



Night of the individuals

Sat, 18/10/2014 - 08:54 -- Eike Totter

Type of tool:

Activity

Duration:

90-120 min

Topics addressed:

Group dynamics

Networking

Social inclusion

The "Night of the individuals" is a dynamic activity that allows to get to know the members of a group in an inclusive way, avoiding stereotyping and revealing relevant and meaningful parts of the group members identity. Adaptable to various scopes.

Aim:

The tool keeps the positive benefits of what is known as "cultural night", national night", local specialities night" etc. but avoids the unbearable stereotyping part(s). It reveals the individual in many diverse issues, shows strong references of identity, relevant background of participants, can create an informal, cozy or dynamic ambience and support group dynamics or gather ideas and content that can be helpful for next activities.

The method... wait! tool!!! is based on diversity sensitive approaches and undermines the omnidominant question of nationality in favour to strengthen the individual by allowing them to present themselves from their most relevant side according to the context.

Methodology:

This is an inclusive and diversity sensitive re-engineered version of a popular but nowadays inappropriate and outdated activity. (Proven trans-ferability ;-)

Step by step process:

- Participants are invited to bring special items as snacks or drinks, selfmade stuff, music (live or prerecorded) or something that nobody expects from them or do a performance that THEY like or frequently use and that they can connect to their personality.
- Participants are introduced to the frame of the activity. Should be nonformal, e.g. in the evening.
- Introduction in different languages, e.g. using methods of language animation, can help to break ice and to foster communication on individual level.
- It is important that the space is safe enough for the selected aims and that no one is forced to show something they aren't comfortable to share at that moment.
- Participants are presenting their item(s), revealing the connection to their personality. Should be animated in a respectful and trustful manner. (Approx. 3 -5 mins per person, can be varied but should keep the attention span in mind!)

- People discover the items, drinks, snacks, individuals in informal formal setting.
- Later there can be an evaluation revealing learning aspects as surprises, new insight, uncomfortable moments etc. ...
- Out.... errr.. IN!put can be used later on for othe activities.

Materials and resources:

Participamts need to be briefed in advance to bring meaningful items that are possibly connected with the topics to be treated during the next days. Directions should focus on individual relevance and not(!) feed the "general", "national", "group" think.

It is helpful to have facilitation materials, a CD player, at least any kind of speaker system, a room that can be closed and possibly cozily arranged (light, seats, ...).

Outcomes:

- Informal ambience.
- Better understanding of other participants.
- Better understanding for own individuality.
- Increased self-confidence.
- Drunk bodies (sometimes).
- Connection through shared stomach, feet or vocal chords reactions.
- Knowledge and metaerials for further work on diversity issues or any other question of group dynamics.

Evaluation:

- Can be a low threshold activity to introduce into diversity issues and anti-discrimination work.
- As non-formal as we can imagine!
- Keeps all of the advantages of previous (self-?)presentation "evenings".
- Avoids/ reveals stereotyping.
- Creates transparency.
- Fosters group-cohesion.
- Can be adapted to many different needs and requirements of the project and create or collect necessary data or materials for further steps.
- Needs sufficient time (ca 3 mins per pax minimum plus introduction before and informal exchange afterwards).

Notes for further use:

This tool is re-engineered in an inclusive way to keep a popular part of many exchange programs but also meet quality requirements of modern, anti-discriminative and diversity sensitive approaches. It is transfer-able to many different contexts (e.g. in combination with language animation and cultural access), which I do usually and with very encouraging results.

Rating:

No votes yet