

Activity: Session 8 Communication

Objective: Develop effective strategies to convey messages in clear, concise instructions.

Materials:

- Enough listening mazes for everyone
- Pens or Pencils

Sign in And Welcome: Group Activity

(Mentors should greet the protégés and show them where to sign in.)

“Listening and Giving Instructions”

Instructions:

Break up into teams of two, one mentor and a protégé. Have them sit facing one another. Pass out a pencil and “listening maze” to each protégé without allowing them to see what is on the front of the maze. Have the protégé hold the maze against their chest and remind them not to look down at what is on it.

Explain: Each protégé has a maze. Each mentor will be giving them instructions on how to get through the maze with their pencil. The mentor can only use verbal instructions-no hand movements, head gestures or pointing. If necessary have the mentors sit on their hands. The protégé can not ask any questions, they can only listen silently and follow instructions.

When they are done the mentor and protégé can switch roles and try again except this time the protégé can use their hands and gesture to give instructions and the mentor can ask questions.

Introduce Topic and Discussion

Introduce the topic of communication and discuss how the activity went.

- Was it easy the first time to give the instructions? Was it difficult not to use your hands and gesture when you gave instructions?
- How was it to receive the instructions and not be able to ask questions?
- How was it the second time? Was it easier when the protégés used their hands and gestured? Was it easier when the mentors could ask questions?

Discuss how the group activity relates to active listening.

- How does this activity relate to communicating and listening?
- Is it important to listen carefully when someone is speaking? Should you ask questions if you don't understand? Why? Explain.
- Is it important for the speaker to give clear instructions? Why? Explain.

One-on-One Time

Discuss active listening and the following questions:

- Have you ever had a situation when you thought you communicated well, but the other person didn't do what you said? What happened? How did you resolve the situation?
- Have you ever received instructions from someone (like your parents or a teacher) and done what you thought they said only to find out later you were wrong? Explain. How did that feel?
- In those situations what could you have done to better communicate? (Brainstorm ideas, for example repeating back instructions, asking questions, demonstrating what you want to the other person to do, etc.)

Wrap up Discussion/Closure

Ask the group to put their new communication skills into practice and share how it went at the next meeting.

Optional Activities/Discussions

Group Activity: "Receiving Instructions"

Ask for a volunteer protégé to play the game. Have the volunteer step outside the room while you give the rest of the group the instructions. You will place two specific items, like a book and a stapler, at opposite ends of the room. Split the group into two teams.

- Team 1 is going to try and get the volunteer to move toward one item by saying "Hot" or "Cold". Team 2 is going to try to get the volunteer to move toward the other item by saying "Hot" or "Cold".
- Outside, explain to the volunteer that when they go back in the room they are going to hunt for a specific item by following the group's instructions. When they hear "Hot" they are getting closer, when they hear "Cold", they are moving away.
- Return the volunteer to the room and have the group start shouting out "Hot" and "Cold".
- Allow the volunteer a couple minutes to try to find the item. They will quickly be confused at receiving different instructions.

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- Thank the volunteer and explain what just happened.
- Ask the volunteer how it felt to get different messages. Were they confused, did they start to get frustrated?
- Ask the group to share similar situations that have happened to them. Brainstorm ideas on how to resolve those situations through better communication.

Group Activity: “Giving Instructions-“How to make a Peanut Butter & Jelly Sandwich (PB&J)”

Materials needed:

- Ingredients and utensils to make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich.

Note: This can be a fun but messy activity.

Place all the ingredients and utensils on a table in front of the group. One mentor will demonstrate how to make a PB&J in front of the rest of the group. The mentor will pretend that he/she has never made a sandwich before and has no idea how.

- The group will call out instructions on how to make the sandwich. The mentor will follow their instructions precisely. For example a protégé might say “Put the peanut butter on the bread.” The mentor would use his fingers since the protégé didn’t say to use the knife, or put way too much peanut butter on since the protégé didn’t say how much to use.
- Typically the first sandwich will be a mess. The mentor can start over with a second sandwich and allow the group to try again giving clearer instructions.
- Discuss how important it is to give clear instructions and communicate effectively.

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