experiences.
- Communication and Collaboration: Communicate effectively in diverse environments; Exercise flexibility and willingness to be helpful in making necessary compromises to accomplish a common goal.
- Flexibility and Adaptability: Understand, negotiate and balance diverse views and beliefs to reach workable solutions, particularly in multi-cultural environments.
- Social and Cross-Cultural Skills: Know when it is appropriate to listen and when to speak.
- Leadership and Responsibility: Act responsibly with the interest of the larger community in mind.

NOTES & ADDITIONAL IDEAS: