

THINK – PAIR – SHARE



Purpose

Raise the students' awareness of attitudes, behavior and skills that facilitate or interfere with open and supportive communication within a small group.

Preparation



Material and Resources

computer with internet connection, screen or IBW (for lecturer), notebooks



Room

group tables for 3-5 students, internet connection



Duration

about 45-60 minutes

- Presentation of the activity (10')
- Think-part of the activity (10')
- Pair-part of activity (10')
- Share-part of the activity (15')

Possible addition: all over discussion (15')



Target group

student teachers, student teachers in internship, students



Setting

S-PLCs in seminar or internship



Application

beginning of the S-PLC work, initial stage of the semester

Description of the Activity

Each part of the activity corresponds to one of the „phases“ of the activity - Think/Pair/Share.

The lecturer asks the students to reflect on previous experiences within group work in terms of attitudes, skills and conditions that facilitated and interfered with communication using the Think-Pair-Share method.

1. The activity is introduced by the lecturer by presenting the focus of the activity (communication within small groups) and highlighting how open and supportive communication is critical for a healthy group environment.

2. **THINK** (individual activity: each participant considers for him / herself):

Students are asked to individually reflect on their experiences of teamwork whilst working in small groups during their time at university and focus on the attitudes, behaviours and skills that facilitated or hindered communication (students can be asked to write their ideas in two columns / lists).

In order to stimulate and guide reflection, a list of topics / areas can be provided (as support to think about facilitating / hindering conditions):

- how communication was initiated,
- how it was controlled and by whom,
- what communication problems arose and why,
- if / how open, supported communication was promoted,
- if / how everybody's ideas were listened to,
- if / how affective issues were dealt with, etc.

3. PAIR (partner / small group activity):

In pairs / groups of two or three, students exchange their experiences, reconsider their individual thoughts, and compare their lists of facilitating and hindering conditions for open, supportive communication.

4. SHARE (plenary activity):

In plenary, some students share what they have discussed. The teacher takes notes of the facilitating and hindering conditions in two separate columns before commenting on them. He / she makes sure that all important conditions are included in the list (see "note to the lecturer" below).

Additional Information



Alternative

In step "PAIR", the teacher provides the students via email / learning platform with the link to an editable (e.g., Google doc) document / digital poster (e.g., Padlet) where students can introduce their ideas on facilitating and hindering conditions for supportive communication within a small group. In plenary, these conditions can be discussed and missing important conditions can be added by the teacher.



Alternative

Think–Pair–Share can also be done within the group or in pairs. Subgroups of the S-PLC can be addressed and ideas then shared in the S-PLC.

Note to the lecturer

In order to work successfully in a small group, members need to be able to communicate openly on an intellectual and emotional level and provide support to one another. The following information can be supportive when coming up with a list of "facilitating and supporting conditions for open, supportive communication":

Some of the following aspects can be formulated in positive or negative terms and, therefore, be included as either facilitating or interfering conditions.

Facilitation of communication:

- Listening actively: listen to what other students say and how they say it, be alert and interested in other people's comments
- Paying attention to nonverbal communication: people send messages nonverbally; examples of nonverbal signals include tone of voice, volume, facial expressions, eye contact, silence, arm and leg posture
- Asking questions: asking members questions during group work shows interest in them, their contributions, comments, etc.
- Checking, clarifying and paraphrasing / summarising: to ensure that you are understanding correctly, that your interpretations are accurate; check that you have understood the message the others are trying to get across
- Inviting others' point of view: respect for others encompasses openness to and interest in their views
- Providing constructive feedback: this requires focusing on ideas and behaviours rather than on individuals. You need to be as positive as you can be. Both giving and providing feedback requires checking and asking for clarification if comments are unclear as well as listening attentively and being open to accept other members' ideas.

Barriers to communication:

- Judging the other person
- Not paying attention to what other people are saying (e.g., looking at the computer screen, the smartphone etc.)
- Avoiding dealing with the concerns of a member of the group
- Attitudes such as anger, nervousness, having the need to win an argument etc.
- Somebody talking too much / for too long