

Introductory Activity – Working the Room.

Overview: A major purpose of an opening activity is to help participants get acquainted with each other. “Working the Room” identifies and rewards participants who would make good politicians.

Purpose: To energize participants and to encourage interaction among them.

Participants: Minimum, 10 / Maximum, any number / Best between 10 – 30

Time: 15 – 20 minutes

Supplies: Working the Room Contest Instruction Sheet.

Pens / Pencils / Paper / Bell

FLOW

Briefing. As participants come in, greet them at the door and give them copies of the instruction sheet. If anyone asks you questions about the contest, repeat the instructions from the instruction sheet.

Keeping the time. Keep an eye on the clock. One minute before the ending time of the “mingle and chat” activity, give an appropriate warning.

Sart the contest. As the exact time, ring the bell. Tell the participants to stop talking with each other. Ask participants to hide their name tags and any other personal identification.

Conduct the popularity contest. Explain that the first phase of the contest involves visibility. Ask participants to stand up if they believe that their names will be remembered by many people in the room. Bring the group of standing persons to the front of the room. Point to the first contestant and ask the other participants in the room and ask the other participants to write his/her full name on a piece of paper. Announce the name of the participant, and ask each participant to check the name written by his neighbor. Ask those who wrote the correct name to stand up, and count the number. Repeat the process with each of the other contestants. Identify the winner (winners) whose names were correctly written by each of the participants.

Begin the memory contest – Explain that the second part of the contest involves memory. Ask participants to look around the room and estimate how many others they can name. Start an auction, asking participants to bid the number of full names that they can recall correctly. Identify the highest bidder or bidders.

Conduct the memory contest – Ask the highest bidder to go around the room whispering (to prevent the others from hearing) the full names of the participants. Ask all participants who have been correctly identified to stand up. If the highest bidder has

succeeded in correctly naming all the participants he/she wins. Otherwise repeat the activity with the second highest bidder.

Process by talking about the value of introducing yourself, small talk, making yourself memorable, and remembering the faces and names of others. Influence is about recognizing others and making an impression – it is a skill-set that can be acquired.

Instruction Sheet

We want you to meet and interact with as many other participants as possible.

This is a do-it-yourself icebreaker. You have approximately 7 minutes to mingle and chat with the other participants. Collect information from different people and share information about yourself. Use this contest as an excuse to behave like an intrusive extrovert.

You will not receive any other instructions until the time is up.

At that time we will conduct a contest that will reward your ability to work the room. You will have two chances to win.