

Title

The New Society

Source

Method presented during the International Trainers Laboratory, October 2001, by Tony Geudens (Belgium). For further information on the International Trainers Laboratory, please contact IJAB e.V., Kerstin Giebel, Heussallee 30, D-53113 Bonn, Tel.: 0228/9506223, Fax: 0228/9506199, E-Mail: giebel@ijab.de.

Field/Content

Exercise on working in a group / team

Duration

1 hour

Participants

Groups of 6 to 8, with a common working language

Aims

To see how a group functions and to reflect upon different values

Materials / Resources

List of different persons:

You can add and modify according to the target group:

- a poet
- a dietician
- a religious leader
- a scientist (who has a gun)
- a 22 year old student (who does not want to marry)
- a 60 year old doctor
- a violin player with a drug problem
- a 12 year old girl
- an army officer
- a farmer who does not see well anymore
- an inseparable couple: a psychologist and his girlfriend who has a mental illness

Preparation

See above

Methodology

You explain the situation that there has been an atomic war and that you are in the atomic shelter underground with the group of people of the list. However there is not enough food for everybody to survive until it is safe to go out of the bunker. So you have to decide in consensus within 20 minutes on 3 people who will leave the bunker so that the rest can survive to build a new society. Everybody has to agree with the decision. You could have two observers per group to take notes about the things that go well or not, the different roles in the group etc.

Alternatively, you can also give the role of each person on the list to the participants in the discussion group. Give them some prerequisites to get into the role and ask them to play

their role and decide on one person of the group who has to leave. Make sure that everyone gets clearly out of their roles after the game. Do not let people play themselves (a Turkish person playing a Turkish person, etc)!

Evaluation / Debriefing

You can add questions and change the order according to the course of the discussion:

- First a round to let the emotions out (in order to limit time)
- What happened in the exercise - how did you come to a decision?
- What helped the process move forward?
- What blocked the process?
- Did you see the difference between people who paid more attention to the process and others to the product (final result)?
- What would you do differently if you were asked to do this exercise again?
- Did you discuss the values that lie behind the choices of kicking some people out rather than others? What were these values?
- What does this exercise show us about making decisions by consensus?
- What can we learn about working together in intercultural groups?
- Any closing comments

Variants

Different versions of the same game exist: it can be a hot air balloon that is too heavy and you need to ask one or more persons to get out of the balloon so that you will not all crash into the mountains. It can be the people that you want or do not want to share a house with or a train compartment on a long trip etc.