



The Freechild Project Youth Engagement Workshop Guide

By Adam Fletcher



Let Us Support YOU!

The Freechild Project provides training, tools, and technical assistance to youth-serving organizations, K-12 schools, and government agencies focused on youth engagement. For more information contact Adam Fletcher at (360) 489-9680, email adam@freechild.org or visit www.adamfletcher.net

The Freechild Project *Youth Engagement Workshop Guide*
© 2010 Adam Fletcher for The Freechild Project

All rights reserved. All worksheets and handouts may be duplicated, but must be duplicated exactly as is. Please obtain prior written consent from Adam Fletcher for any alternative usage.

Published by The Freechild Project, PO Box 6185, Olympia, WA 98507-6185 Phone (360) 489-9680 Email adam@freechild.org

The Freechild Project Youth Engagement Workshop Guide

By Adam Fletcher

Table of Contents

Preface	4
Workshop 1: Intro to Youth Engagement	10
Workshop 2: Intro to Youth Engagement for Adults	12
Workshop 3: Are You Ready for Youth Engagement?	15
Workshop 4: Breaking Stereotypes	20
Workshop 5: Examining Media Bias.....	24
Workshop 6: Be Who You Are	26
Workshop 7: Words as Weapons and Tools	29
Workshop 8: Short Listening Activities	31
Workshop 9: Feedback Techniques	35
Workshop 10: Jargon Flags	38
Workshop 11: Power, Trust, and Respect.....	39
Workshop 12: Ground Rules.....	41
Workshop 13: Group Strengths and Weaknesses	42
Workshop 14: The Silent Circle.....	44
Workshop 15: Group Appreciations	46
Workshop 16: It's in the Bag.....	48
Workshop 17: Lava Rocks Problem Solving	49
Workshop 18: Probing for Problems.....	52
Workshop 19: Planning For Roadblocks	54
Workshop 20: That's A Wrap	56
Workshop 21: Letting Go & Taking Charge.....	58
Workshop 22: Ideal Partners	60
Workshop 23: Creating Roles for Youth and Adults	63
Additional Activities: Brainteasers	65
Additional Activities: Reflection exercises	66
Resources.....	68

Preface



Before you begin an ambitious journey to engage young people, you should think about your own journey, whether you are a youth or an adult. Consider these questions:

- ★ How have you been engaged in the past?
- ★ What have you learned from your experiences with engaged youth as an engaged youth or adult?
- ★ What are the assumptions behind activities you have participated in without youth? With youth?
- ★ Why train people in youth engagement?

After thinking about these points, you are ready to begin planning your youth engagement workshops. All of these workshops are hands-on, and engage youth and adults as partners.

Supportive Learning Experiences

There are a few important considerations that facilitators should keep in mind during these activities. They are not a mystery; however, they are not the same in every organization or community.

Be a Facilitator. Presenting any workshop can be challenging for the most experienced facilitator. A facilitator's job has three parts: lead the workshops, guide the reflection, and be enthusiastic. Enthusiasm is contagious! Also, share personal experiences and remember that as a young person, a student, a community member or an adult ally, you have knowledge and experience that you can and should share. Also, remember that the mood of the facilitator will set the tone for the entire workshop. So strive to be positive and have fun with these workshops!

- ★ Set aside your needs in favor of the needs of the group.
- ★ Establish a friendly atmosphere and open sharing of ideas.
- ★ Encourage participants to take risks. When in doubt, check with the group. It's not your responsibility to know everything.
- ★ Be aware of Youth Engagement – both in the content, and in who is speaking.
- ★ Respect can be the critical ingredient in effective Youth Engagement programs.
- ★ Address conflict and do not try to avoid it. Create an atmosphere of trust so that disagreements can be brought into the open.

Create Guidelines & Goals. Have participants create ground rules or guidelines before you begin a workshop. Brainstorm potential rules and write them down – but avoid too many rules. There are three essential guidelines:

- ★ Safety first. Never compromise the safety of yourself or others.
- ★ Challenge by choice. If someone wants to sit out, that's cool.
- ★ HAVE FUN!

Every group should have some specific goals that all players agree on. Some goals have included:

- ★ Break down the barriers that may exist between participants such as race, sex, background, and social status.
- ★ Build a sense of teamwork and purpose.
- ★ Show that everyone has different strengths and abilities to offer the group and that no one is better than anyone else.

Think about Framing & Sequencing. The purpose of these workshops is often set during the introduction, or *framing*, of them. Framing can happen as an analogy where the facilitator creates a magical place where dangerous things can happen without new knowledge. Or the workshops can be simply presented without metaphors, and with just a simple prompt that alerts participants to look for deeper meaning. Another important consideration is the order in which you present workshops, or *sequencing*. If a group has never learned together, it might be to follow the sequence presented in the following section. This order is proposed to help youth and adults “soften” their personal space bubble. If a group is more comfortable with each other, try “bursting” the bubble by digging right into deeper workshops. It is important to try to put “heavy” workshops after less intensive ones, to build a sense of rest and preparedness.

Reflect, Reflect, Reflect. One way to highlight the necessity of workshops for youth and adults together is in the reflection afterwards. An easy way to see the relevance of reflection is to picture workshops as a circle: you start with an explanation what you are going to learn and frame its purpose and goals to the group. As the activity progresses, the facilitator taking a more hands-on *or* less guiding approach as needed. Finally, group reflection helps participants see how they met the goals of the workshop, and helps them envision the broader implications. Then the group has come full-circle. Remember to bring it all back to reality with the reflection. Reflecting on the workshops is vital to bring the group back to the reason why they’re playing games. The following types of questions can be useful in reflecting:

- ★ **Open-ended** – Prevents yes and no answers. “What was the purpose of the game?” “What did you learn about yourself?”
- ★ **Feeling** – Requires participants to reflect on how they feel about what they did. “How did it feel when you started to pull it together?”
- ★ **Judgment** – Asks participants to make decisions about things. “what was the best part?” “Was it a good idea?”
- ★ **Guiding** – Steers the participants toward the purpose of the activity and keep the discussion focused. “What got you all going in the right direction?”
- ★ **Closing** – Helps participants draw conclusions and end the discussion. “What did you learn?” “What would you do differently?”

Make Meaning *With* Participants. At their best, the following workshops can serve as bridges between young people and adults, and between Youth Engagement, learning, and community building. They can reinforce the need for communication, co-learning, and collective action. At their worst, these workshops can actually be tools of oppression and alienation and serve to support vertical practices that isolate young people from adults everyday. In the words of educator Paulo Freire, “A real humanist can be identified more by his trust in the people, which engages him in their struggle, than by a thousand actions in their favor without that trust.” In this sense, Youth Engagement requires that we all become humanists who engage adults with youth, followers with leaders, and teachers with students.

Create Safe Space. It is vital to create, foster, and support safe spaces youth and adults to learn together about Youth Engagement. In a society that is openly hostile towards critical perspectives from young people, youth need support when they make their voices heard. Likewise, adults face challenges when they partner with youth, and they need support as well. Establishing a safe space is powerful, positive, and hopeful, and hope is a requirement for Youth Engagement.

- ★ *Acknowledge* that everyone has preconceived ideas about others – or prejudice - that can damage others and ourselves.
- ★ *Ask* participants, “Who should be in this training but is not?”
- ★ *Focus* and limit our conversations until trust increases (sometimes it is better to agree not to talk about specific issue/problem right away).
- ★ As the facilitator, *seek* true dialogue and ask real questions.
- ★ *Encourage* participants to examine their personal assumptions by checking in with others rather than hiding or defending them.
- ★ *Speak* from personal experience by using I statements and do not generalize about your young people or another adults.
- ★ *Be open* to a change of heart as well as a change in thinking.

Co-train Adults with Youth. Youth and adults need training - together. When possible, and appropriate, facilitate workshops with mixed groups of youth and adults where they can learn about Youth Engagement as partners. This emphasizes that everyone is a co-learner in the process of engaging Youth Engagement, discouraging experienced participants from lauding their knowledge over others. You can create the conditions that support young people and adults learning together either by clearly stating expectations or having the group come up with them, and then holding the group to the expectations. Following are some training tips for co-training adults and youth:

Seek Consensus. Whenever a group is discussing a possible solution or coming to a decision on any matter, consensus is a good tool. The following consensus-building technique is called “Fist-To-Five.” Start by restating a decision the group may make and ask everyone to show their level of support. Each person should responds by showing a fist or a number of fingers that corresponds to their opinion.

- ★ **Fist** is a no vote - a way to block consensus. It says, “I need to talk more on the proposal and require changes for it to pass.”
- ★ **1 Finger** says, “I still need to discuss certain issues and suggest changes that should be made.”
- ★ **2 Fingers** says, “I am more comfortable with the proposal but would like to discuss some minor issues.”
- ★ **3 Fingers** says, “I’m not in total agreement but feel comfortable to let this decision or a proposal pass without further discussion.”
- ★ **4 Fingers** says, “I think it’s a good idea/decision and will work for it.”
- ★ **5 Fingers** says, “It’s a great idea and I will be one of the leaders in implementing it.”

If anyone holds up fewer than three fingers, they should be given the opportunity to state their objections and the team should address their concerns. Continue the Fist-to-Five process until participants achieve consensus, which is a minimum of three fingers or higher, or determine they must move on to the next issue.

Learning is a Process – Not an Outcome. Encourage participants to view learning about Youth Engagement as a process that has no end. There are no experts in Youth Engagement – only people with a little more experience. However, even experience cannot teach us what we do not seek to learn. John Dewey once wrote that we should seek, “Not perfection as a final goal, but the ever-enduring process of perfecting, maturing, refining is the aim of living.” This is true of Youth Engagement. Youth and adults should use action as a starting point for a lifelong journey that includes learning, reflection, examination, and re-envisioning democracy in our communities.

Embrace Challenges. Since Youth Engagement is a process, it is important to understand THAT there will be difficult times ahead. One of the keys to sustaining long-term Youth Engagement is establishing the expectation that criticism will come – and that is good. We cannot grow without criticism. In a society where adults routinely criticize youth without suitable avenues for youth to criticize adults, we must be aware of the outcomes of our actions. Embrace these challenges and learn from them. Following are several strategies for fostering critical thinking with young people:

- ★ **Use *think-pair-share*** - Have individual thinking time, discussion with a partner, and presentation back to the group.
- ★ **Ask *follow-ups*** - Why? Do you agree? Can you elaborate? Can you give an example?
- ★ **With hold judgment** - Respond to answers without evaluating them and ask random group members to respond to them.
- ★ **Summarize** - Asking a participant at random to summarize another's point to encourage active listening.
- ★ **Think aloud** - Have participants unpack their thinking by describing how they arrived at an answer.
- ★ **Play devil's advocate** - Asking participants to defend their reasoning against different points of view.
- ★ **Support participant questions** - Asking participants to formulate their own questions.

Workshop Structure

The following workshop outlines can assist you in facilitating activities for young people and adults. This isn't an expert's guide that is set in stone; each workshop should be altered to meet your needs and particular situation. When you use these workshops for social change work, the role of the facilitator is very important and must be intentional.

The following workshop outlines are not meant to provide every activity you need to facilitate a workshop in any circumstance. They must be adapted for every occasion. Each of the following outlines are structured the same way, including:

Facilitator Notes

- ★ Introduction
- ★ Goal
- ★ Time
- ★ Materials
- ★ Space
- ★ Considerations

Activities

- ★ Individual Steps

Optional Activities and Variations

- ★ Individual Steps

A Note on Evaluation

Workshops on Youth Engagement, just like all workshops for and/or about young people, are often evaluated on two factors:

- ★ Presentation – How well was the information presented and how well did the presenter facilitate?
- ★ Content – Did it make sense, and was it appropriate?

The following workshops dig deeply into Youth Engagement issues, and while the questions above are important, they should be accentuated with the following considerations:

- ★ Depth – Was the content of this workshop meaningful and relevant?
- ★ Purpose – Was this workshop clear to me?
- ★ Application – Do I have practical next steps or realistic considerations to keep in mind in the future?

Best wishes! Please email me with your notes, feedback, and experiences from these workshops, and take care. Send an email and let us know – adam@bicyclingfish.com

Adam Fletcher's Consulting Resources

The author of this publication, Adam Fletcher, provides a variety services to support the workshops in this publication, including:

- ★ Train-the-Trainer Events
- ★ Program Planning
- ★ Program Material Development
- ★ Organization Evaluation
- ★ Retreat Facilitation
- ★ Public Speaking

For more information visit his website at www.adamfletcher.net or call Adam directly at 360-489-9680.

Intro to Youth Engagement



Workshop 1

Facilitator Notes

Introduction: This is a hands-on, interactive session featuring reflection and critical thinking skill development. Designed for mixed groups of youth and adults, there should be no more than 40 participants.

Goal: When this session is complete participants should be able to...

1. Define Youth Engagement in their own terms
2. Identify current opportunities to engage Youth Engagement

Time: 1 hour 40 minutes

Materials: Flip chart paper and markers

Space: Enough room for the group to split up into small groups. It will be necessary to move chairs in order to conduct the icebreaker.

Considerations: Throw in a break at some point during the workshop. The case study activity near the end is optional, and can be omitted to allow more time for discussion in the small or large groups.

Activities

1. [5 min] Introduce yourself, review the agenda, and go over the goals.
2. [20 min] Each same-age small group should answer the following questions and records their answers on flip chart paper.
 - ★ What does the other age group do that really bothers you and makes it difficult for you to work together?
 - ★ What do you do that gets in the way and makes it difficult for youth and adults to work together?
 - ★ What do you really like or value about working with youth/adults?
3. [10 min] Have each small group report back to the whole group. Pick top barriers from all the groups by choosing the ones that are most common or that, if solved would make things a whole heck of a lot easier.
4. [40 min] Break into small, mixed-age groups. Assign each group one of the top barriers, and have them develop strategies for preventing and/or overcoming the barrier. Have each group report back to whole group.

5. [10 min] Review the Principles of Youth-Adult Partnerships from Chapter One, “What is Youth Engagement?”
6. [10 min] Have each participant take a moment to write a reflection on two things they can do personally in the next two weeks. After that, they should brainstorm two things they can do in their program or organization in the next two months to make youth-adult partnerships work. Have people refer back to the lists of strategies generated if they get stuck. Ask for individuals to share so others can get additional ideas by listening.
7. [5 min] Evaluate and close the session.

Optional activity

- [20 min] If time allows, take an example from the group of a project in progress or up-coming situation in which youth and adults are or will be working together. Have that group member give the background (people involved, what is going on/will happen, current or anticipated barriers, etc.) and have the rest of the group try to come up with solutions for the person’s problem.

Intro to Youth Engagement for Adults



Workshop 2

Facilitator Notes

Introduction: This workshop for up to 40 adult-only participants includes a self-reflection activity, learning fundamentals of Youth Engagement, critical thinking, and basic program planning.

Goal: When this session is complete, participants should be able to...

1. Identify relevance of Youth Engagement in their personal life
2. Identify barriers to Youth Engagement

Time: 2 hours

Materials: Flip chart paper and markers

Space: Enough room for the group to split up into small groups. It is necessary to move chairs in order to conduct the icebreaker.

Considerations: During visualizations, make sure you keep your own opinions and/or editorial comments to yourself. Participants should have the opportunity to construct their own visions without your personal input. You'll want to throw in a break at some point during the workshop. The case study activity near the end is optional.

Activities

1. [5 min] Introduce yourself, go over the agenda, and review the goals.
2. [10 min] Choose an icebreaker, making sure that the game ends with everyone in small groups of 5-8.
3. [5 min] Begin the reflection by reading the following at a comfortable, relaxed pace. Your tone should be quiet and calming. Give people time to bring up the images in their heads and really remember them. You can add to or subtract from this script as needed.

Begin by asking each group to sit down and get comfortable. Explain that you will lead them through a reflection activity that sends them back in time to when they were teenagers. Ask them to close their eyes. Then ask them to imagine that it's [use today's date] during their X grade year in school— If the group consists of people who work primarily with one age group (e.g., fourth graders) use that school year. Otherwise chose a year in school for them. A year in middle or high school works best. Start by saying...

"Think about getting up in the morning. What time is it? Does someone wake you up? Who? Do you get up easily or is it a pain? What is your morning routine? Do you take a shower, bath, or do your

hair? What are you wearing? Are you ready in a few minutes? An hour? Who else is around in the morning? Do you have to help anyone else get ready?

“Now you leave for school. How do you get there? Bus, drive, get a ride, walk, bike? Do you go with others? What does the building look like? How do you feel about the place? What do you do when you first get inside? Do you go to your locker? Hang out with friends? Who are your friends? How do you feel about them?

“What is your first class of the day? Who teaches it? Do you like the subject? Do you like the teacher? What are your favorite classes? What classes do you dislike? Why? What about lunch? Where do you eat? What did you eat? Do you have any meetings?

“Now it is the end of the school day. Do you play a sport, have an activity, have a job, do your homework, hang out with friends? What adults do you encounter: coaches, advisors, administrators, or bosses? When do you get home? Do you eat dinner with your family? Do you do homework, or *pretend* to do homework? Do you watch TV? Talk on the phone? What time do you go to bed? How do you feel at the end of the day?”

4. [15 min] After a pause, ask participants to return to the present and open their eyes. Tell them you understand that the exercise may have reminded them of some painful or personal memories, and perhaps of some humorous ones, too. Reassure them that no one will be forced to share, but that you're going to ask each small group to take a moment to share general reactions. It might be useful to journal alone for a moment on the following questions:
 - ★ What was good about being young?
 - ★ What was not good about being young?
5. [10 min] Ask each group to report back to the large group, and share some of their reflections.
6. [15 min] Tell the group that through a variety of small and large group conversations you are going to examine their current involvement throughout their community. You can ask each individual to think about the neighborhood groups, clubs, committees, boards, religious groups, friends, family, and volunteer work they do. Then ask them to imagine being a young person doing that work. You might next ask participants to remember back to the visualization and what it was like to be a teenager. Ask, “How would it affect your current community involvement if you had no desk, no way to take phone calls for most of the day, probably limited access to a computer and transportation. How do you remember interacting with adults? How did they treat you?”
7. [15 min] In the following conversation participants discuss barriers to Youth Engagement. Barriers are limitations, obstacles, or challenges that youth and adults face. Have each group brainstorm answers to the following questions and record their answers on flip chart paper.
 - ★ What do adults do that gets in the way or makes it difficult for Youth Engagement?
 - ★ What do young people do that gets in the way and makes it difficult for Youth Engagement?
 - ★ What other barriers to Youth Engagement exist?
8. [10 min] Have each small group report back to the whole group, and pick the top barriers.

9. [15 min] Assign each group one of the top barriers. Ask them to develop strategies for preventing and/or overcoming the barrier, and report back to whole group.
10. [10 min] Have each participant take a moment to write two things they can do personally in the next two weeks to engage Youth Engagement. Then have them write two things they can do in their programs or organizations in the next two months to put Youth Engagement to work. Have people refer back to the lists of strategies generated if they get stuck.
11. [10 min] Evaluate and close.

Optional activity

- [20 min] If time allows, take an example from the group of a project in progress or up-coming situation in which youth and adults are or will be working together. Have that group member give the background (people involved, what is going on/will happen, current or anticipated barriers, etc.) and have the rest of the group try and come up with solutions for the person's problem.

Are You Ready for Youth Engagement?

Workshop 3



Facilitator Notes

Introduction: This inquiry-based workshop for up to 40 participants shares fundamentals, engages participants in evaluating their programs and organizations, and planning for Youth Engagement. It can be adapted for use with youth and adults; however, it is primarily for adult organizational staff.

Goal: When this session is complete, participants should be able to...

1. Identify effects of Youth Engagement
2. Examine requirements for Youth Engagement
3. Plan practical approaches to engaging Youth Engagement

Time: See “Considerations” section; up to 2 hours are needed.

Materials: Flip chart paper and markers

Space: See the following heading, “Considerations”; space use is variable.

Considerations: There are two sections to this training that you should be aware of:

Section 1: Preparing for Youth Engagement is about deepening your understanding of what you are trying to do, why you’re doing it, and what you expect out of it. It also means deepening your understanding of what it’s going to take to make a partnership really work. In fact, a group may decide that it isn’t ready to involve young people. That’s okay. It is better to recognize that fact rather than investing a lot of time creating frustration.

Section 2: Assessing Readiness is designed as a set of activities that may be conducted separately in a series of short sessions or all together in one long session. The time required for each activity is noted in a range—you can spend a little or a lot of time on each activity depending on the size and needs of the group. Most of the activities involve discussion.

Activities

Section 1: Preparing for Youth Engagement

1. [5 min] Before getting started in engaging young people, there are some key questions to examine. Read aloud the following questions and write the underlined words on a flip chart:
 - ★ What is your *vision* for Youth Engagement in your program?
 - ★ What is your *motivation* for engaging Youth Engagement?
 - ★ What *expectations* do you have about Youth Engagement?
 - ★ What *roles* will Youth Engagement play?
 - ★ What *resources* exist to ensure success for Youth Engagement?

2. [20 min] The following is a visualization that should be read in a comfortable, relaxed pace, in a quiet and calming tone. Give people time to bring up the images and really experience them. Modify this script as needed. Ask the group to sit down and get comfortable. Explain that you're going to lead them through a visualization that lets them imagine their ideal for youth involvement. Ask them to close their eyes. Then begin...

"Imagine that it's three years from now and you've got the perfect situation for Youth Engagement. What does it look like? What are people doing? What roles do the youth play? The adults? On which issues are they focused?"

"Now take a closer look. How does it feel? How are people interacting? What do you hear people saying? How do they share power?"

"Now step back a bit. How does your program look or feel different? How is it benefiting the organization? The youth? The adults? What is 'ideal' about it?"

Ask participants to draw a picture of their vision, either individually or as a small group. Then have them share in small groups or the whole group, depending on number of participants.

3. [40 min] The following is a dialogue-oriented activity with separate questions for youth and adults. The activity may be conducted as small group discussions by reading through the questions and giving individuals the chance to write down some thoughts. Then break up into small groups to discuss the following questions.

- ★ Do you think Youth Engagement will enhance your work?
- ★ What is it about Youth Engagement that interests you?
- ★ Did someone give you a similar chance when you were young?
- ★ Do your funders require Youth Engagement?
- ★ Was there a request from the board?
- ★ Have young people demanded more involvement?
- ★ Are you getting pressure from others? Whom?

Have the small groups report back to the large group. This is particularly critical if in a mixed group of youth and adults.

Section 2: Assessing Readiness

4. [10 min] These following steps are an organizational analysis that is primarily for adults, and may be used with young people. Begin the activity by instructing participants to write the mission or purpose of their organization at the top of a page. Have them draw a "map" (an "organizational flow chart") of the organization beneath the mission statement. The map should include individuals, departments, programs, and people affected by the programs, with lines between any connected people or projects.
5. [5 min] Have each participant highlight where youth fit into the chart.
 - ★ How does Youth Engagement currently happen?

- ★ Where does Youth Engagement fit within the overall mission and activities of the organization?
 - ★ Are young people volunteers? Recipients of services? Interns? Committee members? Participants in events?
6. [20 min] Based on the organization’s mission and experience, have the group discuss the possibilities for changing or expanding Youth Engagement.
- How could Youth Engagement be a more effective or efficient way to meet an accepted goal of the organization?
 - What are the potential benefits to the organization?
 - How can Youth Engagement contribute to the work of the organization?
7. [15 min] The final activity is an assessment primarily for adults and asks participants to take a look at the resources required to make Youth Engagement work. Based on their expectations, organizational maps, and lists of possible youth roles, use the following questions to guide discussion:
- ★ What kind of support structure do you have for Youth Engagement?
 - ★ Is someone willing and available to work with young people to recruit, orient, train and provide ongoing support?
 - ★ How willing and available are other staff and adults to attend Youth Engagement training?
 - ★ What kind of space in your office can youth use?
 - ★ Are funds available for the costs that will be incurred?
 - ★ How will you deal with issues of accessibility: Location, transportation, safety, incidental expenses?
 - ★ Am I aware of liability concerns for involving youth?
8. [5 min] Close by asking for new insights people have gained or how ideas about their perspectives about Youth Engagement might have changed.

Youth Engagement Readiness

Worksheet



Are Adults Personally Ready for Youth Engagement?

	Strongly Disagree	2	Strongly Agree
I respect young people.	1	2	3
I am willing and able to give up some power and control.	1	2	3
I enjoy being with young people.	1	2	3
I am comfortable with chaos.	1	2	3
I am patient.	1	2	3
I listen carefully to people.	1	2	3
I am willing to admit when I'm wrong.	1	2	3
I like to try new and different things.	1	2	3

Are Youth Personally Ready for Youth Engagement?

	Strongly Disagree	2	Strongly Agree
I respect adults.	1	2	3
I am willing and able to take on more responsibility	1	2	3
I want to try new and different things.	1	2	3
I am open to guidance when trying new things.	1	2	3
I listen carefully to people.	1	2	3
I am willing to ask questions.	1	2	3
I am willing to admit when I am wrong.	1	2	3

Youth Engagement Options



Worksheet

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Program design | <input type="checkbox"/> Budgeting | <input type="checkbox"/> Board of Directors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Facilitation | <input type="checkbox"/> Staff evaluation | <input type="checkbox"/> Staff training |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Program eval | <input type="checkbox"/> Researching | <input type="checkbox"/> Staff hiring/firing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Policy-making | <input type="checkbox"/> Others: |

What roles will young people have?

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteers | <input type="checkbox"/> Advisors | <input type="checkbox"/> Paid Staff |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Full-voting | <input type="checkbox"/> Leaders | <input type="checkbox"/> Others: |

Why will young people be engaged?

- New circumstance? Explain: _____
- Existing circumstance? Explain: _____
- Youth-led concern? Explain: _____
- Other positions? Explain: _____

When will Youth Engagement happen?

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Once | <input type="checkbox"/> One day | <input type="checkbox"/> One week |
| <input type="checkbox"/> One month | <input type="checkbox"/> One year | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

How many young people will be engaged?

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Few (1-15) | <input type="checkbox"/> Some (15-35) | <input type="checkbox"/> Many (35-100) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A lot (100+) | <input type="checkbox"/> Multi-community | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

Who will be involved?

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disengaged youth | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban youth | <input type="checkbox"/> Rural youth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Homeless youth | <input type="checkbox"/> Low-income | <input type="checkbox"/> Others: |

Who will support Youth Engagement?

- | | | |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> One paid staff | <input type="checkbox"/> Multiple paid staff | <input type="checkbox"/> Older youth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer | <input type="checkbox"/> Other? _____ | |

Is financial support provided to support Youth Engagement?

- | | | |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Available: \$ _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Not available | <input type="checkbox"/> Other? _____ |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|

Breaking Stereotypes

Workshop 4



Facilitator notes

Introduction: This workshop is a communication-oriented session, engaging youth and adult participants through role playing, intergenerational dialogue, critical thinking, and cooperative problem-solving. A mixed group of youth and adults is required, with no fewer than 15 and no more than 100 participants total.

Goal: When this session is complete, participants should be able to...

1. Acknowledge constructive and restrictive behaviors among youth and adults
2. Examine stereotypes of youth and adults at work in current activities
3. State how youth and adults prefer to be treated and interact with each other

Time: Up to 2 hours

Materials: Flip chart paper and markers

Space Required: Large room with enough open space in the front for people to act out short scenarios.

Considerations: Role-plays are a lot of fun and provide the chance for people to act out situations in a non-threatening manner. These role-plays are designed to start the conversation about the role of respect in building youth-adult partnerships. People will explore how different behaviors are interpreted and how they can best convey respect. The purpose of these scenarios is to have the groups act as they think about ideal interactions, and for participants to imagine how they personally would react to the situation.

You will need to set up these scenarios ahead of time as best you can, getting volunteers and assigning roles. Many of the roles require different people in the same scenario be given instructions separately. Most of the volunteers will need a few minutes to plan out their scenarios.

If you've got the right numbers, you may be able to have everyone participate in one scenario and give the whole group a few minutes to get prepared. Choose as many scenarios to do as you feel appropriate and as time allows. You may create new scenarios and/or adjust the details of the scenarios to make them more relevant to your group. Given the open-ended nature of the scenarios you'll need to cut off at a certain point otherwise they'll go on and on.

These scenarios don't need to reach a resolution! You simply want them to raise issues and create an illustration of what *may* happen. The key to these activities in the debriefing of the activities with the participants. Remember: Short, to-the-point, then discussion.

Activities

1. [5 min per small group] Following these activities have participants break into small groups and assign one group one scenario. You should take each small group aside and share their directions as detailed below. The group should have just a few moments to talk about their scenario, and then just a few minutes to act it out to the large group.
2. [10 min per small group] After each scenario, refer to specific examples of behaviors you observed acted out and ask the following questions. Write down the major issues that arise on flip chart paper.
 - ★ What just happened?
 - ★ Why do you think that happened?
 - ★ For the participants in the scenario: How was what happened different than what you expected? Why?
 - ★ How did you feel about your role?
 - ★ What issues/problems surfaced?
3. [5 min] Staying in the same groups, assign each group a new scenario and give them the list of issues for that scenario. Their task is to re-create that scenario, but this time, considering the issues, make it work as effectively as possible.
4. [10 min per small group] Re-play the new and improved scenarios. After each one, hold a brief discussion, asking:
 - ★ What was different?
 - ★ How well did it work?
 - ★ For the participants, how did you feel this time?
 - ★ Is there anything you'd still change?
5. [15 min] After all the scenarios have been re-played, hold a group discussion:
 - ★ Were there any reactions people had in any of the scenarios that surprised you? Why?
 - ★ How did people show respect to each other?
 - ★ What kinds of things do youth and adults do or say that gets misinterpreted? Why?
 - ★ How can such misunderstandings be prevented?

The Meeting Scenario

Facilitator Directions: Privately give “Youth” instructions to one actor, and “Adult” instructions to several actors playing adults. Don’t share each group’s instructions!

Youth: You have been asked by the principal of your school to attend a meeting about after-school programs because you’re involved with the community service club at school and help run an after-school tutoring program at the nearby middle school. You get out of school at 2:30, which is when the meeting starts and it will take you half an hour to get there by bus. You haven’t been given any information on the project so you’re not sure what it’s all about. You figure you can just go and listen at this first meeting and that there will be students from other high schools, too.

Adults: You are members of a coalition of community organizations and businesses that are trying to improve after-school programs for elementary and middle school youth. You are having an important meeting to decide the type of activities which will be offered. You were told by the city (which is going to fund the programs) that you must have a student actively involved in your organization. Some people are against including a young person, believing that they will prevent getting work done. Some of you, however, are looking forward to hearing what youth really want from after-school programs. The meeting started at 2:30, and it is 3:00 now. The student representative is not yet present. Your character should broadly be well-meaning but un-helpful, polite but somewhat condescending. Don't do introductions. Don't explain what's going on. Ask the youth actor vague questions about what youth want.

The Recruiting Scenario

Facilitator Directions: Give the following directions to one actor playing an adult and a group of several youth at the same time.

Youth: It's lunchtime. You're hanging outside with friends, eating.

Adult: You're recruiting people for an exciting new after-school community service program where people gain great job skills and have a lot of fun. Go talk with the group of youth.

The Presentation Scenario

Facilitator Directions: Give the following directions privately to one youth presenter and a mixed group of youth and adults as the audience.

Audience: It's Friday afternoon. You have just attended an assembly. It's a three-day weekend coming up. A guest speaker is coming soon.

Youth Presenter: You are a guest speaker in the class. You've spent hours putting this presentation together on how to get money for college and how to find a job after school. You really want to help. You have just walked into the classroom.

The Home Scenario

Facilitator Directions: Give the following directions at the same time to

two adults playing parents and two-four youth playing their teenage children. It's okay to reverse the roles and have adults play the teenagers and youth play the adults.

Youth: It's the big game of the season this Friday. Everybody is going to be there. You want to go and then go to a party afterwards. You want the car but know grandma and grandpa's 50th anniversary is coming up.

Adults: It's grandma and grandpa's 50th anniversary this Friday and you've planned a big surprise party for them. You need the kids there to help and you know grandma and grandpa would be pretty upset if they weren't there.

The Restaurant Scenario

Facilitator Directions: Give the following directions separately to one-two actors playing adults with a group of several youth, and one other actor playing an adult waitperson.

Group: You are having a meeting at a local restaurant about an upcoming community service event you're planning. Because you are meeting, you haven't really had any time to look at the menu.

Waitperson: Young people come into your restaurant all the time and they're usually very loud, rude and don't leave you a tip. You don't really like or have much patience for them. You really wish they'd stop coming. Adults, of course, are a different matter entirely.

Other Possible Scenarios

- ★ A young person being interviewed for a job
- ★ A student having a conference about grades with a teacher
- ★ A youth and an adult co-chairing a meeting

Variations

Try having youth and adults reverse roles—this highlights their perceptions of how the other group acts. Also, rather than using pre-determined scenarios, have the group brainstorm possible youth-adult scenarios, break up into small groups, and then each small group creates a scenario to act out.

Examining Media Bias

Workshop 5



Facilitator Notes

Introduction: This is a communication workshop for 8-40 youth and adult participants that uses intergenerational dialogue, critical thinking, personal creativity, and group analysis to examine media bias.

Goal: When this session is complete, participants should be able to...

1. Identify popular media images and messages about youth and adults
2. Examine how messages affect relationships between youth and adults

Time: 1 hour 30 minutes

Materials: A wide collection of newspapers and magazines of all kinds, scissors, blank paper, glue sticks, pens, and crayons for each small group. Before the workshop begins, make sure supplies are distributed among the tables, with additional supplies in a central location. If possible, have music on hand to play while participants work.

Space: Workspace for each small group

Considerations: Reality and media images often don't match, especially when it comes to young people. Images of adults are distorted in mainstream media, as well. This activity gives youth and adults a chance to look at the images put forth by the popular media and assess how those images have influenced their feelings and ideas about each other and themselves.

Activities

1. [5 min] Split people up into groups, depending on time and group size.
2. [30 min] Instruct each individual participant to pretend they are aliens who know little of your culture. You want to compile some information for the folks back on your planet about what it means to be a young person and what it means to be an adult. However, all you've got to work with are the newspapers and magazines before you.

Every participant should work individually to create two pictures, including one showing what it means to be an adult and another showing what it means to be a youth. You can make a collage, put together a collection of words, create a symbolic representation of the "typical" youth or adult, anything – just be creative! Keep a few questions in mind: What do youth do? What do adults do? What are youth or adults like? What's important to know about youth? Adults? What are their relationships to each other like?

3. [20 min] Everyone should share their collages with their small groups. Ask each participant describe their picture and what their work says about what it means to be a youth or an adult, according to

popular media. To save time, you could have half of each group focus on youth and the other half focus on adults.

4. [5 min] After each participant has reported to their small group, ask them to work together to create a small group definition for “youth” and for “adult.”
5. [5 min] Ask each small group to share their collages and share their definition with the large group. The facilitator should listen for themes and compile a list on flip chart paper.
6. [10 min] After each group is finished presenting, ask the following questions to the large group:
 - ★ What doesn’t seem very realistic to you about these images and the definitions/descriptions? Why?
 - ★ What does seem realistic? Why?
 - ★ What’s missing?
 - ★ How do you feel about these images?
 - ★ How do you wish they were different?
 - ★ How do these images get in the way of youth and adults working together?
 - ★ What things can people do to improve the situation?
 - ★ What can you do to improve the situation?
7. [15 min] For the closing activity, ask participants to stand in a circle, shoulder to shoulder. Explain to participants that after spending the whole workshop exploring media bias, they are invited to “Stand and Deliver.” This requires individuals to come to the center of the circle, one at a time, and declare something they are going to do to fight media bias against young people. Give ample time for everyone to speak if they want to, but don’t force everyone to talk either. This activity might require the facilitator starting it, so be sure to have an action in mind before you start.

Be Who You Are

Workshop 6



Facilitator Notes

Introduction: This is an identity and communication-oriented workshop for a mixed group of 12 to 100 youth and adults. Identity and communication are explored throughout this workshop where participants explore experiences and ideas affecting Youth Engagement.

Goal: When this session is complete, participants should be able to...

1. Distinguish between individual and group identity
2. Understand relevance of personal experience to Youth Engagement
3. Examine practical applications of storytelling to community settings

Time: 1 hour 30 minutes

Materials: Flip chart paper and markers, large 3x5" rectangular shaped Post-it pads in two colors, and writing instruments such as pencils, pens, or online blogs for the whole group. Before the workshop, hang sheets of flip chart paper on two walls of the room. Designate one wall "youth" and the other "adults." Also, create a poster with the following two statements on it and hang it closed so that participants cannot see it. The poster should say, "The experience and/or knowledge I have of this group, which leads to some tension, or distance I feel is..." and "What I want to know about this group is...."

Space: Lots of wall space and enough room to accommodate the entire group.

Considerations: This workshop is about identity, namely, who we are as individuals and what does it mean to be an individual? Participants have the chance to examine the questions they have about youth and adults and to get some answers. It also gets preconceptions – and the experiences that have led to those preconceptions – out in the open in an anonymous manner. In addition, people get the chance to tell personal stories.

Be aware issues may arise making people angry, upset or uncomfortable. People don't like feeling labeled or put into boxes. Also, individuals may have stories that are difficult to hear. Remind individuals that recognizing and acknowledging stereotypes is the first step to changing them. The exercise works very well with large groups although with small groups you'll have greater opportunity to debrief.

Activities

1. [10 min] Start by giving the group an overview of the activity. Then begin by asking the group to define the word "identity." You might ask:
 - ★ What does it mean to be part of a group?
 - ★ What does having an identity mean to you?
 - ★ What different things contribute to your identity?

★ What does your identity mean to you?

2. [3 min] Once the group has a working definition of Identity, explain that:

“Everyone has different groups they identify with. Those groups often include race or ethnicity, gender, occupation and relationships. Age is another major one of those groups. It is also one of the most evident differences in this group.

“Within the identity of ‘youth’ and ‘adults’ there are other groups. For example, within the group of ‘adults’ you’ll also find ‘parents,’ ‘teachers,’ and ‘workers.’ Among a group of ‘youth’ you will find ‘athletes,’ ‘students,’ and ‘son/daughter.’

But those labels can get in the way.”

3. [7 min] Ask participants to take a piece of paper and write at the top “Youth” or “Adult,” depending on which group they identify with. Under that, write the names of one to three other groups that you strongly identify and connect with as a youth or adult. Explain that the purpose is to create subgroups of youth and adults to discuss what it means to identify with an age group.

4. [5 min] Have participants report back, and create a list of 3-8 subgroups for “Youth” and 3-8 subgroups for “Adult,” depending on the size of the overall group. Write the name of each of these groups at the top of a flip chart page on the wall. Draw a line down the middle of each page.

5. [5 min] Pass out four pieces of adhesive note paper (think Post-its) to each person and make sure everyone gets the same color. Ask them to think about their experiences with youth or adults or any of the sub-groups, and to write their answers on the Post-its. You might say,

★ “What has frustrated you about the other group? Why does this frustrate you?”

★ “What questions do you have for this group?”

5. [20 min] After several minutes, ask them to pick two groups they feel the greatest distance or tension with or have the most pressing question for. Give participants two Post-its notes and have them respond to the two questions you reveal on the poster you made before the workshop (see “Considerations” section at the beginning of this workshop). Encourage them to mill around and add additional pages of flip chart paper as necessary. As a reminder, the questions are:

★ The experience and/or knowledge I have of this group, which leads to some tension, or distance I feel is...

★ What I want to know about this group is....

As participants finish writing, have them post their notes on the appropriate pieces of flip chart paper. Ask participants to mingle around and read each others’ statements. When that is done, ask them to rejoin into two groups.

6. [20 min] Have participants identify a question they can respond to and stand by that question. Encourage everyone to choose a unique question, and when everyone is in place, have half the

group go and ask questions of the people left standing with their questions. When that group is done, switch groups and answer the rest of the questions.

7. [20 min] Gather the large group back together in a circle. Explain to them that you are going to ask three questions, and you want everyone to think about their answer. A few people can share their thoughts with the group after each question; however, no one is obligated to share.

The facilitator should read each question slowly, individually, and give the group several moments of silence between questions. After each question, you might need to prompt the group to speak by asking if anyone wants to respond.

- ★ What is one thing you just heard, felt, or thought that you will remember over the next week?
- ★ What is one thing you want to react to?
- ★ Do we ever have opportunities to ask open, frank questions to young people and/or adults in the rest of our lives? What do those look like?
- ★ What barriers stop us from having these conversations other places? How can we overcome those barriers?

NOTE: This activity can raise emotions that the group has not shared before. Make sure you create the safe place for expression or share avenues for people to share their feelings before the workshop ends.

Words as Weapons and Tools

Workshop 7



Facilitator Notes

Introduction: This is an inquiry-based workshop in which 8-40 participants will identify and explore the role of language between young people and adults. Participants explore the role of language in Youth Engagement.

Goal: When this session is complete, participants should be able to...

1. Recognize role of language in Youth Engagement
2. Understand differences in language between young people and adults
3. Create foundation for respectful communication

Time: One hour minutes

Materials: Flip chart paper and markers

Space: Big enough for the group to work

Considerations: Language plays a big role in perception and a sense of belonging to a group. Talking about language is a good way to get at issues that underlie tension between youth and adults. It is important that this exercise not get too personal. Remind individuals to focus on *characteristics*, not individuals. That means making general comments rather than, “Oh, it is stupid when (my mother, youth volunteer, x teacher, the project director) says this.” Encourage people to laugh and use this exercise as a fun way to vent and to get some issues out on the table.

Activities

1. [10 min] Split group up into youth and adults. Depending on the size of group, you may want to create small groups among the youth and the adults. Hand out flip chart paper and markers and ask each group to appoint a recorder. Tell the groups they will have ten minutes to brainstorm as long a list as possible of things they never want to hear the other group say again.
2. [10 min] When the group is finished, have them pick the top ten words or phrases they dislike and to briefly list the reason(s) they selected each one.
3. [20 min] Ask each small group to report back to the large group. Give the large group the opportunity for the large group to respond with questions, comments, or other responses after each small group reports. For this segment, the facilitator should try to remain quiet, allowing the group to answer its own questions and pose its own questions.
4. [15 min] After each small group has presented, the facilitator should pose the following questions. Ask the group to stay focused on discussing the assumptions and reasoning behind each phrase:

- ★ Were there any surprises?
- ★ Was anything missing?
- ★ For adults, did you see anything on the young people’s list that you remember *not* wanting to hear when you were young?

Take note of common themes presented by participants.

5. [5 min] When complete, without a break, hand out a new sheet of flip chart paper to groups, this time with the question, “What kinds of things do people want to hear from each other?”
6. [5 min] When the group is finished, have them pick the top five words or phrases they like and briefly list the reason(s) for each one.
7. [15 min] Each small group should report back again with the facilitator again remaining quiet. After each small group has presented share these questions:
 - ★ Were there any surprises?
 - ★ Was anything missing?
 - ★ For adults, did you see anything on the young people’s list that you remember *wanting* to hear when you were young?
8. [5 min] Close by asking participants to say what they have learned about communicating effectively with the other age group.

Optional activity

- [20 min] After everyone has presented their thoughts on both questions, have them role play contrasting examples. Give volunteers words or phrases that appear to be opposites, and ask them to make up a scene where youth and adults say what the other *does not* want to hear, and say what they *do* want to hear. This can provide a good segue into the next workshop.

Short Listening Activities

Workshop 8



Facilitator Notes

Introduction: The following workshop uses a collection of short communication exercises to focus participants on barriers to listening and skills for overcoming them. The exercise is meant to be fun while raising awareness of the work involved in listening closely.

Goal: When this session is complete participants should be able to...

1. Acknowledge communication styles
2. Apply new listening skills

Time: 2 hours; individual activities are from 10-30 minutes

Materials: See "Activities"

Space: See "Activities"

Considerations: Each activity consists of a short description along with several suggested debrief questions. Mix and match exercises, do them all, or supplement them with other information. After doing a couple of the exercises, facilitate a general discussion about what it means to listen, how to be a good listener, and how participants can apply what they learn through these activities.

Activities

Pair Observations

Materials: None

Space: Enough for people to work in pairs.

1. [25 min] This exercise shows us how little we perceive even when we are supposedly paying focused attention on someone. Have the group divide into pairs (Person A and Person B) and sit face to face. Person A asks person B the following four questions:
 - ★ What is your name?
 - ★ Where were you born?
 - ★ What makes you happy?
 - ★ What makes you sad?

When those questions are complete, switch and have Person B ask Person A the same questions.

2. After all pairs have interviewed each other, have them sit back to back. Then the facilitator should ask the following four questions to

everyone, one question at a time. Pairs should share their answers to each other out loud:

- ★ What color hair does your partner have?
- ★ Does your partner wear glasses?
- ★ What was your partner wearing?
- ★ What type of shoes does your partner have?

When everyone is finished bring the group back together to discuss how many people got the right answers. You may change the interview questions to something that may relate more directly to the work of the group.

3. You can reflect on this activity by asking:

- ★ Were people able to answer the second four questions? Why or why not?
- ★ What does this tell us about how we listen and communicate?
- ★ How do expectations affect communication?
- ★ How might one improve communication based on what you have learned from this activity?

Listening and Not Listening

Materials: None

Space: Enough for people to work in pairs.

1. [30 min] This exercise illustrates some of the specific behaviors around listening and not listening and gives people the opportunity to experience what both experiences feel like.
2. Have the group divide into pairs. Ask the pairs to come up with a simple situation in which one person (Person A) is talking to another (Person B)—for example, a friend telling another about his/her day, a student asking a teacher about a homework assignment, etc.
3. Each person in the pair then chooses one of the roles. When you tell them to begin, person A starts talking. Person B is to do everything he or she can to demonstrate that they are not listening. Let this go until it is clearly time to stop (about 2-3 minutes).
4. Create a list of “not listening” behaviors. Then challenge participants to three it again, this time with Person B doing everything he or she can to demonstrate he or she is listening. Make a list of what people did this time that was different.
5. You can reflect on the activity by asking:
 - ★ How did it feel when Person B wasn't listening?
 - ★ When he/she was listening?
 - ★ Which was easier? Why?
 - ★ How do you know when someone is really listening to you?

Explaining a Process: Communicating Back to Back

Materials: Blank paper and pencils for half the group. Slips of paper with simple drawings on them for the other half.

Space: Enough for people to work in pairs

1. [30 min] Ask the group to divide into pairs. Ask the pairs to sit back to back and designate themselves Person A and Person B. Person A is given a slip of paper with a simple design (preferably abstract). Person A attempts to explain the design and instruct Person B in how to draw it. Person B may not talk! They have 10 minutes (variation: After 5 minutes, tell them that Person B may now talk). If time allows, have partners switch roles, shuffle a new design, and have them try again.
2. Most likely, the drawings will look nothing like they should, illustrating the importance—and the difficulty—of clear communication. This shows us clearly that what we think we are saying may not be what others hear. Reflect on this activity by asking:
 - ★ What strategies for describing the picture seemed to work? Why?
 - ★ In what situations might those kinds of strategies also be useful?
 - ★ How can you be clearer and more precise?

Explain that the clearer we are in our communication, the less likely we are to run into misunderstandings (and the anger and confusion that can accompany them).

Focusing with Body Language: Impulse Circle

Materials: none

Space: Enough for the group to stand in a circle

1. [10 min] The Impulse Circle can be used to help a group focus and concentrate. The group should stand in a circle and hold hands. Facilitator squeezes the hand of the person on their right, sending an impulse around the circle. The group sees how quickly they can do this.
2. After a couple times around, add a second impulse. See if they can keep two going at once.
3. Ask participants to do the activity in silence or with their eyes closed. Ask:
 - ★ What is difficult about this activity? Why?
 - ★ How might you make it easier? Why would that help?

Challenging Assumptions about Language: Making PB & J

Materials: A loaf of bread, jam, peanut butter, knife, plate, towel

Space: A table with the group around it

1. [25 min] This activity demonstrates assumptions we make about language. Set up materials on the table, and ask for two volunteers. Assign one to be the sandwich maker and the other to be the sandwich director.

2. Explain to the group that the sandwich maker is an alien from another planet and has only the most rudimentary understanding of your culture, let alone your language.

The sandwich director's job is to instruct the alien in the art of making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich making using only words, with no actions.

The audience's job is to call foul if they think the sandwich director is using concepts or words that are too sophisticated (such as "open the jar," or "pick up the knife") or otherwise committing fouls, like pointing.

2. Reflect on the activity by asking:

- ★ How do your assumptions about what people understand affect communication?
- ★ How can we change that effect?
- ★ What happens when you make too many assumptions and are not clear enough?
- ★ How can you apply what you have learned to other communication?
- ★ It is much easier to get work done when you have common understanding.

Feedback Techniques

Workshop 9



Facilitator Notes

Introduction: This is a skill-building workshop that can either have a group of youth or a mixed group of youth and adults, with no fewer than 8 participants and no more than 25.

Goal: When this session is complete participants should be able to...

1. Provide constructive feedback between youth and adults
2. Encourage others to do the same with specific tools

Time: 1 hour

Materials: Flip chart paper and markers

Space: Enough for the group to spread out and work in pairs

Considerations: Communication is one of the biggest barriers to young people and adults working together. Everyone knows how to talk, but surprisingly few people know how to communicate. It is a skill (so you don't automatically know how to do it) and takes some practice. However, the skills developed for giving and receiving feedback are definitely Western European in origin. There are other ways to communicate and other skills that go with them.

Activities

1. [15 min] Introduce the term “feedback”: Feedback is a means of letting someone know how their behavior affects you—positively or negatively. Then share the “Feedback Model and Rules Handout” following this activity. You may want to use that page as an overhead.

Keep reading for directions on how to demonstrate this feedback model briefly by using a volunteer as a partner.

2. [5 min] Explain how participants will practice feedback. Tell them to think of a situation in which they wanted to tell someone else about something they did that was hurtful, annoying or otherwise difficult. Tell participants that they will work in threes. One person will practice giving feedback, one will listen and one will observe.

Share the following roles with participants:

- ★ *The feedback giver* starts by telling the listener what the situation is, and about the role the listener will play.
- ★ *The observer* simply notes if the person practicing feedback is following the “rules” of feedback.
- ★ *The listener* listens and then gives the response which he or she sees fit.

- ★ *The feedback giver* makes another statement, again using the model. Then participants stop.
- ★ *The observer* shares observations and the recipient shares how it felt to get feedback.

If you only have a few people or don't have much time, you can have the listener double as the observer and do the exercise in pairs.

3. [30 min] One by one, participants will practice giving feedback. Allow for about five to seven minutes for each round, reminding people to switch so they will have enough time to rotate the roles.
4. [10 min] Close by reflecting on the following questions:
 1. What did it feel like to give the feedback statements?
 2. How did the feedback giver feel about the response of the listener?
 3. Observers: what were some of the difficulties you noticed people having?
 4. What was it like to hear feedback?
 5. During what situations could this technique be useful? Why?
 6. During what situations wouldn't it be useful? Why?

Optional activities

- [15 min] If time allows, have people practice feedback again, but this time positive feedback. Tell each participant to identify a situation in which he or she wanted to tell someone about something the person did that he or she really appreciated. Let people know that feedback often feels awkward and artificial at first, but that it gets easier and more comfortable with practice.

Feedback Model and Rules



Handout

Use the following model to provide practice giving and receiving feedback:

I feel [feeling] when you [behavior] because [impact on you].

- ★ *Instead of* “You irresponsible jerk! Where were you yesterday? We can never count on you!”
- ★ *Try* “I felt irritated when you didn’t show up at the meeting yesterday because we had to postpone our goal setting.”

Rule 1: Focus on behaviors and actions, not personality.

- ★ *Instead of* “You’re a totally domineering loudmouth!”
- ★ *Try* “I felt frustrated at yesterday’s meeting when you interrupted several people to make your own points because I didn’t get to hear what they had to say.”

Rule 2: Be specific and concrete, avoiding vagueness and generalizations.

- ★ *Instead of* “You are always late for things.”
- ★ *Try* “I was upset when you came late to the event because I had to do your work as well as my own.”
- ★ **TIP** If you can’t come up with a concrete example, think again about the feedback you are trying to give. Is it accurate, or just your perception?

Rule 3: Time your feedback well.

- ★ *Don’t* give feedback so long after the actual incident that he\she has trouble even remembering.
- ★ *Don’t* give feedback so soon after the incident that the person isn’t really ready to hear it.
- ★ *Don’t* give feedback when the person isn’t ready to listen. For example, he/she is on the way out and doesn’t have time, is with a group of people, or is in a bad mood.
- ★ *Do* pick a good time and place so that you both can be focused and capable of listening.

Rule 4: Do no harm.

- ★ *Don’t* just go off on someone so that you feel better. Check your attitude and your motivations for giving feedback *before* you speak. Ask yourself why you want to give this person feedback.
- ★ *Do* sincerely try to give people information that is going to help them and be reasonable with your expectations.

Rule 5: Deal with one item of information at a time.

- ★ *Don’t* say, “I feel angry when you don’t take out the trash or do the dishes or pick up your things or vacuum the floor because this place is a mess!”
- ★ *Don’t* confuse the receiver with lots of big words or go into a long drawn-out speech and get straight to the point.
- ★ *Do* pick one thing to focus on for now.

Jargon Flags

Workshop 10



Facilitator Notes

Introduction: This is a communications activity for a variable number of youth and adults that deals with language in organizations. It focuses on clear communication between youth and adults.

Goal: When this session is complete, participants should be able to...

1. Develop awareness of how language is used
2. Define unknown terms

Time: 45 minutes

Materials: One piece of paper and a marker for each participant

Space: Enough for participants to fit into a comfortable circle.

Considerations: Language can define a group - you know you belong when you can “talk the talk”. Jargon Flags can provide a mechanism to break down the walls of exclusion that language can create. Remember, this workshop should be *fun* - if people treat it as a game, they won’t feel attacked if and when a flag is raised on them. This workshop can be easily modified to fit particular settings, including agency-specific topics, as well as the differences between the language youth use and the language adults use.

Activities

1. [10 min] Begin by giving participants a piece of paper, and asking them to make a flag of any shape. They can carefully rip the paper into any shape. When everyone is finished, collect the flags.
2. [35 min] Sort the flags and mix them up, and then hand out one flag to each participant. Ask everyone to take a minute and think of the subject that they know the most information about. Choose one speaker from the circle to start with, then explain that you are going to ask them to talk about their information until you stop them.

Before the speaker begins, ask every other person in the circle to raise their flag every time the speaker uses a word they don’t understand. When a flag goes up, the person raising it says the word, and the person who said the word has to give a definition. Give each person a minute or so to talk, and then stop. At the end reflect with the group on the purpose of the activity.

Variation

Turn it into a competition: Who can have the most flags raised? The fewest? Have fun and make sure people are communicating clearly.

Power, Trust, and Respect

Workshop 11



Facilitator Notes

Introduction: This is an inquiry-based activity that requires a mixed group of youth and adults for at least 8 people, and as many as 60. Participants explore differences in how they view important aspects of Youth Engagement.

Goal: When this session is complete, participants should be able to...

1. Identify others' understanding of key concepts
2. Critically examine the role of power, trust, and respect in Youth Engagement

Time: 45 minutes

Materials: Flip chart paper and markers; a writing utensil and paper for each participant

Space: Enough room for people to work in small groups

Considerations: People generally assume that their understanding of a certain word is the same thing another person understands. Oftentimes people haven't really examined what they mean by using certain words. For particularly tricky words—like power, respect and trust—you can get in a fine mess if group members define their terms very differently. This exercise asks a group to look closely at some key terms and talk about what they really mean.

Activities

1. [5 min] Explain to participants that in this workshop they will be exploring some issues that are very important to Youth Engagement. Then write the following terms on a sheet of flip chart paper.
 - ★ Power
 - ★ Trust
 - ★ Respect
 - ★ Support

Ask participants to jot down a definition for each term. Explain that these definitions should be based on their individual experience with it — no dictionary definitions allowed! You might ask participants to write about what the term *really* means to them. They can also feel free to use drawings or symbols, as long as they can explain what the symbols mean.

2. [10 min] After everyone has had a chance to write about it, have participants split it into small groups. Participants should share their definitions in their small groups and talk about why they defined it that way.

Have groups report back. While they talk, record key words on a sheet of flip chart paper, including phrases or ideas explaining each word.

3. [15 min] As a large group, discuss the definitions specifically. Then ask:

- ★ Did you notice any differences in interpretation of the words? What did you notice? Why do you think there were or weren't differences?
- ★ Did your understanding of these words change? Why? How?

Next, discuss some of the issues more closely associated with each terms:

- ★ Are there different kinds of power, trust, and/or support?
- ★ Where do these concepts come from?
- ★ How do you get power, trust, and/or support?
- ★ What happens when you are unsupported? When you are not empowered? Not trusted?
- ★ What kinds of responsibilities go along with these terms?
- ★ What does your culture say about these terms?

4. [15 min] Close by asking how power relates to youth and adults working together, and talking about what is important to remember when they think about these terms.

Variations

Mural - Put a big blank piece of paper (the kind that comes on the roll) on the wall. Have people draw images or symbols or words that represent power (or respect, trust, etc.) to them. Use the mural to prompt discussion.

Mind map - Write one of the terms in the middle of a big piece of paper. Have people write related words or phrases around it, and words related to those words or phrases. Draw circles around all the words and draw lines between connected words.

Tableaux - Have small groups discuss the term for a few minutes. Then have them create a scene with everyone involved where people can represent objects and no one can move or talk, but they still represent the term. The large group then talks about what they saw represented in the tableaux.

Skits - Similar to Tableaux, but this time team members create short (two or three minute) skits. This time people can move and talk. Again, the large group talks about what they saw represented in the skit.

Ground Rules

Workshop 12



Facilitator Notes

Introduction: This is an inquiry-based workshop for at least five and as many as 60 youth and adult participants, particularly groups that will be working together for a long time.

Goal: When this session is complete, participants should be able to...

1. Recognize collective investment in Youth Engagement
2. Establish principles for common action

Time: 25 minutes

Materials: Flip chart paper and markers

Space: Enough to hold the entire group

Considerations: It's critical for groups working together to take time to discuss the rules or guidelines by which they collectively agree to abide. These rules can be as simple as "Show respect" or "Be on time." The activity is important because it gives people the opportunity to set boundaries before they begin working together.

Activities

1. [5 min] Explain to the group the importance of setting ground rules, and mention that ground rules are best when kept simple, basic and few in number.

Ask people to think about a group of people that worked well together. What was it about that group that worked so well? Facilitate a brief discussion.

2. [15 min] Ask for potential ground rules. Write several suggestions on a flip chart.

Make sure everyone understands each rule and does not objections with them. Ask participants for questions or concerns, and find out if anyone needs clarification about the terms.

When you feel sufficient discussion has taken place, ask everyone who feels they can support and uphold these principles to raise their hands.

3. [5 min] If the group is one that will be working together for some time, you may want to discuss consequences for straying from the ground rules. This is a level of detail that many find unnecessary. Often, the group itself will informally enforce rules such as "listen to each other" and "Show respect." Post the rules for all to see.

Group Strengths and Weaknesses

Workshop 13



Facilitator Notes

Introduction: This is an inquiry-based workshop for as few as eight and as many as 40 youth and adult participants. Activities explore essential issues that are relevant to Youth Engagement.

Goal: When this session is complete, participants should be able to...

1. Identify common interests, abilities, and needs
2. Acknowledge and celebrate capacity of group to foster Youth Engagement

Time: 1 hour

Materials: Flip chart paper and markers, blank 8.5x11" paper and crayons for each participant; draw a large shield on a sheet of flip chart paper before the workshop, and write one of the phrases from Activity 1 in each box.

Space: Enough for participants to work in small groups

Considerations: Building respect means learning to see people as individuals and as resources. Far too often we tend to assume that because of their age, youth have less to contribute in terms of skills and abilities than adults. When youth and adults are going to be working together on projects it is particularly important to take time to find out individuals' gifts and capacities. Since many people are uncomfortable talking about what they're good at – it might feel like bragging- you'll need to ask the question in several ways. It's also important to encourage people to think creatively and include things that might seem insignificant to them.

Activities

1. [5 min] Before the workshop begins split people into small groups and hand out paper and crayons to each group. Present the outline of a shield on a piece of flip chart paper. Each box should have one of these phrases in it:
 - ★ Things you enjoy doing
 - ★ Things you can build or make
 - ★ Things you know about
 - ★ A successful experience you had
 - ★ Other strengths and things you are good at
2. [15 min] Instruct participants to draw a similar shield with 5 boxes on their pieces of paper. Then tell them that in each box they are to draw symbols that represent each of the categories on the flip chart paper. Encourage participants to be creative, think broadly and include little things.

3. [5 min] When they are almost finished, ask participants to turn their paper over and write three weaknesses or things they wish they were better at or things they would like to change about themselves.
4. [20 min] After participants have had enough time to finish, ask them to share their pictures in small groups. Each person should explain everything on the front of the picture and read at least one thing she or he wrote on the back. Ask the other people in the group to listen for clues about other strengths each speaker might have. After each person is done explaining his or her shield, the rest of the group should ask questions or suggest other possible strengths.
5. [5 min] When everyone in the group has reported, ask each group to create a master list of the strengths and skills everyone brings to the group.

After each group is finished, ask them to post their lists, and ask participants to look around and read what each group has posted.

6. [15 min] Close with a couple of the following questions, or your own:
 - ★ How does it feel to talk about your strengths?
 - ★ What was it like to listen to others' strengths?
 - ★ Does anything surprise you?
 - ★ What do the lists tell you about this group?
 - ★ Is there anything missing that we are going to need?

The Silent Circle

Workshop 14



Facilitator Notes

Introduction: This is a critical thinking workshop for as few as eight and as many as 40 youth and adult participants. It explores a critical element of engaging Youth Engagement.

Goal: When this session is complete, participants should be able to...

1. Identify strengths and weaknesses within group
2. Recognize role of trust in Youth Engagement

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: None

Space: Enough for group to stand in a circle.

Considerations: This activity may sound easy, but many people have strong reactions to the simple act of walking forward with their eyes closed. Depriving yourself of sight demands that you put trust in other members of the group. This exercise prepares group members for more high-risk trust building activities, and for taking action as a team.

Activities

1. [5 min] Begin by having the group stand in a loose circle, about an arm's length between each person. Explain to participants that one at a time, each person is invited to walk cross the circle with their eyes closed. Once each person has crossed the circle, the two closest people will gently stop them by placing their hands on the walker's shoulders. Then those two people will turn the walker around and send them across the circle again. When the walker finishes crossing again they will be turned around again. This time, when the walker reaches the other side they are invited to open their eyes and rejoin the circle. One at a time, each person will cross the circle this way. There should be complete silence until everyone has crossed. Before the group begins, the facilitator should demonstrate the process for participants.
2. [15 min] One at a time, everyone in the group should take a turn. Remember the essential rule of any cooperative game: Challenge by choice. That means that if someone does not want to try, that is okay – as long as they understand the impact that has on the rest of the group.
3. [10 min] Once everyone has completed the activity, you can close by asking the group:
 - ★ How did you feel doing this activity?
 - ★ What was the most challenging thing? The most surprising?
 - ★ What did you learn by taking the walk?
 - ★ What did you learn by observing others?

Group Appreciations

Workshop 15



Facilitator Notes

Introduction: This is a skill-building activity for youth and adults that can be used with any number of participants.

Goal: When this session is complete, participants should be able to...

1. Understand their group as a “community”
2. Acknowledge the strengths of individuals and the group

Time: 5-15 minutes

Materials: None

Space: Enough for group to break into pairs

Considerations: This short and simple activity has a variety of uses and adaptations which all serve to focus group awareness on the talents and contributions of members. At the same time, positive feedback increases individual and group effectiveness.

Activities

1. Explain to the group that the goal of this activity is to share something each participant appreciates about someone in the group.

The variations and ways by which you structure this positive feedback are endless. While the options are endless, there are a couple ground rules:

- ★ Nothing negative may be said
- ★ The person receiving appreciation cannot respond, but must simply accept the good things being said about him or her.
- ★ Everyone at some point must have a chance to be appreciated.

VARIATIONS

- ★ Pick a different person at the end of each meeting who will hear appreciations from the rest of the group for seven minutes.
- ★ Write each person’s name on a separate piece of paper and put it up on the wall during a retreat. People write appreciations on the papers.
- ★ For every person in the group, go around the circle and have everyone else say one word that expresses a positive thing about that person.

It's in the Bag

Workshop 16



Facilitator Notes

Introduction: This is a critical-thinking workshop for youth and adult participants. This workshop is for few as eight and as many as 40 participants.

Goal: When this session is complete, participants should be able to...

1. Understand roles of trust and openness within group
2. Help others get to know each other better

Time: 1 hour

Materials: Paper lunch bags, scissors, glue m magazines, pens, crayons, and other art supplies, such as string, glitter, stickers, stamps, etc. Boom box and music, if available.

Space: Sufficient table or floor space to work alone without disruption.

Considerations: This fun, simple exercise helps break down barriers between youth and adults by giving them the opportunity to really express themselves.

Activities

1. [5 min] Explain to the group that you are going to make personal bags. Each participant should make their bags independently, and if you have music to play, put it on once “work time” begins.
2. [25 min] Let participants know that they have about 20 minutes, and explain the first task for everyone to do is using the outside of the bag, draw, write, and otherwise represent how you believe others see you, things that people generally know about you, and things you tell people.

On the inside of the bag draw, write, or otherwise represent how you feel you are, including things that people generally don't know about you and things you usually don't tell people. Make sure to tell the group that no one has to share anything on the inside of the bag.

3. [25 min] When everyone has finished, ask people to pair up and share the outside of their bags and one thing from the inside of their bags. When everyone has done that, ask the pairs join with another pair and repeat. If time and numbers allow, have quartets join together and share again.
4. [5 min] Debrief in the large group. You might ask, “How do you feel about this activity? What did you learn? What was difficult/easy? Why? Any surprises?”

Lava Rocks Problem Solving

Workshop 17



Facilitator Notes

Introduction: Activity for 8-40 youth and adult participants working in teams. The activity is designed as an experiential way of pulling together lessons from previous communication and teamwork.

Goal: When this session is complete, participants should be able to...

1. Identify group decision-making trends
2. Identify leadership, communication and power issues in stressful situations
3. Create supportive environments for group success

Time: 2 hours

Materials: One 6" x 6" "lava rock" for each 2 of your group members. Rocks, logs, carpet squares, or paper can be used - whichever is most convenient. If your group has 9 people, you should have 4 items.

Space: An open, grassy field about 20 yards long is optimal; large indoor space is workable.

Considerations: A deceptively simple exercise, this activity quickly conveys rich lessons about how groups can work together - especially when they are frustrated. Frustration is a key component of this activity so it is absolutely critical that the group be allowed to work through mistakes, false starts, and slip-ups. Be warned that watching a group struggle in this manner can be just as frustrating for the facilitator. Be patient; it really can take 2 hours to complete. Pay close attention to the actions and interactions of group members.

Activities

1. [15 min] Tell participants that the group is being chased and they need to get across a field of hot lava. Give the group their "lava rocks" and explain that when they step on these magic rocks they will not sink into the lava. Their challenge is to figure out how to get the entire group from one side of the Hot Lava Pit to the other, both marked by masking tape on the floor or lines in the dirt.

Explain that only one person can stand on a plate at a time, and the plates may be picked up and moved. Participants should know that the key to the game is that only part of the team will be able to cross the field at once. A time limit can also be placed on this game. If people are talking, take one of the lava rocks away. You can return it when they show more cooperation.

Ask if the group has any questions about the rules – however, do not answer any questions about how they should do it, and do not let them discuss it.

Notes for During the Activity

The most common solution to the activity is to bunch up closely on the lava rocks with two or more people standing on each one. The team will then hand the Lava Rock at the back up to the front, slowly creep forward and then repeat until they reach the far shore.

If participants are completely stuck, tell them that they have five minutes to get everyone on the lava rocks. This often helps them get the idea that they have to put rocks close together.

If desperate, you can give them the chance to return to the starting point, talk for a few minutes and then begin again in silence. These techniques can also help control the time it takes to complete the activity, thus ending with sufficient time to debrief. Dealing with frustration is crucial.

2. [15 min] When the group has completed the task, give them a moment to celebrate their success. Then sit down to talk about it. The debriefing of this activity is critical.

The key to debriefing this exercise is to keep good running notes on specific actions of both individuals and the group during the activity and then call their attention to those actions during the discussion. Pay attention to the roles taken by the youth and by the adults. Who makes the first move? Who is out in front? How do they work together? What kinds of tensions do you see?

Listen to group member comments and help them relate the lessons to other situations they might be in, or might have already encountered, especially for groups that will be working together in the future.

Opening Questions

- ★ How did it feel when I gave the rules?
- ★ How did it feel when you first got started?
- ★ How did you feel when you ran out of rocks/logs?
- ★ How did it feel to get off on the other side of the river?
- ★ How did it feel to slip off the Lava Rock and begin again?
- ★ How did people at the front feel? The back? The middle?
- ★ What was hard? What was easy? Why?

Questions about Power *(continued on next page)*

- ★ How did the group decide what to do?
- ★ Did the team have a plan? Did everyone understand that?
- ★ What kinds of leadership did you see?
- ★ Were there differences in the roles young people took and the roles adults took? How so?
- ★ In what ways did youth and adults work well together? In what ways didn't they? How could you tell? What would you change? Why?

Questions about Communication and Respect

- ★ What was it like not to be able to talk?
- ★ What other forms of communication did you use?
- ★ What did you learn about communication?

Questions about Support and Trust

- ★ How did you know you were being supported by others?
- ★ What kinds of things did people do that were supportive?
- ★ What was it like to have to hang on to each other?

Questions to Apply Learning

- ★ What was useful about doing this exercise?
- ★ How is this group like other groups you have been a part of?
- ★ What does this tell you about what it takes for youth and adults to work together?
- ★ What have you learned about how you work in a group?

Probing for Problems

Workshop 18



Facilitator Notes

Introduction: This is an inquiry-based, situation-oriented planning workshop for mixed groups of youth and adults. It is designed for a minimum of four participants, and a maximum of 40.

Goal: When this session is complete, participants should be able to...

1. Anticipate potential problems and develop preventative solutions
2. Examine specific barriers to partnerships

Time: 30-60 minutes, depending on the number of people and desired amount of detail.

Materials: Flip chart paper and markers.

Space: Enough for the group to work together or in teams.

Considerations: Often people are aware of the barriers that prevent young people and adults from working together. They may even be able to list them out in detail. However, knowing the problematic issues is not enough, it's important to solve them ahead of time when possible. In this activity, participants select a specific upcoming event—it's got to be a real one - and devise solutions for how to get around the major barriers.

Activities

1. [5 min] Begin by asking the group to select a specific upcoming event that they are working on. It may be a meeting, a workshop, a conference, a focus group, a banquet – anything - as long as it involves young people and adults working together. Have someone in the group give a brief description of the event, its purpose and the key players.
2. [5 min] From a list of the top barriers that get in the way of youth and adults working together, have the group select three to six that are major concerns for the event.

NOTE: If you haven't conducted the Youth Engagement 101 workshop with his group, and thus developed a list of barriers, select from the following:

- ★ Lack of trust
- ★ Lack of respect
- ★ Lack of resources
- ★ Poor communication
- ★ Not listening (cont.)

- ★ Unclear expectations

- ★ Unclear motives and agendas
- ★ Stereotyping
- ★ Fear and power issues
- ★ Tokenism
- ★ Bad attitudes/stereotype of activities

3. [15 min] In teams or as a large group, go through each of the barriers the group chose one by one. If you are conducting the workshop in teams, you may want to assign a different barrier to each team to address. For each barrier have the group create two or three strategies for dealing with that barrier when it comes up. Encourage participants to create strategies that are both concrete and realistic so that the group can implement any one of them.
4. [5 min] To close this activity, ask participants if their thoughts about the barriers have changed. You might ask if they learned anything about planning activities for which youth and adults will be working together, or if they might change the way they plan events in the future.

Planning For Roadblocks

Workshop 19



Facilitator Notes

Introduction: This is an inquiry-based planning workshop for young people and adults that requires at least four and as many as 16 participants.

Goal: When this session is complete participants should be able to...

1. Acknowledge group issues and concerns
2. Anticipate challenges before they occur
3. Strategize responses to challenges

Time: 60 minutes

Materials: Flip chart paper and markers and several index cards or slip of scrap paper for each participant, along with a writing utensil

Space: Enough to accommodate whole group.

Considerations: Even after discussing power and respect, laying ground rules, building teams, defining terms, and talking about structural barriers between youth and adults, issues often remain. Concerns may be raised by people in the organization who have not been a part of the process of involving youth. Workshop participants themselves may have concerns. Therefore, it is critical to get the issues out on the table and address them. Without clear and open communication, the group runs the risk of having the issues surface later to sabotage their work.

Activities

1. [5 min] Start this workshop by distributing two or three index cards or slips of scratch paper to each participant, and place the rest within reach.
2. [10 min] Ask participants to spend a few moments thinking quietly to themselves about their greatest worries and fears about the Youth Engagement activities they are building, Tell them to imagine worst-case scenarios—or even the most annoying scenarios. Examples include over-burdened staff, adults not following through on their promises, slow board meetings, adults taking over, youth misrepresenting the agency in public, etc.

Ask participants to write each concern on an index card or scrap of paper, and tell them not to write their names on the cards. Writing anonymous concerns allows people to admit to worries that they might otherwise not express.

3. [10 min] Collect cards from participants and read them aloud, creating a master list on flip chart paper. If there are a lot of issues, create priorities by having people come up and place check marks by the three they are most concerned about.

4. [20 min] To begin this activity, if the number of issues and/or the number of participants is small enough (no more than 10) you can work in the large group. Otherwise, break the large group into smaller groups of four to eight participants.

Each small group should spend several minutes brainstorming...

- ★ At least three ways to prevent this concern from occurring
- ★ At least three ways to deal with it if it happens

5. [10 min] When everyone is done, ask each small group to share their discussion with the large group.
6. [10 min] To close, ask if there is a concern that wasn't addressed that someone feels is critical. If time allows, address it then. Otherwise, make sure it will be discussed at some point in the near future.

That's A Wrap

Workshop 20



Facilitator Notes

Introduction: This is an action-oriented planning workshop for youth and adults with a minimum of eight and a maximum of 40 participants.

Goal: When this session is complete participants should be able to...

1. Identify challenges of project planning
2. Examine how they function under pressure
3. Develop appropriate responses to challenges

Time: 45 minutes

Materials: A long, untangled rope and an outdoor plot of land with some obstacles. Before the workshop the facilitator should plot the course with this rope. Read the activity for directions.

Space: Outdoors, with some variation in terrain

Considerations: This activity has the potential to cause great strife within a group as it involves functioning - or, more accurately, dysfunctioning - under both pressure and physical strain. You will want to debrief the activity carefully if conflict is evident, and be prepared for possible anger directed at you as a facilitator. With all that said, this activity is an excellent metaphor for the difficulties that may be encountered in Youth Engagement projects and how projects comes together and succeed.

Activities

1. [5 min] Explain to the group that this activity involves squeezing together in tight quarters. Anyone who feels uncomfortable participating (due to claustrophobia, twisted ankle, etc) can coach from the sidelines.

Ask the group to stand in a circle. Tell participants to take a big step forward, then another, then another. Keep doing this until there is no circle. Instead, you should have one big mass of loosely packed people.

2. [5 min] Explain to the group that you are going to take the rope and wrap it around them. The rope should be tight enough to the group to stay up; however, if needed ask the outside group members to hold onto it. Make sure ahead of time that the rope is cleared of tangles and will wrap without you having to clear it.

Then briskly pace out, and explain, a short but mildly challenging course that should involve at least having to navigate a couple steps or a one-to-two foot wall, going around a tree or bush and maybe under a pole, all depending on the terrain you have to work with.

Then explain that to participants that their task is two-part: To travel through the course while finding out something new about a person they are standing near. Ask if there are any questions, and give them the “Ready, set, go!”

3. [10 min] While the group is working, pay attention to what they do and how they do it. What kinds of roles do people take on? What sort of conflict arises? What attitudes and emotions are surfacing?
4. [15 min] When the group is finished, encourage them to celebrate their success (or anger, or frustration), and then ask the following questions:
 - ★ How did it go? What happened? What was it like? For the people on the outside of the circle? On the inside?
 - ★ How did it *feel*? For the people in the front? Middle? Back?
 - ★ What worked? What didn’t work?
 - ★ Did the group have a plan? Why or why not? Was everyone included in the plan?
 - ★ How many people found out something new about someone near them?

NOTE: Call any specific behaviors to attention and ask what was going on.

5. [10 min] At this point you should have received enough input from the group to make a couple points. Generally, the people in the front of the group just take off and then get frustrated because the people behind them are not moving fast enough. The people in the middle will notice the people in the front are going and decide that they had better start moving, too – even though they aren’t really sure what’s going on. Meanwhile, the people in the back often have the rope digging into them and are calling for people to slow down – and their calls which usually go unheeded!

Draw connections with participants by asking if anyone has had the experience of being in a group where they were in the “back or in the “middle.” If few people were able to find out something new about someone near them, ask why. Often a group will lose track of part of what it set out to do when things start getting crazy. What would you do differently if you were to do this again?

Usually people will say, “plan!” Make the point that in a group that is often the first thing to be avoided – or forgotten. Ask everyone to think about how they will make sure that people in the “front” hear what people in the “back” are saying. Remind them that in Youth Engagement programs participation of the whole group is needed. Keeping this activity in mind, how can everyone ensure their whole group is involved as they work together? If participants indicate they learned something new about the people close to them, ask people to share their insights.

Letting Go & Taking Charge

Workshop 21



Facilitator Notes

Introduction: This is an inquiry-based planning workshop that requires a minimum of eight and a maximum of 40 participants.

Goal: When this session is complete participants should be able to...

1. Explore roles of power, respect and trust in Youth Engagement
2. Let go of some power and encourage others to take responsibility

Time: 2 hours

Materials: Flip chart paper and markers

Space: Space large enough for the whole group plus at least one break out room; more will be needed if the group is so large that it requires several small groups.

Considerations: This discussion offers participants the opportunity to bring together the lessons of the preceding activities and conversations, and begin applying them. It allows time for youth to talk as a group and adults to talk as a group. Be aware that some people may be a little uncomfortable with this, believing that if they are to work in partnership they need to do all their work together. But young people and adults both need time to talk among themselves. Each age group has specific issues that are likely only to come out with the support of their peers. Participants will close by reporting to each other what they discussed and creating agreements for how to work together.

The discussion questions included here are suggestions. You may want to change them depending on the dynamics of the group and issues that have come up over the preceding exercises. The important thing is for adults to talk honestly amongst about how they feel at the prospect of youth taking power, and for youth to talk honestly amongst themselves about how they feel at the prospect of taking some real responsibility.

Activities

1. [10 min] Explain to the group that it will be split into teams of young people and adults for the next hour, but will reconvene to report on their discussions. Then split group into youth and adults and have them use separate rooms so that each will have the opportunity for completely open discussion.
2. [45 min] Select questions from each of the following two lists for discussion by the appropriate groups, and give them to the groups. Once groups have their questions they should begin conversations:

Youth

- ★ How do you feel about working with adults?
- ★ What does it mean to you to take on some significant responsibilities for this project/program?
- ★ How will it affect your time for school, your relationships with your friends, your involvement in other things? What scares you? Excites you?
- ★ Overall, what are your top three worries about taking this kind of responsibility?
- ★ Usually, youth expect that adults will know what to do, and they expect that adults will have an answer. How do you feel knowing that these adults aren't going to have answers all the time and they're not always going to know what needs to be done next?
- ★ What are your top three worries about working with adults?

Adults

- ★ How do you feel about working with young people?
- ★ What does it mean to you to have youth taking on some of the power and responsibility to this project/program?
- ★ How does it feel to let go of some of the control?
- ★ Adults in our culture are expected to have all the answers for youth. How does it feel to be in a situation where you can't have the answers?
- ★ Part of having respect for someone means letting them try out their ideas, even when you are sure it's a mistake.
- ★ How do you feel knowing that at some point you will witness a young person fail?
- ★ What are the top three worries you have about working with youth as partners?

3. [15 min] Each group should close by discussing the following questions. They should use flip chart paper to create lists they can use to report back to the large group.

- ★ What will you need to do to make Youth Engagement work?
- ★ How can young people help adults, and adults help young people?

4. [10 min] Have the groups come back together. Spokespeople from each group give a report on what they talked about, ending with their lists about what will make Youth Engagement work. Give each group a chance to ask questions of the other and respond to their report as needed.

5. [5 min] Close by creating a very short list of three to five ideas of things the group can do together to make Youth Engagement work, including once a month hour-long teambuilding activities or critical information-sharing meetings. You may also want to have each participants take a moment to write one thing for themselves personally that he or she will try to do in the future.

Ideal Partners

Workshop 22



Facilitator Notes

Introduction: This is an inquiry-based workshop identifying essential roles for young people and adults, requiring a mixed group of youth and/or adults with minimum of four and a maximum of 40 participants.

Goal: When this session is complete participants should be able to...

1. Identify personal and group goals for Youth Engagement
2. Identify how Youth Engagement can benefit larger society

Time: 45 minutes

Materials: Flip chart paper and markers

Space: Floor space or tables with enough space for teams to spread out a large sheet of flip paper (2 sheets of flip chart paper taped together lengthwise)

Considerations: We often talk about what an individual needs in order to work with youth or adults. However, it is useful to get these ideas out in the open and down on paper. This helps people see what is really expected and evaluate what is realistic. This activity engages people by showing their creative sides. It gives them the chance to symbolically represent the ideal characteristics and abilities of an ally.

Activities

1. [5 min] Break people up in two teams of 4-8, depending on the size of the group. Keep teams all youth or all adult.
2. [15 min] Tell each team that you will give them a large piece of paper on which they will draw the outline of a person. Tell them that after the outline is complete, they will illustrate it with the kind of characteristics or abilities that an ideal youth or adult partner would have.
3. [20 min] Have teams present their drawings. Create a master list of characteristics as each team reports back. Reflect on the workshop by asking:
 - ★ Which characteristics do you think are most important? Why?
 - ★ Are these realistic? Why or Why not?
 - ★ How do you feel about the ideal partner the other teams came up with?
 - ★ Do you have any concerns?

If the group is ongoing, keep the drawings hanging around to remind participants what they are striving for.

Creating Roles for Youth and Adults

Workshop 23



Facilitator Notes

Introduction: This inquiry-based workshop for youth and adults requires a minimum of four and a maximum of 40 participants. This activity was adapted from *Youth Empowerment: A Training Guide*, which was published in 1990 by Camp Fire.

Goal: When this session is complete participants should be able to...

1. Reflect on Youth Engagement applications in current youth-serving programs and larger communities
2. Understand the work and commitment required for effective Youth Engagement

Time: 45 minutes

Materials: Flip chart paper and markers; copies of the worksheets from the end of this workshop.

Space: Enough to accommodate the group

Considerations: While not necessary, it is helpful if participants have first completed *Exploring Group Strengths and Weaknesses* and *Youth and Adults as Ideal Partners*, both located in the *Youth Engagement Workshops* section. Greater knowledge of individual strengths and interests, as well as what is needed to be an effective partner, helps to ground this activity in reality.

Activities

1. [10 min] Start by splitting the group into teams with between five and eight participants, depending on size of group. Teams need to be mixed with young people and adults. Half the teams will work on roles for adults; the other half on roles for youth.
2. [5 min] Hand out the appropriate worksheets to each team and ask participants to work in their groups to complete them.
3. [15 min] When all the teams are finished, teams should report back on the roles they developed. Allow for questions and comments.
4. [15 min] Close with a discussion, including:
 - ★ What was it like to create these roles?
 - ★ How realistic do you think the descriptions are? Why or why not?
 - ★ How can you apply these ideal job descriptions to your work?

Ideal Roles for Youth

Handout



Describe the ideal role for young people to promote Youth Engagement here:

Answer the following questions about the role:

1. Is this a meaningful role? What is its usefulness to the program, class, organization, or community?
2. Will this position lead to greater responsibility for young people in the program, class, organization, or community?
3. What does adequate support from adults look like? How do adults know how to support Youth Engagement?
4. What skills, training, experience, and knowledge will a young person gain from this role?

Answer the following questions about possible candidates for this role:

5. What young people will really want to fill this role? Is this role something that will interest some youth? Why or why not?
6. What knowledge, skills and attitudes are necessary to succeed in this role?
7. How can there be reasonable expectations for young people to succeed in this role, considering:
 - Schedules
 - Quantity of work accomplished
 - Quality of work accomplished
 - Depth of knowledge about a subject
 - Types of training
 - Responsibility for others
 - Degree and kind of supervision
 - Formal reporting requirements
 - Other parts of the role

Ideal Roles for Adults

Handout



Describe the ideal role for an adult to promote Youth Engagement here:

Answer the following questions about the role:

1. What will this adult specifically need to know to successfully engage Youth Engagement?
2. How is this different from existing roles in your program, group, organization, or community?
3. What kind of resources (time, training, other) will the adult need in order to be successful?

Answer the following questions about possible candidates for the job:

4. What knowledge, skills attitudes, and other qualifications are necessary to succeed at this role?
5. How could you determine if someone was suited for this role?
6. What other questions would you ask?

Examining Youth Engagement

Workshop 24



Facilitator Notes

Introduction: In this workshop participants will make sense of the broad array of planning activities occurring throughout their communities; express understanding of the multiple types of involvement students experience throughout education; and, recognize opportunities to engage youth in more substantive ways

Goal: When this session is complete participants should be able to...

3. Reflect on Youth Engagement applications in current youth-serving programs and larger communities
4. Understand the work and commitment required for effective Youth Engagement

Time: 50 minutes

Materials: Flip chart paper and markers; copies of the worksheet from the end of this workshop.

Space: Enough to accommodate the group

Considerations: This workshop requires participants to make connections between the necessity of community improvement and a seldom acknowledged key to success: youth engagement

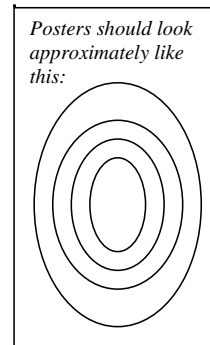
Activities

1. [5 min] Facilitators should begin this module by providing a brief overview of the lessons and activities for participants. Next the facilitator can open discussion with one or more of the following questions:
 - ★ What is an example from our community (beyond school) where planning occurs that does not include the people affected most by those decisions? (Perhaps bring a relevant article as an example.)
 - ★ What are the most radical possibilities for engaging youth in community planning?
 - ★ What are some of the connections between youth engagement planning and classroom learning?
2. [20 min] Working in small groups of 6-8, participants should draw a 5-inch wide circle in the middle of a sheet of flip chart paper with a marker. Then, using pens or pencils, they should brainstorm all of the opportunities they have to plan education, i.e. choosing classes, sharing lockers, etc.

After a few minutes, participants should draw an 8-inch wide circle around that one. Inside of this circle they should brainstorm all of the educational planning they can think of that happens within a classroom everyday.

When they are done writing in that circle, participants should draw another around that an brainstorm all of the educational planning that happens everyday throughout the school, separate from everything they've brainstormed so far, or identical, if it repeatedly happens.

Next, participants should draw a last circle and brainstorm all of the planning that affects education that happens outside of individual schools, but within the school system. This may include anything done by the district, state, or federal government.



Finally, outside of the circles participants should brainstorm all the other educational planning they think happens outside of the school system, such as voting, education organization activities, testing businesses, etc.

With a different color pen, participants should go over their poster and circle or highlight the points at which participants currently participate in education planning. Beside each one, they should use the following key to mark how participants participate:

- P = Partners** with adults in planning
- R = Recipients** of adult planning

Finally, with another color pen make stars to indicate the areas where new opportunities exist for participants to participate in education planning.

When participants are done they should present their posters to the entire group. Discuss similarities and differences, as well as missing points. The facilitator might ask why planning happens where it does, and who is responsible for ensuring planning happens.

3. [10 min] Distribute copies of the *Cycle of Youth Engagement* handout, and review it with participants. As you go over each point, have participants read the explanation from the worksheet as well as the example. Then have participants respond to each one, encouraging them to offer their feelings, stories, and reflections. You might ask, "How do we know that this cycle really works?" or "What would this cycle look like in our group, school government, club, or district school board?"
4. [10 min] Ask participants to spend a few minutes discussing how the *Cycle of Youth Engagement* relates to all of the planning in schools. They might talk about some of the different places planning happens, some of the different people involved in planning, or the purpose of planning. Then have a group discussion focusing on youth engagement in community development.
5. [5 min] Close by asking participants to respond to the following quote with fewer than three words. Read it two times, slowly, and open the floor.

"If you had a problem in the Black community and you brought in a group of white people to discuss how to solve it, almost nobody would take that panel seriously. In fact, there'd probably

be a public outcry. It would be the same the for women’s issues or gay issues. But every day, in local arenas all the way to the White House, adults sit around and decide what problems youth have and what youth need, without ever consulting us.” - Jason, 17-year-old activist in New York City.

Facilitators can use the following questions to help participants reflect on what they have learned in this lesson:

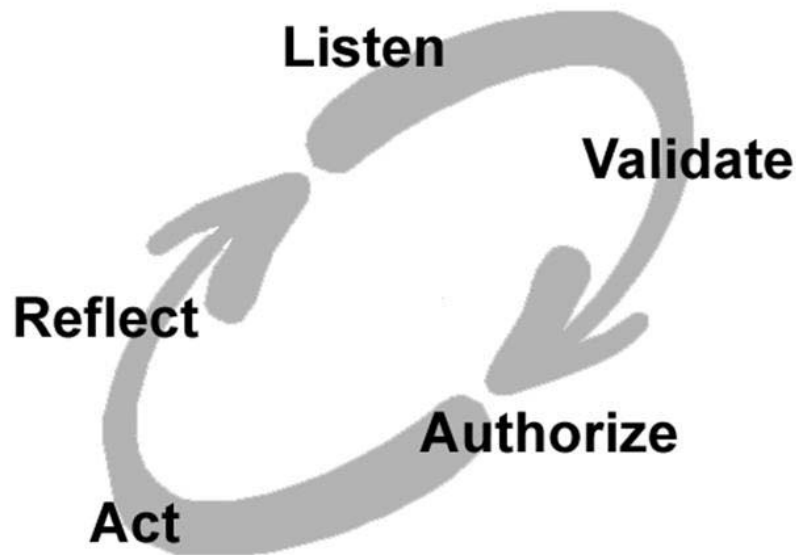
- What’s the most important thing you learned today?
- What difference can participants make in school planning activities?
- Is there a time when youth engagement does not matter?

The Cycle of Youth Engagement

Handout



There is no surefire way to engage every youth in every community all the time. Whenever Youth Engagement happens the following steps always happen. This cycle is a circle, meaning that the steps never really end – they only morph into the next one, over and over.



Step 1: Listen to Youth

Youth Engagement inherently requires simply listening to young people. Providing a platform for youth to be heard can be challenging. Listening to youth can happen in personal conversations, classroom discussions, agenda items in meetings, or through written reports and studies.

Step 2: Validate Youth

When youth speak, it is not enough to nod your head. Validating youth does not mean automatically agreeing with them, either. It is important to offer young people sincere comments, criticism, or feedback. Disagreeing with youth allows them to know that you actually heard what was said, that you thought about it, and that you have your own knowledge or opinion you think is important to share with them. Youth must know that community building is not about autonomous authority, and that a chorus of voices inform learning and leading communities.

Step 3: Authorize Youth

Youth Engagement requires *ability*, which comes in the form of experience and knowledge. Providing young people with authority means going beyond traditional roles for youth in communities by actively providing the training and positions they need in order to affect change.

Step 4: Mobilize Youth

Transitioning from passive participants to active learners and leaders throughout communities requires youth taking action to create change. Mobilizing young people in positions of new authority allows them

to affect cultural and systemic educational transformation, and encourages educators to acknowledge youth as partners.

Step 5: Reflect on Youth Engagement

Youth Engagement does not happen in a vacuum – it is connected to everything every young person experiences. Adults and youth should take responsibility for learning through Youth Engagement by engaging youth in conscious critical reflection by examining what was successful and what failed. Youth and adults can also work together to identify how to sustain and expand the Cycle of Youth Engagement by effectively returning to the first step above.

Brain teasers

Additional Activities



Facilitator Notes

Keep the pace of workshops up-beat and energetic with these challenging mind games! All of these activities are fun, although they can be a bit frustrating at times for participants. More importantly, they can serve as great metaphors during workshops to keep participants thinking. They can be fillers before you start, during break times, or after you end. There's only one rule – you can't tell the answers. Remember the adage, "Knowledge is earned – not given." Try to memorize your favorite mind twist, and go without these notes. Good luck!

Activities

Going Camping – Start by saying, "We're going camping this weekend! The thing is though that we can only bring along particular items. It's kind of a crazy camping trip!" Then, say one thing at a time, letting people think about each one. "We can bring a dog, but not its dog food... an elephant, but not a canary... an end table, not a lamp. . ." you add more. Answer: Things with four legs can go camping; anything else can't.

Silly Sally – Begin with, "I've got this crazy friend named Silly Sally. You see, she only likes certain things, very particular things. Let me tell you about her." Then slowly start listing off what Silly Sally likes... "She likes apples, but not bananas... spaghetti, but not the sauce... Seattle, not Olympia... troops, not packs... Jeeps, not Fords... Bill, not Tom... the roof, but not the ceiling... the floor, but not the carpet..." Answer: Silly Sally likes things with double letters!

Crossed or Uncrossed – Holding up two sticks, announce that you want the group to guess "Are these crossed or uncrossed?" As they guess you confirm or deny that they are crossed or uncrossed. You pass the sticks to the next guy, and he asks "Crossed, or uncrossed?" Go around the entire circle until everyone says "Oh, yeah, now I get it!" I like to say, "Remember, the answer isn't always in the most obvious solution." Answer: The answer isn't in the sticks, but the legs of the person asking "Crossed, or uncrossed?" Are they sitting with their legs crossed or uncrossed?

Ancient Counting Sticks – Hold up three sticks in the air, and announce that they are the ancient counting sticks of Zoogoobawgooland. "These three sticks will be conformed in such a way that will represent a number." Then lay the three sticks on the ground in a unique way. Answer: Show the number you wish to represent with your fingers. Put your hand someplace not too obvious... Keep having the participants guess, and keep changing the number and stick layout. Use both hands, making numbers up to 10. As you progress, keep making gestures more obvious as you go along.

Reflection Exercises



Additional Activities

Facilitator Notes

Taking action, making change, experiencing new adventures... these are awesome reasons to get out and *do something*. But the richness of the experience, the learning from the experience, these are equally important if we are going to *transform* society through action. Reflection is integral to learning, because it helps us build self-awareness, strengthen personal and team growth, and improves our action for the next time.

In age, race, gender, and culturally diverse groups of participants, reflection activities should mirror the differences in the group. These activities may do that, or spur your own creative thinking to create new ones. There are many different ways that people experience and learn from the same situations. Keep in mind these different learning styles:

- ★ **Linguistic Learners** - Like to read, write and tell stories
- ★ **Interpersonal Learners** - Like to have lots of friends, join and talk in groups
- ★ **Intra-personal Learners** - Like to work alone and pursue own interests
- ★ **Spatial Learners** - Like to draw, create, daydream and see pictures
- ★ **Musical Learners** - Like to sing, hum tunes, listen and respond to music
- ★ **Bodily/ Kinesthetic Learners** - Like to move, touch, talk and use body language
- ★ **Logical/ Mathematic Learners** - Like to do experiments, figure things out, asks questions and look for patterns and relationship

Activities

Emotional Go-Around – Participants are asked to show with a word, their body, or a facial expression how they feel right at the moment. Let people show their reaction, one at a time, and then have participants explain their reaction. This activity can give the facilitator a sense of the group mood and gives the participants a chance to express how they feel at that moment.

Show and Tell – Individually or in pairs, have participants describe items they have collected or used throughout their action, including their reactions and emotions regarding the item or the activity it was used in.

Human Sculpture – In a large open space, divide your group into two halves. Each half creates a sculpture around a word or phrase (e.g. peace, activism, empowerment) with few props. Then each group displays its 'art' for the other group. The watching group can interpret the sculpture, without disruption, for two minutes. When they are finished, the sculpture group can explain its work.

Engagement Skits – Split the participants into groups of three or four and ask each group to portray their service experience through a skit. Give each group 10 minutes to plan what they will do and up to five minutes to share their skit with the rest of the group. After each group's presentation, have the

whole group process reactions, give suggestions for effective future projects, and give positive feedback to the actor/actresses. This activity could take 30 minutes to an hour to complete.

Visualization – Take participants on an imaginary tour of their experience. Ask them to find a comfortable position (lay on the floor, rest your head on the table, lounge in a chair) and close eyes. Play relaxing music at a low volume. Ask participants to become aware of their breathing, ask them to leave their present thoughts and clear their minds. Once the participants appear to have relaxed, ask them to begin remembering their service experience. To assist them in remembering their experience mention common events, allow participants to remember how they felt before they did their experience, what their expectations were, what happened in their preparation, how they felt during their service experience. To stimulate their thinking you might mention some of what you remembered. Slowly bring them back to the present. Ask them to become aware of their surroundings, again concentrating on their breathing, and open their eyes when they are ready. Ensure that a quiet tone is maintained. Continue to play music, and ask participants to share their recollections with another person and finally have people make comments to the whole group.

Group Banners – Using a large pieces of banner paper and markers, ask participants to get into pairs and depict their experiences using a combination of words and pictures. Give them about 10-15 minutes. When completed ask each pair to share their banner with the whole group. Use their banners as a jumping off point for processing the experience.

All Tied Up – Have the group stand in a circle. Holding the end of a ball of string, hand the ball off to a participant. Ask them to reflect on a particular question (e.g. what was something new you learned today?). Once they have answered the question ask them to hold onto their piece of the string and to pass the ball onto someone else. Continue the process until everyone has reflected on the question, and has a section of string in their hands. When completed, you should have something that looks like a web. When they are all done talking, make some points about the interconnectedness of people, how they are all part of the solution, for if one person had not contributed to their service projects the outcome would have been different, etc.

Imagining the Future – Ask participants to imagine that the year is 2020, and everyone in the group has come back together for a reunion. As a group, reflect on all of the changes that have happened because of the action you have finished, and the difference that work has made on your life.

Graffiti Museum – Glue a wide variety of magazine pictures on construction paper, and post them down a hallway wall. Have participants look through all of the pictures, and chose one that represents their impression of the previous event (e.g. an activity, the day, or the whole weekend). Gathering in a circle, have participants quietly circulate the pictures, and write why they do or do not relate with the picture.

Service Journals – Ask participants to keep a journal of their conference experience through regular (after each activity) entries. Provide framework for the journals (e.g. who will read it, what should they write about, how it will be used). Variations on the Activity Journal include team journaling, and circle journals. You can also provide particular questions to respond to, and use hot topics from activities to reflect on. You may ask participants to reflect on conference topics, including quotations and readings from authors, music groups, etc.

Stream of Consciousness – After lying down, relaxing and allowing their minds to wander, encourage participants to begin free word association around their experience. Guide participants through the

process by offering refocusing words, but allow them to say what comes to their minds, without censor or restriction.

Collage of Words – Using a large sheet of paper, have participants write words that described their experience. Provide plenty of creative material (e.g. markers, crayons, colored pencils) and a large sheet of paper on a smooth surface. Give them twenty minutes, and have them explain their work when they're finished. Explain how without everyone's contributions, the work would not be as rich and varied as it is.

Action Interviews – Encourage participants to see their projects through the public's view by conducting media-style interviews with one another. Remember to cover all the bases: who, what, when, where, why and how, or go Oprah and ask the hard-hitting questions!

Rap and Rhyme Responses – Divide participants into small teams, and give them 10 minutes to write a rap or rhyme about their experience. The teams must incorporate all of their members into the production.

Group Poem Writing – Like a circle journal, this will bring your group together in a reflection on their service. Circulate a piece of paper around your group with the title across the top "For Love of Engagement", encouraging each participant to write a line in response to the previous until everyone has written. When finished, have a volunteer read the work to the entire group, and then discuss it.

Time Capsule – As participants are being introduced to your event, have them put memorabilia and initial attitudes related to their action on paper to start the time capsule. This could include a short project description, an agenda for your event or activity, or anything else relevant to what is going on. Have participants write down how they are feeling at the start of the event, how they feel at different points of their actions (e.g. what they expected at the beginning, how they felt before their action, what they feel/felt (before, during or after) their project as a whole.) Put everything into a "capsule" that will be opened and read aloud and discussed (perhaps anonymously) at the end of the event.

Compile Questions Left Unanswered – In pairs, ask participants to write down any question they feel is unanswered from the activity you just completed. Encourage them to ask anything, and then report their questions to the large group. Refrain discussion until all the questions are read, but then allow for an open exchange between participants.

About the Author

Adam Fletcher



Adam Fletcher has been a public speaker, writer, and consultant for youth-serving organizations, K-12 schools, and government agencies since 1997. The founder of the internationally-recognized Freechild Project and an expert on community engagement, Adam is the author of dozens of publications. His expertise focuses on youth engagement and re-envisioning the roles of young people throughout society.



From 1989 to 1999, Adam worked in community-based nonprofit organizations in Nebraska and Washington State, and from 1999 to 2001 he worked with national nonprofit organizations in Washington, DC, Taos, New Mexico, and Olympia, Washington. Adam has 5 years experience working as an education official in Washington State government. In 2002, Adam graduated from The Evergreen State College with a degree in education and youth studies, and later attended the University of Washington School of Education for graduate studies in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies. Adam was born in Calgary, grew up some in Omaha, and now lives in Olympia with his daughter and their cat.

Providing workshops for children, youth, and adults for more than 10 years, Adam Fletcher is widely regarded for his facilitation skills. He has worked with a variety of clients, including K-12 schools, youth-serving organizations, and government agencies. His publications include the *Meaningful Student Involvement Guide to Student as Partners*, the *Washington Youth Voice Handbook*, and the *SoundOut Student Voice Handbook*.

Workshop Resources



Additional Activities

Toolbox for Training and Youth Work – Like an on-line bookshelf, this website lets users pull different training and youth work methods according to their needs, including exercises, simulations, background texts, etc. www.salto-youth.net/toolbox/

Wilderdom Books – A comprehensive list of books about cooperative games, initiative games and more. <http://wilderdom.com/games/BooksAboutGames.html>

Wilderdom Games – This website is full of initiative games and other activities that anyone can use. <http://wilderdom.com/games/>

The Encyclopedia of Informal Education – Infed, the informal education homepage and encyclopaedia of informal education, was established in 1995 at the YMCA George Williams College, London, as an open and not-for-profit site. Put together by a small group of educators, it is now accessed around 6 million times a year. www.infed.org

Silver Bullets: A Guide to Initiative Problems, Adventure Games and Trust Activities, by K. Rohnke is published by Kendall/Hunt.

Supporting Websites

The material in *Get Going! Youth Engagement Workshops Guide* can be supplemented by other publications by Adam Fletcher. Specifically:

- ★ *SoundOut Student Voice Curriculum*. (2009)
- ★ *Guide to Social Change Led By and With Young People*. (2006)
- ★ *Guide to Cooperative Games for Social Change*. (2006)
- ★ *Meaningful Student Involvement Guide to Students as Partners in School Change*. (2005)

These publications are available to order or download from the websites below.



SoundOut promotes Participant Voice in curriculum, leadership, and school improvement throughout K-12 schools. Learn more at www.soundout.org



The Freechild Project Connecting young people and social change around the world through training programs and one of the largest online resource collections globally. Learn more at www.freechild.org

