

Exploring Group Connections

Purpose: To identify participants' strengths and to connect the strengths' of others to the needs of the group

Time: 30 Minutes

Materials: markers, flip chart, tape, half sheets of paper, handout-Skills Inventory Worksheet

How To:

Step 1: Setting the Context – 5 minutes

- Introduce the activity with the following statement. Write the statement regarding effective leaders on the flip chart.

We are all leaders in this community. One key aspect of leadership is the ability to identify your own strengths (i.e. what you are good at and what you can offer the team). Sometimes it is difficult for us as individuals to realize our skills how they connect to the needs of the team. Therefore, we need to help each other connect our individual strengths to our groups needs. This exercise will help us strengthen that connection.

Effective Leaders

1. **Know their skills/gifts**
2. **Can connect their skills to team needs**
3. **Can help others connect their skills to team needs**

- Give an example:
“Someone may have be an amazing artist - how could those skills be used in our team?” Challenge the group to share at least five examples.
- Try to elicit a wide variety of examples to work from.

Step 2: Brainstorming- 10 minutes

Pass out the **Skills Inventory Worksheet**

Now we are going to do an activity where we identify our individual gifts and think of ways these can be connected to our team needs and opportunities.

Close your eyes and visualize some things you are really good at. Think of some instances where you feel happy and energized. Can somebody share an example?

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Instruct everyone to list their gifts on the piece of paper that you will provide them.

Step 3: Sharing- 15 minutes

- Now invite people to stand up and share their gift(s) with the group. Then ask the group how these gifts could impact the needs of your group. (This should be an encouraging and affirming activity!)
- Ask for a couple of different examples until people realize that the same skills can be used in a variety of ways. Do this for each participant. *If group members are shy or concerned about speaking in front of a group, please use this as an opportunity to encourage them as a valued member of the team.

Wrap Up:

- Was that exercise easy? Hard? Was it challenging to visualize your skills?
- What was it like to share your gift with the group?
- How about giving feedback and connecting skills to needs? How is this helpful for our group? What did you learn? Think about the gifts and connections we made in the group. What skills do we have a lot of? What others might be useful?
- How can we more effectively celebrate the individual gifts that make our group stronger?