

Structured Experience 12-9: Interruption Role Play

GOALS

The goals of this experience are to

- ◆ Demonstrate strategies to handle interruptions.
- ◆ Practice effective conversations when interrupted.
- ◆ Have fun.



MATERIALS

The materials needed for this structured experience are

- ◆ Copies of Handout 12-2: Interruption Role-Play Scenarios for all participants



TIME

- ◆ 5 minutes for setup and to form groups
- ◆ 25 minutes for small-group interruption conversations
- ◆ 10 minutes for volunteers to practice in front of large group (optional)
- ◆ 5 minutes for debriefing



INSTRUCTIONS

- 1.** Divide participants into groups of three people each. If necessary to have three per group, the facilitator may need to join a group and participate in the exercise.
- 2.** Give copies of Handout 12-2: Interruption Role-Play Scenarios to all participants.
- 3.** Ask participants to review Handout 12-2 with you, and explain that there are three different scenarios. Walk them through the scenarios in the handout and the format for the exercise. In their groups, they will have three rounds to switch off and play different roles, working through each scenario one at a time with everyone participating.
- 4.** Give them a moment to decide who will play each role in Scenario A. They should all be prepared to provide feedback to each other at the end of each round and discuss how it went.

5. Allow the participants about two minutes to review the scenario, and decide which roles they will play and what approach they will take for the first round. When ready, begin the exercise by asking the first interrupter and “interruptee” for Scenario A to start the conversation. Emphasize that the players should remember to use the steps and tips they learned for handling interruptions and distractions to carry out the role-play conversation.
6. Time the exercise. Give the participants approximately four minutes to have their first conversations. When the time is up, ask the participants to share their observations and feedback about the role play for four to five minutes.
7. Ask the groups to move on to Scenario B and rotate characters so there is a new interruptee for the second round. Repeat the process in step 5 above with Scenario B. Follow the procedure in step 6, and move on to a third round to work with Scenario C, so each participant has played the interruptee.
8. When ready, ask participants to go back to their original seats.

LARGE-GROUP PRACTICE (OPTIONAL)

1. Ask for three volunteers to do the role play again for the large group (a trio for each of the three scenarios, building on what they learned from their small-group experience). Explain that the first round will now be re-created and that you need three people to role play the first interruption conversation again (Scenario A), but only for two to three minutes this time. Have the volunteers go to the front of the room and begin the role play.
2. When the time has passed, ask the audience to share what they observed about the conversation and thank the volunteers for their willingness to participate in front of the group.
3. When ready, ask for three new volunteers to re-create the interruption conversation in round two (Scenario B) and follow the procedures in step two above. Do the same for a round three conversation (Scenario C) with three new volunteers. *Note:* The above portion of this structured experience may not be suitable for all groups. The facilitator will need to gauge the personalities in the group and decide whether the large-group practice would be beneficial and enjoyable for the participants.

DEBRIEFING

Ask for a handful of volunteer participants to share their reactions to the exercise. Lead the debriefing into a discussion of how the participants performed as characters who needed to handle interruptions, how they used the steps and tips to handle interruptions and distractions during the experience, and whether they found the steps and tips they learned to be helpful. (10 minutes)