



Discussion Meet Workshop

Overview: This workshop is designed to introduce members to the components of a Discussion Meet and strike interest in this widely applicable approach to communication.

Time frame: 2-3 hours

Materials and Equipment: Paper, Pencils, Markers, Discussion Meet Manual, Large Sheet or Tarp (Optional), "Would You Rather" Questions

Introduction: Introduce yourself, what you do and how you came to hear about Discussion Meets.

Activity 1

Would You Rather?

Play "would you rather" with kids by getting them to pick between two undesirable choices or two desirable choices. Make sure you say their name so it becomes like an introduction game. Once they answer ask them why and get them to articulate points about why they chose this. Have a list of these pre-prepared before allowing the members to make up their own.

Examples: "Eat a rotten banana or drink a jar of pickle juice?"; "Throw your phone over a cliff or lose your mom's wedding ring?"; "Eat lasagna every day or never have the same food twice for the rest of your life?"

Introduce Characteristics of Discussion:

1. State problem or need
2. Explore, define and understand problem or need
3. Identify causes of problem or need
4. Elaborate on all possible alternative solutions
5. Evaluate and compare alternatives
6. Test and project what appears to be the best solution
7. Arrive at ways to implement the solution.

Activity 2

Listen and Speak

Have two delegates stand beside each other and have one recite the 4-H Pledge while the other sings the alphabet song and see if they mess up partway through. To make it harder: bring along two books and ask them to recite a paragraph from the book out loud. Afterwards, ask the delegates to recall what the other person was saying. The person who can remember the most about the other person's speech gets to advance to the next round. Do in Round Robin style or until you see fit.

* Introduce categories on Marking Rubric, this game is an example of the Cooperative Attitude category

Activity 3

Picture It



Have kids pair up and sit with their backs to one another. Give one member a blank piece of paper and a marker, and give the other a picture or hold up an item. Have the member who can see the picture or object describe it to the other partner **without directly naming any parts**, and the other partner will attempt to draw it. This activity is designed to show how we must be specific in how we describe things or people may misunderstand. Examples of items: Red 2x2 Lego piece, an Orange Circle, a black cat. Examples of things **not** allowed to say: “Lego, Red, Orange, Circle, Black, and Cat”

* Cooperative Attitude Category

Activity 4

Interruption

Choose a random simple topic and have someone start talking about it. If they hesitate, repeat a word, stop to think or say a placeholder such as “um” another person can say “error” and take over the conversation. Whomever is left talking after a set amount of time (1 or 2 minutes) is the winner.

Examples: “I went out camping with my parents a few years ago, and uh” - “Error” (New person) “When I was camping we ran into a bear on one of our hikes...”

* Delivery Category

Activity 5

Cops and Robbers

Split the group into two. One group will be the cops and one will be the robbers. The robbers will each get a piece of paper with one word on it, and this is what they “stole”. Examples: Cheese, Cat, tree, Pencil, Ice cream.

The cop’s job is to catch the robbers before they reach the other side of the room. This is like tag, with a rope or divider in the middle of the room. Once they cross the middle of the room they can be tagged by a cop. The cop can ask three questions about what the robber stole and the robber must answer each question truthfully, hinting at what it may be. After the third question the cop must guess what the item is. **Not allowed to ask the question “What did you steal” or any variation of that.**

If they guess correctly the robber must give them the paper and go back to their side. If they are incorrect the robber may continue and are given a 5 second grace period before they can be tagged again (Adjust accordingly to size of area to play in). If the room is only a classroom, have them crab walk instead of run.

* Problem Solving and Implementation Category

Activity – 6

Blindfolded

Divide the group into smaller groups of 3-4 (vary depending on size of whole group) and allow them to select one person to be the blindfolded person. Once they are selected, they are taken out of the room and blindfolded. Those left in the group must discuss how they are going to



communicate with the blindfolded person, i.e. who is going to speak. The blindfolded person will be brought back in and an obstacle course will be set out in front of them. The team must get their member back to where they are standing without injuring them, while collecting a few small items such as a ball or a pencil. The team who collects the items and returns their member back to them safely fastest wins.

The goal of this game is to use discussion skills to make a plan and then implement it and see how it works. If it does not work they will have to re-evaluate their plan and try again.

* Problem Solving and Implementation Category

Optional Activity

Building Bridges

Set up a screen and place one team on each side of the screen, ensure they cannot see each other. Give them an equal amount of materials and instruct each team to build half a bridge. 5 minutes: They are to communicate with one another through the screen but cannot see each other. This is strictly planning time and they cannot take the materials out of the bags yet. 20 minutes: They are to build the half bridge while continuing to converse with the other team through the screen. At the end of the 20 minutes, the screen is lifted and you will see how well the two bridges actually match.

* Cooperative Attitude Category

Activity 7

One Liners

With any topic, come up with introduction sentences that are one line long and grab the audience's attention. Possible topics: "The importance of ice cream in a healthy diet", possible one liner: "Ice cream may be frozen, but when I eat it, it melts my heart." "4/5 kids will say that a bad day has been made 10 times better if they have ice cream after one meal."

* Opening Statement Category

Activity 8

Elevator Speech

Choose problem topics randomly and assign one topic to small groups of two or three delegates who are of similar age. Conduct a 30 second elevator speech defining the problem and then outlining the importance, cause, effect and relevancy of the problem.

Example problems: Junior: Lack of ice cream in diets, Short recess times
Intermediate: Video Game overuse, Too much homework
Senior: Homelessness, Debt, Global Warming

* Opening Statement Category

Mock Discussion Meet

The best way to learn is to try it! Following all of the information and guidelines provided in the General Discussion Meet Information Guide, stage a mock Discussion Meet.