



Unit: Speaking
Skill 18: Holding Individual and Small Group Conversations

Activity B: Let's Broaden the Group

Activity Skills:

Group work, creative problem solving.

Leadership Skills:

Communication, relating well with others.

Suggested Level:

Advanced

Time:

30-40 minutes

Supplies needed:

- A whiteboard or flipchart and a writing utensil.
- Paper for each participant.
- Pens and pencils to write.

Do Ahead:

Source:

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BACKGROUND:

We have all had times when others have excluded us from a conversation. Exclusion is not always intentional and there are many ways to communicate to someone that they are not a part of the group. This exercise draws upon the participants' experiences to understand the following:

- How people communicate exclusion
- Why it is important to foster an inclusive atmosphere
- How to welcome others into a conversation when they are being excluded.

WHAT TO DO:

Ask participants to take a couple of minutes to personally reflect upon a time when they were excluded from a conversation. What did the other people do to make you feel excluded and how did it feel? Would you have felt differently if someone had made a point to invite you into the conversation?

Next, as either a large group or in breakout groups, have participants respond to the question: what are some ways that people are made to feel excluded from conversations?

Explain that there are consequences for including and excluding people from any conversation or activity. Ask the group to brainstorm a list comparing the difference between when people are included or excluded.

Your list may look something like this:

When people are included...

- It builds team spirit.
- Everybody feels comfortable sharing their ideas.
- We all learn new things.
- We make new friends and associates.
- We learn to accept others' differences.
- Everybody feels good.

When people are excluded...

- We miss out on new ideas.
- We may alienate talented people.
- We may lose co-workers or volunteers.
- Our group may not function effectively.
- We stick only with what is familiar.

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Notes:

TALK IT OVER:

Reflect:

- Is it sometimes difficult to include others? Why?
- What are some strategies you can use to try to welcome someone into a conversation you are having?
- Do you think you would feel more comfortable joining a conversation if someone welcomed you in?

Apply:

- Can you think of a time when some of the strategies you learned from this activity would have helped you to include somebody in a conversation you were having?
- What strategies will you try to use in the future?

BEYOND THE BOX:

Optional Homework:

Option 1: Reflect upon a time when you could have used some of the strategies from this activity to welcome someone into a conversation you were having. What was the situation and what could you have done differently?

Option 2: Think about someone you know who is really good at welcoming others into their conversations. What do they do that makes them so effective? How do others perceive this individual?

Resources and Web Links: