

IV.6. BASKETBALL AS A TOOL FOR COMMUNICATION

In the first part of this exercise the participants experience how different approaches of communication link to different feelings and have an impact on their performances. In the second part the participants get to know and practice the approach for communication, called “The appreciative inquiry”.

THEMES	Conflict resolution, social inclusion and discrimination
Group Size	12 – 16 participants
Complexity	2
Age Range	13 – 25 years old
Time	approx. 90 min

OVERVIEW

The exercise is divided into 3 modules:

- Basketball 1 (Discover the impact of different approaches of communication)
- Short introduction to the appreciative inquiry
- Basketball 2 (Practical experience of the appreciative inquiry)

A debriefing follows each of the 2 basketball modules.

OBJECTIVES

- To discover causal relations between different approaches to communication and the impact of these.
- To be aware of how our minds, feelings, focus, performance, cooperation, etc. are affected by how we communicate.
- To be aware of how difficult it is to penetrate with one's approach if someone else has chosen another/reverse way of communication in the situation.
- To have a superficial knowledge of the appreciative inquiry.
- To reflect on how to communicate in everyday life in a way that makes both you and the people around you benefit from it.
- To reflect on how to communicate in everyday life in a way that creates development rather than stagnation and conflict.

MATERIALS

- Basketball court
- One basketball
- Flip chart, blackboard or something similar
- Bibs for one of the teams

PREPARATION

As trainer you need to gain knowledge regarding the appreciative inquiry and prepare how to introduce the participants to this approach.

INSTRUCTIONS

Basketball (1):

- Play basketball
- 2 x 6 minutes
- Each team has a coach (one of the participants)
- On one team the coach is told to be exclusively positive and do a lot of complements
- The coach on the other team is told only to have an eye on the players deficiencies and be predominantly negative
- In the second half of the game the two coaches switch roles

Short introduction to the appreciative inquiry

- Make a short introduction of the concept and idea behind the appreciative inquiry
- Outline a few focus points for the participants to keep in mind when applying into practice.

E.g.:

- I. Acknowledge the participants' efforts
- II. Provide feedback with the participants' further development in mind (Indicate a direction)
- III. Make the introduction visual and include concrete examples

INSTRUCTIONS

OBS!: The goal is not to make an academically correct and complete introduction to the subject, so make it as short and simple as possible!

Basketball (2):

- Play basketball
- 2 x 6 minutes
- Different coaches (do some exchanges through the game)
- This time all coaches have to practice the appreciative inquiry

DEBRIEF AND EVALUATION

Basketball (1):

Questions for the coaches:

- How did you feel being respectively the positive and the negative coach?
- Did you recognise any differences in how the players responded to you?

Questions for the players:

- How did you feel playing for the positive/negative coach?
- Was your play affected by the type of coaching? – And how?
- Any pros and cons of the two ways of coaching?
- Did you miss anything in both ways of coaching?
- Can you relate these experiences to any situations in everyday life?

DEBRIEF AND EVALUATION

Basketball (2):

- Repeat the questions regarding the coaches' and players' feelings and observations.
- How did this experience differ from the one you had in the last game?
- Any pros and cons of the appreciative inquiry?
- Could this approach be implemented into any situation in everyday life?

Summary of the whole exercise:

- What did we learn?
- How can this knowledge be applied in practice and everyday life?
- What benefits can we get out of this?
- What is the next step for us to become good communicators?

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS

- There should be some kind of warm up before this exercise!
- Make sure to be very concrete and clear in the instructions for the negative communicating coach (We don't want this to run wild and out of hand!)
- To make sure that the participants warm between the two games, you can try to make the debriefing a bit active (E.g.: When asking a question you throw a ball to the respondent, or the participants could do a "jog-and-talk" prior to the shared debriefing)