

LEADERSHIP

Organization and country: INPRO, Czech Republic

Name of the activity: Team Communication Masters

Overview (What I am going to learn?): This game is enhancing non-verbal communication in a team; thus, one will learn how to communicate with the rest of the team in silence by just using hand gestures. This tool helps teams to increase communication skills and it helps discovering natural leaders in the team. Moreover, it is fun!

Objective (What am I going to learn it for?): With this tool, one will learn to communicate clearly with the rest of the team without using words. Also, the game stands on naturally appointing a leader/s and following the lead. And what is more, the team will learn how to cooperate together and work efficiently.

Materials: You will need a rope with both ends tied together. The length of the rope depends on the number of participants – the higher number of the participants, the longer the rope.

Time: Time of this activity depends on the number of employees that take part and also on the willingness of the team to create more difficult shapes. It can range from 10 minutes (one simple shape) to 45 minutes (many various shapes, increasing level of difficulty).

Target group: All employees, leaders and managers can take part in this activity. However, it is better if colleagues usually working together will be in one group during this activity.

Instructions for facilitators

You will have a group of participants and a rope with both ends tied together. You will ask the participants to hold the rope with both hands.

Then tell them to create some shape on the floor using the rope, e.g., triangle. However, they cannot speak or make noises. For communication they only can use hand gestures, but at the same time they still need to hold the rope with both hands.

Once the participants master the simple shapes, ask them to create more complex shapes with the rope, such as a turtle or a flower, etc. If you want to make this activity even more challenging, ban the use of hand gestures all together.

You can do this activity for how long you want or until the group masters the most difficult shapes. After you are done with this tool, talk with the participants about how they felt communicating with no words, if it was stressful (and what in particular) or if they enjoyed it.

TIP!: One more adjustment to this tool is that once participants that normally work together are done, assign them to other groups. This way they can compare if working together with daily life colleagues is better/easier or if there is no difference when working with strangers.

Tasks and procedure:

Take the rope, stand next to each other and hold it with both hands.

You will now create a shape from the rope on the floor, however you cannot speak or make any sound while doing it. You only can use hand gestures.

You will start with easy shapes; it means the rope should have the required shape. If the group of participants master easy shapes, take up a challenge and try more difficult shapes such as animals, cars, flowers, houses etc.

TIP!: If you want to make the process of creating more challenging, remove even the hand gestures.

Conclusion and evaluation:

In the group of participants, there will probably be one person who will be the leader of making the shapes, i.e., s/he will “say” what to do with the rope. Speak with the participants about how they felt when they were being led by this person. Find out who is this person – did s/he assigned the role to himself/herself or was it assigned to him/her by others? How did this person feel leading others?

This tool is enhancing communication between colleagues, especially the non-verbal. When colleagues can communicate with each other, even when they are under pressure, it makes the work environment healthy.