Overview:

This lesson plan will challenge participants to develop planning, communication, and teamwork skills. In this group activity, several members of the group will be planners who provide instructions to the operating team. The operating team will attempt to assemble the hollow square puzzle based on the instructions provided to them by the planning team. Finally, there will be a team that observes the process and records notes.

Background and Information:

This activity was originally created by J. William Pfeiffer and John E. Jones and was published in their book, *A Handbook of Structured Experiences for Human Relations Training, Vol. 2* (see citation below). A version of this activity is also available from Humanity Development Library 2.0, which is linked on the following page.

Objectives:

As a result of this activity, participants will be able to:

1. Study dynamics involved in planning a task to be carried out by others.
2. Study dynamics involved in accomplishing a task planned by others.
3. Explore both helpful and hindering communication behaviors in assigning and carrying out a task.

Time:

1 hour

Group Size:

Entire group

Materials:

For the four members of the planning team: 1. A Hollow-Square Planning Team Briefing Sheet for each member. 2. Four envelopes, each containing puzzle pieces. 3. A Hollow-Square Pattern Sheet for each member. 4. A Hollow-Square Key Sheet for each member (see Links).

Copies of the Hollow-Square Operating Team Briefing Sheet for the four members of the operating team, copies of the Hollow-Square Observer Briefing Sheet for all process observers (the rest of the group) (see Links), and pencils for all participants.

Intercultural Development Continuum Stages:

- Denial
- Polarization
- Minimization
- Acceptance

AAC&U Intercultural Knowledge and Competence Goals:

Verbal and Nonverbal Communication:

• To articulate a complex understanding of cultural differences in verbal and nonverbal communication (e.g., demonstrates understanding of the degree to which people use physical contact while communicating in different cultures or use direct/indirect and explicit/implicit meanings).
• To skillfully negotiate a shared understanding based on these differences.

Other Skills:

Teamwork

Link to Activity Instructions:

• A version of this activity from Humanity Development Library 2.0

Related Tools:

Similar tools:

• Building a Tower