

Communications Puzzle Team Building Activity

Source:

Kelbaugh, Beverly (editor). 2005. *Communications Puzzle*. Team Building Activity. Columbus, OH: OSU Extension.

Adapted from team building activities in the following references:
Deluth Model for Domestic Violence Prevention. 1989. University of Minnesota. Deluth.
Pearsall, P. 1990. *The Power of the Family*. Doubleday, New York.
Family Community Leadership. 1983. Western Rural Development Center. Oregon State University. Corvallis.

Objective:

Communication is an important skill to develop as a leader. As a result of this activity, participants will:

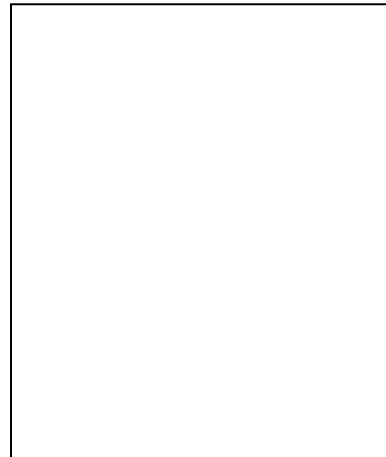
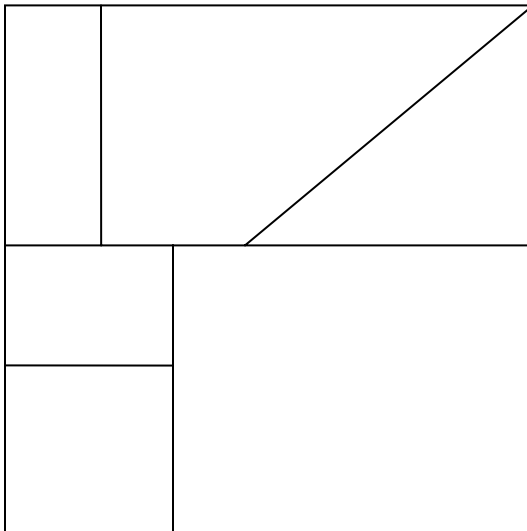
1. Learn and use effective methods to communicate with others
2. Develop a plan for improving communication shortcomings
3. Demonstrate effective communication.

Time Required: 20 to 40 minutes

Preparation and Materials Needed:

Square or K puzzle – one set of pieces for every 6-9 persons in group.

- In advance cut 6 piece puzzles from tag board or paper, as shown on the diagrams.
- Put all pieces for each puzzle in an envelope for each large group.
- Divide larger group of 6-9 persons into 3 sub-groups of 2-3 persons.



Directions:

Sub-group 1 –

Your assignment is to observe. Watch what is happening in the group, the different types of leaders that emerge, the different ways that people deal with the problem

Sub-group 2 -

Give group an envelope with puzzle pieces and say: “Your assignment is to put the puzzle together by following the directions of group 3

Sub-group 3 -

Here is the solution to the (“K” or “Square”) puzzle. Group 2 should not know the shape of the puzzle. Your assignment is to direct the members of group 2 as they attempt to put the puzzle together. You will be timed

Reflection/Processing Items: *(Important! Be sure to do these items at the end of the activity.)*

1. What can you tell me about communication and its importance in working with a group?
2. What are your perceptions of a “bad communicator”?
3. What are some characteristics of a “good communicator” observed in puzzle activity?
(Note: If participants do not readily identify the following, the facilitator should ask participants if the following characteristics/strategies were observed. Ask for examples.
 - Reduce messages to a few words
 - Make direct statements and give information
 - Offer choices
 - Describe the problem and alternatives for resolution
 - Formulate feelings into an “I statement”. For example:
 - “I worry when your assignments are not done because the program may suffer”
 - “I get angry when no one volunteers to give me a puzzle piece I need.”
 - “I am concerned if we don’t plan activities that we will not be prepared to keep campers busy and they will get hurt while you are coming up with a plan.”
4. Have students practice I messages and meaning – role play
5. What are some nonverbal communication messages?
6. Is it possible or important to manage nonverbal cues when talking having a discussion with others?
7. Give an example of a time when someone communicated a different message verbally that they delivered nonverbally.