

CORNERSTONE 2017 RESOURCE

Best. Program. Ever. *Evening Program*

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SUMMARY:	Participants will experience activities and discussions that both model and articulate aspects of creating a great experience and facilitating a great program, including the skills involved in post-program debrief conversations. - <i>Submitted by Briana Holtzman, Brett Gurwitz, and Erica Goldman</i>
TOPIC(S):	Facilitation
LEARNING OBJECTIVE:	Facilitators can exercise atmosphere, adaptability, awareness, and the art of the debrief to bring any experience to life.
AUDIENCE:	Any sized group of teens or adults
TIMING:	75 minutes
APPENDICES:	Best.Appendix.Ever. Handout
MATERIALS NEEDED:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flip chart / paper and markers • Music player/speaker of some kind • Four hats (from which to draw slips of paper, so any size/shape is fine) • Slips of paper (described in sections 2 and 3) • Paper and pens for participants to write on (in small groups, not one per person.)
SET-UP DETAILS:	Indoor space preferred; Facilitation can happen anywhere.

SESSION TIMELINE & OUTLINE:

1. Opening / Intro to facilitation workshop. [5 minutes]

To the entire group, regardless of size, first introduce the workshop and state outcomes. Elicit answers from the group about facilitation in general – ask questions like “What does great facilitation look like?” and chart answers and ideas on flip chart paper.

Chevruta/Pair-Share: Split into partners and answer the following from an individual/personal perspective:

- Share a facilitation/group leading fail – what’s a session you’ve run that has fallen flat? What happened? What one change would you make if you could do it again?
- Or
- Describe a session you’ve been a part of that clicked – what do you remember from the facilitator/group leader?

Split participants into small groups of four or five and ask each to create a tableau that *shows* what great facilitation looks like – they have to create this scene without speaking. Take 4 minutes to make your scene and then each group will have a chance to show off what they’ve built (no words!). Ask viewers to call out what they are seeing.

2. Atmosphere [20 minutes]

Still in the small groups from the tableaux, invite participants to discuss what has happened so far, including questions of atmosphere and tone. Point out that they just experienced three types of openings in three different size groups. What did each of those experiences achieve? When, as a facilitator, does it make sense to use of each of those? When would you use large group, pair/share, interactive teaching, frontal teaching, and other modalities?

Present the group with three hats. One has slips of paper in it that have different energy level assignments on them (everything from lethargic to hyperactive); one has different group sizes in it (pair, small group, big group, whole camp, etc.); and the third has modalities (acted, written/journal, discussion, experiential, frontal, etc.). Ask someone from each of the small groups to pull one slip out of each hat and give them five minutes to come up with an opening that meets those criteria to show back to the group. (Ideas for the slips of paper are included in the appendix.)

3. Awareness & Adaptability [20 minutes]

Gather everyone back into one large group, play some music, and invite them to walk around the space at a medium pace, in a random pattern. After a moment, stop the music, tell participants to stop and close their eyes, and with their eyes still closed, point to something red.

Then let them open their eyes, have one or two say what they were pointing to, and repeat the exercise. This time, tell them to point to something dangerous (or funny). Repeat a third time, and after they close their eyes, ask them to notice how they are feeling and what they are thinking. After a short moment, have them open their eyes and discuss what it felt like to “flex their awareness muscles”, and how much they noticed once they “tuned in” to noticing things. Point out that they are constantly in programs or meetings or classes where they could be noticing the facilitation skills of others and learning from them. Ask them to keep their awareness up and notice everything about the facilitation of the rest of the sessions they are in for the remainder of Cornerstone. Tell them they might want to keep a note on their phones (or notebooks) whenever they experience a program run really well or one that can be improved so they can remember some “I should do this next time!” moments and also some “I should look out for this or try to avoid this” moments.

Discuss: What are the things one needs to be aware of as a facilitator? Introduce the idea of responding to your audience and displaying adaptability. Discuss: What are the cues you might look for in your audience? What are the things that are in your control in any space? What is out of your control?

Break participants up into new small groups of about four people and have each one draw a “shift” from the fourth hat and come up with something they might do as a facilitator to make that transition happen. Share with the large group after a few minutes.

4. Art of the Debrief [20 minutes]

Have participants stay in their new groups of four and give each group paper and pen. Tell them they have five minutes to work as a group to write down three things that they all have in common and one thing that each member of the group has that's different (an aspect that not even two people in the group share) After five minutes, have one person from each group share with everyone what they discovered.

As a group, debrief why this was “a perfect meeting”: a) it had a clear agenda and time parameters – clear expectations for all participants b) every person had to participate or the goals could not be achieved c) every person also had to listen to the others in their group in order to achieve the goals (no one person could dominate the whole time) d) group members had to ask thoughtful questions based directly on what they had just heard in order to achieve the goals.

Discuss the anatomy of the debrief and talk about relevant components, including what open-ended questions are and how to ask them, and how to make connections between this activity and programs at camp. Discuss how they might apply these lessons elsewhere.

5. Zoom Out & Takeaways [10 minutes]

Review the three components of this workshop: Atmosphere, Awareness & Adaptability, and Art of the Debrief. Allow time for reflection and questions. Facilitate a debrief session on how each participant can take what they've learned back to camp – perhaps having each share what they learned that was particularly new for them, what they thought might prove particularly challenging for them, or what resonated the most.