

Breaking the Code (Human Mastermind)

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Overview: In this activity, the group will be challenged to decipher the code in as few guesses as possible. The code is created and held by the facilitator. While keeping track of previous information the group makes a series of educated guesses, each hopefully getting them close to breaking the code.

Round 1 Instructions:

- Place 4 spot markers on the floor in front of the group.
- Instructor writes down 4 group member names on a slip of paper that corresponds to the spot markers on the floor.
- The group should establish a goal regarding the number of guesses they believe it would take to break the code.
- Once a goal is established, the group may make their first guess.
- After each guess the facilitator will tell the group how many people belong on the code and how many are also in the correct position on the code. The instructor never tells the group WHO is correct, just how many.
- The group continues to substitute people on and off the spots, collecting information.
- Resources are available to write down information but the group is not explicitly told to use them.
- Group continues until they break the code.
- Actual score is compared to the established goal.

Reflection opportunity:

- At this point, the group is given an opportunity to talk about strategies that worked and strategies that lead them astray.

Possible Round 2 Instructions:

- While the facilitator is writing down a new set of names, the group should establish a new goal based on the information they now have from this experience. They should also discuss any strategies for this second round based on their reflection on round 1.
- Once a new goal is established and the code is set by the facilitator, process repeats as in round 1.

Reflection thoughts:

- Did the group fall back into old habits, or did they change strategies for the better?
- Did the role you played during this activity match the role you typically have?
- How did the group make decisions? Was there a leader? Director? Consensus? Voting?