Title: Listen carefully and contribute

Exercise Code:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Modules: | Group size: | Duration: |
| 1. Social Learning  2. Professional Ethics  3. Personal Integrity  4. Professional Integrity  5. Conflict Solving Strategies  6. Problem Solving Strategies | Small group | 45 min |

# Purpose:

Active listening is a critical communication skill and it is important to know how to do it. This exercise has been designed in such a way that encourages participants to pay their utmost attention while engaged in a conversation.

# Description:

Choose a topic of discussion for the activity. You can also involve the participants in choosing the topic. For example, you can consider describing the benefits of a product or service as the subject of this exercise.

Get the participants to form a circle so they can easily listen to everyone else as the exercise progresses.

Explain that you are going to select one person to kick start the exercise by starting to talk about the topic.

While the first person is talking, you can suddenly call “change”. At this point the person who was talking should stop and the person to his left should resume from exactly where the original person stopped. For example, if the sentence was incomplete, the next person must complete it and then continue talking about the subject.

Continue saying “change” randomly at intervals and in each case the next person carries on talking about the topic. This forces everyone to stay focused and be prepared for their turn.

Once you have gone through a single round, stop the exercise and ask the participants what they thought of it.

Now that they have learned the format, prepare participants for the second stage which requires even more focus.

Ask participants to choose another topic as they have exhausted the previous topic and it can be better to start on a fresh subject.

Explain that in this stage, you are going to randomly assign a person to talk rather than going in sequence.

Randomly select one person to start the exercise and talk about the chosen topic.

◾State the name of another person at random to change. For example say, “Change to Katie”. Now Katie must continue from exactly where the last person has stopped.

Since participants don’t know who will be called next, they must all pay attention to what has been said.

Make sure that you know who you have called and who you haven’t so everyone gets a chance to participate.

# Material:

# Methods:

# Advice for Trainer:

Discussion

How difficult was this exercise? Was listening attentively to everyone made the conversation more focused and useful? Did this help people to contribute more as everyone was forced to remain focused? How can you use this technique at work to increase the productivity of meetings or brainstorming sessions?

# Source/Literature:

# Handouts:

# Contributor: ECC