

Organization and country: Ireland

Name of the activity: Conflict resolution Dynamics – Empathic Role Play

Overview (What I am going to learn?):

I am going to change my perspective when facing a problem from “facing it” to “solve it”.

I will be able to look at the problem from a “let’s solve it”.

I will work as a team with my colleagues.

Objective (What am I going to learn it for?):

The aim of this activity is to teach participants to solve a problem, as well as to measure the group's capacity to deal with it as a team with a problematic situation in order to find a solution in a constructive manner.

Materials:

- Article to read before the exercise (expect for those performing the exercise):

<https://www.rdstation.com/es/blog/empatia/>

- Article about empathy with clients:

<https://www.zendesk.com.mx/blog/frases-de-empatia-para-clientes/>

- Pen and paper

Videos: Empathic Negotiation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mYBAFvI8J00>

Time:

Estimated time 90 minutes

Target group:

Professionals working in the same company that teams up to solve problems.

Ideally in large groups of 15 to 20 members.

Instructions for facilitators

Some members of the group represent to the other participants a situation of negotiation or conflict between two parts of the company, be it a boss with an employee seeking a salary increase, an employee with another employee negotiating a division of labour or a customer angry about a badly managed situation.

As an example we propose:

A subordinate and his immediate superior negotiate the subordinate's working conditions: The subordinate is a skilled worker, an occupational trainer. The boss wants him to work for the company from Monday to Saturday and with very long working hours. This is justified by the needs of the company, the existing level of competition, the low profitability of the business and the need to cover any demand for training at any possible time.

The worker, for his part, wants working conditions that allow him to reconcile his work and family life; he has a wife and a newborn child. At the same time, he has to pay a mortgage on his home and needs the job. But he does not want to sacrifice his life for it. He thinks that they would be much more competitive if the workers, in this case trainers, in the company were happier, and for this to happen it is necessary to have a private life as well.

Tasks and procedures:

Phase 1: Preparation

- The instructor explains the theme, identifying the characters, the situation and the scene(s) to be enacted.
- He asks for volunteers to act out the scene.
- 1 pair is chosen from among the volunteers.
- Roles are defined and the psychological characteristics, social skills and personal characteristics of their character are written on a piece of paper.

Phase 2: Dramatization

- The actors are placed on stage, next to an office table. On either side sit the boss and the employee.
 - Each of the actors argues according to his or her role and objectives.
 - At the end of the performance, one of the following solutions must be reached:
 - a) Agreement between both of them (one of them may have achieved their objectives or both of them may have made some renunciation that allows them to agree on a solution).
 - b) Final agreement, the worker loses his job and the boss loses his employee, in both situations with the consequences known to both and which may form part of the object of the discussion.
 - The group takes note of each of the actors' attitudes and arguments, and analyses what their strategy is to achieve the objectives they have set themselves.
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Conclusion and evaluation:

Discussion on the topic

1. Analysis of the situation: ideas, feelings, attitudes, solutions, etc
2. Was there more talk about rights than feelings?
3. Will they succeed?
4. What did the performance aim to show?
5. Are there differences between the objectives pursued by each of the actors in the same role?
6. Were there differences in the tactics followed by each of the actors in the same role?
7. What is the reason for the different outcomes (agreements or disagreements) reached by each of the pairs?
8. When a conflict of this kind is prolonged, what is regrettable about the situation?
9. What do you think of this worker's attitude towards his/her boss/employee? How would you describe it?
10. What do you think of the boss/employee's attitude?
11. How do we react to any warning from our bosses/employees? What is positive in our reactions? What is negative?
12. Should we change our attitude towards our bosses/employees? What should we change?
13. Should our managers/employees change their attitude towards us? In what ways?
14. Proposals for solutions or improvement of boss/employee communication.