

Controlled Chaos: Large Group Facilitation with more Kvelling n less Yelling *Elective 2*

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| AUTHOR(S): | Josh Friedman, Erica Goldman |
| SUMMARY: | An opportunity to practice facilitating intentional activity in large groups. Uses a series of challenges to engage participants with the struggle of communicating clearly to large groups. - <i>Submitted by Josh Friedman and Erica Goldman</i> |
| TOPIC(S): | Large Group Facilitation, Overcoming Assumptions in Leadership |
| LEARNING OBJECTIVE: | Participants will be able to apply new techniques of getting a group's attention and will have practiced guiding that attention in intentional and productive directions. |
| AUDIENCE: | Large groups of any size, typically for counselor/manager level individuals, or youth group leaders. |
| TIMING: | 90 minutes |
| APPENDICES: | Elec2-Appendix-Large Group Attention Grabbers.docx - handout Elec2-Appendix-Challenge Cards.docx – to be used in program |
| MATERIALS NEEDED: | Challenge cards, each cut out separately from the appendix listed above, so they can be individually given to different participants |
| SET-UP DETAILS: | Should take place in a large room where it is possible to hear one another from across opposite ends of the room. The more props, the more potential activities; but as written this can be done with just people and the cards. |

SESSION TIMELINE & OUTLINE:

- 20 minutes: Simon Says, Introductions, and Briefing
- 10 minutes: Topic 1 Challenges
- 10 minutes: Topic 1 Debrief
- 10 minutes: Topic 2 Challenges
- 10 minutes: Topic 2 Debrief
- 10 minutes: Topic 3 Challenges

10 minutes: Topic 3 Debrief

5 minutes: Handouts & Final Questions

20 minutes: Simon Says, Introductions, and Briefing

Simon Says: Facilitator 1 (F1) will begin the session by starting in some part of the room and leading a game of “Simon Says” (e.g. ‘Simon Says put your hands in the air’). F1 will then proceed to move around to different parts of the room and continue giving out ‘Simon Says’ commands until reaching a focal point in the room. Once at this point, F1 will begin giving commands without saying ‘Simon Says’, and those who are not following what ‘Simon Says’ only, etc. will be called out and told to sit down. Once everyone else is out besides one (or few enough), F1 will declare the remaining people victors and honor them with an opportunity to sit down and a moment of silence from everyone to commemorate the game.

Introductions: Once everyone is seated and quiet, F1 will introduce themselves and so will Facilitator 2 (F2). F1 then leads a brief debrief of Simon Says using the following questions:

1. So what happened? Why did it happen that way?
2. What can we learn from this technique?
3. What are potential pitfalls here? How might you avoid them?

During this debrief, F2 will take 5 participants (Pps) out of the room to brief them on the **challenge cards**. See more below, but the **instructions for the Pps** are as follows:

1. You will receive a card from me right now with a challenge on it.
2. Your goal is to complete this challenge from when you are signaled to begin until we stop the round.
3. Each card has a color on it, and when you hear your color called, or you are otherwise cued by either F1 or F2, it is your turn to try and accomplish your challenge.
4. You are encouraged to use the most effective techniques you know of for capturing people’s attention and directing them to act.
5. Once you have accomplished your challenge, you may participate as the rest of the Pps are.

Once these instructions have been given and the TOPIC 1 Challenge Cards have been distributed, F2 will return the Pps to the group debrief.

After this debrief, the Pps will introduce themselves, saying 1) their name, 2) their role at camp, and 3) why they came to learn about large group facilitation. Then, F2 will provide the layout and ground rules for the following ‘challenge rounds’:

- 1) We will start every round with a “baseline activity”, which means that once we begin doing this, your job is to continue to do this until prompted or otherwise convinced to do something else, or until the round is up. If at any point you have nothing else to do, return to doing the “baseline activity”.
- 2) Throughout each round, individuals are going to attempt to capture your attention and have you do something besides this “baseline activity”, and it is more than okay for you to do that.
- 3) There will be, at times, more than one individual competing for your attention at once, at which time, it is up to you who you will grace with your attention.
- 4) Finally, each ‘challenge round’ has an assigned topic, or theme. If you are able to guess the theme, and help the individuals leading the round to do it better/best, you win! (There are no prizes for winning beyond learning about Large Group Facilitation)

F2 will then take questions from the group about how to act or proceed in the following rounds.

10 minutes: Topic 1 Challenges

F2 will begin the round by teaching all of the Pps the baseline activity for the round: “Double Double This-That”

For a video manual, click here: <https://youtu.be/vNm52EdG3cg>

Once the whole group is doing the baseline activity autonomically, then F2 will begin cueing Pps with challenge cards to attempt to complete their challenge. Once all of the challenges have been attempted or completed / time has run out, move into the debrief for this Topic.

Note: For Cueing Pps with challenge cards, try to make sure that they have gotten their chance to accomplish the challenge before cueing the next Pp. Some overlap between challenges can help with the naturalistic feel of the program, but too much overlap can just result in confusing chaos, opposite of what is desired.

10 minutes: Topic 1 Debrief

Note: Just before this debrief begins, F1 will take 5 Pps outside of the room to give them the 5 challenge cards for round 2, instructions (see above), and then release back into the room to participate in the debrief.

F1 will lead a debrief (consider group geometry, but keep the energy of the activity present, don't go to another room, etc.) to focus the learning on the first topic – Listening – with the following questions:

- 1) How did you indicate to the group that you wanted to be listened to? How did you notice others doing this? Which ways worked for you best as a listener?
- 2) What 'voices' do we have besides our voices?
- 3) Why do individuals fail to listen to one person in big groups? What are some techniques you have learned today to overcome these obstacles?
- 4) As a participant, which actions were easiest to do, and which ones had you considering whether or not to do it or how much effort to put into doing it? What can we learn from this information for giving instructions or guiding large groups of people?
- 5) What assumptions might you be carrying about who can and cannot get a big group to listen to them? Can you challenge any of these assumptions based on the techniques you've just seen modeled or discussed?

F2 will then ask for final thoughts before F1 takes over for the next round.

10 minutes: Topic 2 Challenges

F1 will begin the round by teaching all of the Pps the baseline activity for the round: "Going on a Picnic Madlibs"

"Going on a Picnic Madlibs" Rules:

1. Pps get in groups of 2-4.
2. 1st Pp in the group then begins the game with the sentence: "We're going on a picnic and I'm gonna bring..."
3. 1st Pp must then list a category to be 'madlibbed' by the 2nd Pp (e.g., 'type of pasta', 'kind of animal', 'game with cards', etc.)
4. 2nd Pp must continue the game with the sentence: "We're going on a picnic and I'm gonna bring..."
5. The 2nd Pp must however list 2 things: 1) a member of the category listed by the 1st Pp, and 2) a new category to be 'madlibbed' by the 3rd Pp.
6. Repeat steps 4-6, each time with the current Pp repeated ALL of the items listed so far, filling in their 'madlib', and then choosing the category for the next Pp to 'madlib'.

Once the whole group is doing the baseline activity autonomically, then F1 will begin cueing Pps with challenge cards to attempt to complete their challenge. Once all of the challenges have been attempted or completed / time has run out, move into the debrief for this Topic.

Note: For Cueing Pps with challenge cards, try to make sure that they have gotten their chance to accomplish the challenge before cueing the next Pp. Some overlap between challenges can help with the naturalistic feel of the program, but too much overlap can just result in confusing chaos, opposite of what is desired.

10 minutes: Topic 2 Debrief

Note: Just before this debrief begins, F2 will take 5 Pps outside of the room to give them the 5 challenge cards for round 3, instructions (see above), and then release back into the room to participate in the debrief.

F1 will then ask for final thoughts before F2 takes over for the next round.

F2 will lead a debrief (consider group geometry, but keep the energy of the activity present, don't go to another room, etc.) to focus the learning on the second topic – Modifying the Energy – with the following questions:

- 1) What happened when trying to bring the energy of the group to a different place?
- 2) What techniques did you use to get people excited? To calm them down?
- 3) What do you do to modify the energy at your camp? What can you bring back from this exercise to improve it?
- 4) As a participant, what you are reacting to? What moments captured your attention best?
- 5) As a participant, what events had the clearest instructions and why?
- 6) What assumptions might you be carrying about who can and cannot modify the energy of a group? Can you challenge any of these assumptions based on the techniques you've just seen modeled or discussed?

10 minutes: Topic 3 Challenges

F2 will begin the round by teaching all of the Pps the baseline activity for the round: "Making a Perfect Circle". It is important that the Pps **don't move** while these instructions are being given but only afterward.

Making the Perfect Circle:

- 1) Decide on a person – to – person width: chopstick, chicken wing, or spread eagle
- 2) Everyone in the circle assumes the position chosen and touches shoulders, elbows, or fingertips respectfully.
- 3) Then, the circle works to make it true that "everyone in the circle can see everyone else".
- 4) If this is not true for the current circle, all that people need to do is to ask people on either side of them to scoot back until they can see all of the people on that side.
- 5) Once it is true that "everyone in the circle can see everyone else" the game is won.
- 6) If at any point anyone in the circle shouts "Earthquake", then everyone in the circle has to find a new spot in the circle.

Once the whole group is doing the baseline activity autonomously, then F2 will begin cueing Pps with challenge cards to attempt to complete their challenge. Once all of the challenges have been attempted or completed / time has run out, move into the debrief for this Topic.

Note: For Cueing Pps with challenge cards, try to make sure that they have gotten their chance to accomplish the challenge before cueing the next Pp. Some overlap between challenges can help with the naturalistic feel of the program, but too much overlap can just result in confusing chaos, opposite of what is desired.

10 minutes: Topic 3 Debrief

F1 & F2 will lead a debrief (consider group geometry, but keep the energy of the activity present, don't go to another room, etc.) to focus the learning on the third topic – Optimizing Space – with the following questions:

- 1) What are the challenges involved in a large group moving around a large room in a coordinated manner? What did you do to alleviate these challenges?
- 2) What are some assets to the space we are in now? Is there anything useful to getting the attention of, or instructing a large group in this space? How?
- 3) What does changing the shape of a group allow you to do? How might you use different shapes for the group in the future to solve previous challenges?

- 4) How did individuals completing challenges grab your attention in this round? How did they help you help them?
- 5) When might space issues really matter at camp; what are some circumstances when a change of venue might cause you to rely on techniques you've just seen or heard about?
- 6) What assumptions might you be carrying about where certain activities can take place? Can you challenge any of these assumptions based on the techniques you've just seen modeled or discussed?

F1 & F2 will then ask for final thoughts before moving on to handouts and evaluations

5 minutes: Handouts & Final Questions

F1 & F2 will take final questions individually if there are any, handout the "Large Group Attention Grabbers Handout", and mention evaluations for the session.