

Meaning of Life

Synoptic Table of Beginner Activities

Title	Objectives	Overview	Evaluation & Reflection
<p>The Mission Statement: Mission Possible</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-awareness • Self-presentation skills • Creativity • Critical thinking skills • Decision-making skills • Engagement <p><u>Level of Difficulty:</u> Beginner</p>	<p>This is a Homework Activity, where students uncover the vision and the attitudes they have towards their personal and professional life, as well as the methods and techniques they need to use to get where they want to be.</p>	<p>After the end of the exercise, students will discuss if they have viewed things differently after the implementation of this activity and what did they learn about what really matters to them.</p>
<p>Top 5 Values</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-awareness • Self-presentation skills • Engagement <p><u>Level of Difficulty:</u> Beginner</p>	<p>This is a Homework Activity, where students realize which things make them feel that they are really doing what they were put on this earth to do.</p>	<p>Learning about one's values, strengths and talents is crucial in developing deeper meaningfulness in identifying and pursuing an occupation. Using one's talents and values at work is associated with greater meaning and well-being.</p>
<p>Balance your Group</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-awareness • Self-presentation skills • Engagement <p><u>Level of Difficulty:</u> Beginner</p>	<p>Engaging all participants in one Group Activity by having the same goal. The better they do the exercise, the better the results. The Aim of this activity is to learn that meaning at workplace increases when engagement is in balance.</p>	<p>Increasing "profitability, productivity, customer satisfaction, innovation, health and safety, turnover and wellbeing" are some of the outcomes when engaging your employees at work.</p>
<p>Going to the Right High Scoring</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teamwork • Decision Making • Critical Thinking • Negotiation Skills • Engagement <p><u>Level of Difficulty:</u> Beginner</p>	<p>This Group Activity aims to encourage engagement in teamwork. Achieving the same goal when engagement in work tasks. When new working tasks are added the employees learn to re-position and re-structure strategical plans and actions.</p>	<p>By the end of this exercise participants will be aware that employers must provide a concise and well-organized strategic plan in order to implement actions and tasks necessary for the increasing productivity of the organization.</p>
<p>Fun at Work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperation • Decision Making • Engagement • Communication <p><u>Level of Difficulty:</u> Beginner</p>	<p>A feeling of togetherness increases when people collaborate together. Employees when working together with trust and respect increases their impact and meaning of their workplace and hence generate and cultivate positive environment at work.</p>	<p>In a working environment that promotes engagement and teamwork, people may thrive as it provides them the tools to pursue challenging goals as well as cultivates positive emotions. By the end of this activity, the participants will be able to value the aforementioned useful assets.</p>

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<p>Don't Smirk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beginners • Teamwork • Negotiation Skills • Commitment <p><u>Level of Difficulty:</u> Beginner</p>	<p>Meaning increases when influenced by others</p>	<p>This exercise is very important to convey the meaning of collaboration, trust and good teamwork capabilities. All members and the leader play a vital role in influencing each other. Precise and consistent coordination and management skills are also important in the workplace that increases unity and a sense of "working together" and trusting each other.</p>
<p>Blindfolded Trust</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-confidence • Commitment • Teamwork <p><u>Level of Difficulty:</u> Beginner</p>	<p>Meaning increases when recognized by others. When a person's capabilities and efforts are recognized builds trust and improves performance.</p>	<p>This exercise is very important to convey the meaning of trust and good teamwork capabilities. All members and the leader play a vital role in influencing each other. When a person's capabilities and efforts are recognized by other team members then it increases self-confidence and willingness, it builds trust and improves work performance.</p>
<p>Communication Construction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication Skills • Commitment • Teamwork <p><u>Level of Difficulty:</u> Beginner</p>	<p>Meaning increases when communication is maintained Communication increases understanding Increase commitment and team dynamics Communication can increase employee job satisfaction</p>	<p>Clear directions and positive feedback is necessary for an effective communication at workplace and therefore increasing meaning and job satisfaction. If employers are able to actively listen to employees and respond positively and constructively then it increases employees job satisfaction.</p>

Meaning (of Life) Beginner Activities

Title of the Activity: The Mission Statement: Mission Possible	
Duration: 60 minutes	
Type of Activity:	Homework
Level of Difficulty:	Beginner
Objectives (including skills which are expected to be enhanced):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To help students uncover the vision and the attitudes they have towards their personal and professional life as well as the methods and techniques they need to use to get where they want to be. • To identify the areas of their life in which they find meaning, passion and engagement and to focus on specific steps they need to take. • To enhance self-awareness, self-presentation, creativity, critical thinking, decision making and engagement skills.
Instructions:	<p><u>Material:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pen / Pencils • Papers • Slide projector or flip chart with the instructions (for the career counselor) • Markers (for the career counselor) <p><u>Implementation Procedure:</u></p> <p>The school counselor may have a brief introduction (A) and then provide the instructions on how to do the homework exercise (B) so as the student may proceed with by applying step it at home (C) and they discuss about it at the next session (D):</p> <p><u>A: Introduction</u> Finding meaning in life entails to be committed to fulfilling your potential. To do so, first you need to be clear about where you are headed and why this is important to you. In addition, you need to recognize the attitudes and beliefs you hold about yourself and others, so</p>

as to identify any influences that may hold you back, or to expand your perspectives to support your mission. Subsequently, you need to design an action plan and to draw upon all the available resources. In other words, you should develop your own MAP (: Mission, Attitude, Process) to navigate you in your life journey. To this end, a useful method you may try is to write a story about this journey, by using your MAP to find the right direction.

B: Instructions The school counselor can use a slide projector or a flip chart to provide the following instructions for the homework exercise:

Allow enough time (approximately 30 minutes) for introspection and reflection while performing this exercise. Find a quiet place where you can be uninterrupted while you work. Consider both your personal and professional life when writing your story. Take a few breaths and let your imagination free.

Imagine that you are the script writer of a new movie, called “Mission Possible” that is about you and your life. What kind of film would it be? Who are the main characters? What is the Mission that the hero/heroine would like to manage? What are the Attitudes held by the hero about the world, the other people and himself/herself? Which Process does the hero adapt to overcome the setbacks and to come out on top? How does your story end? What alternative title would you like to give to your movie?

Take the time to reflect thoughtfully on each answer. Once you have the details of your movie clearly in your mind, write some key notes to answer the aforementioned questions.

C: Implementation The student undertakes the homework exercise by following the instructions provided in step B.

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	<p><u>D: Next session</u> At the next meeting, the school counselor asks the students to present their stories by taking account of the aforementioned steps, and to reflect upon emotions and thoughts that they have about their story now. Also, the counselor encourages the participants to reflect upon their Mission, Attitude and Process in their stories and to think about whether there are any disempowering elements of the story that they need to discard. Finally, the school counselor asks the students to create a mission statement that is the best reflection of them.</p>
<p>Evaluation & Reflection:</p>	<p>Discuss if students have viewed things differently after this exercise and what did they learn about what really matters to them.</p> <p>Students need to understand that uncovering our purpose in life is essentially an exploratory and creative process. Story-telling is an effective creative method to express our authenticity, but also to construct new possibilities for ourselves that we may have overlooked.</p> <p>A clear mission reflects our authenticity and integrity, our vision and values, and it serves as our guide to living our life.</p> <p>Our mission may evolve over time, and we should review it regularly to make sure that it is aligned with our beliefs, perspectives, actions and choices.</p>

Title of the Activity:
Duration:

Top 5 Values
60 minutes

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Type of Activity:	Homework
Level of Difficulty:	Beginner
Objectives (including skills which are expected to be enhanced):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify their values. • To realize which things make them feel that they are serving their true life and self-purpose. • To help students enhance <i>self-awareness</i> and <i>decision-making skills</i>.
Instructions:	<p><u>Material:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pen / Pencils • Paper • Sheet of paper with the instructions <p><u>Implementation Procedure:</u></p> <p>The school counselor may have a brief introduction (A) and then provide the instructions on how to do the homework exercise (B). The student may proceed by applying it at home (C) and they can discuss about it at the next session (D):</p> <p><u>A: Introduction</u> The school counsellor asks students to take some time with the core values exercise in order to consciously assess what really matters to them. Identifying their values, will make it much easier for them to work out how they need to adjust what they are doing in their life and work. Core values are different for each of us.</p> <p><u>B: Instructions</u> The school counsellor - facilitator can hand out the sheet of paper with the following instructions for the homework exercise.</p> <p>Here is an inventory of core values that students can just read through and see which values ring true for them.</p>

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Acceptance	Fairness	Peace
Achievement	Fame	Personal development
Advancement	Family happiness	Personal expression
Adventure	Fast pace	Planning
Affection	Freedom	Play
Altruism	Friendship	Pleasure
Arts	Fun	Power
Awareness	Grace	Privacy
Beauty	Growth	Purity
Challenge	Harmony	Quality
Change	Health	Radiance
Community	Helping others	Recognition
Compassion	Helping society	Relationships
Competence	Honesty	Religion
Competition	Humor	Reputation
Completion	Imagination	Responsibility
Connectedness	Improvement	Risk
Cooperation	Independence	Safety & security
Collaboration	Influencing Others	Self-respect
Country	Inner Harmony	Sensibility
Creativity	Inspiration	Sensuality
Decisiveness	Integrity	Serenity
Democracy	Intellect	Service
Design	Involvement	Sexuality
Discovery	Knowledge	Sophistication
Diversity	Leadership	Spark
Environmental awareness	Learning	Speculation
Economic security	Loyalty	Spirituality
Education	Magnificence	Stability
Effectiveness	Making the difference	Status
Efficiency	Mastery	Success
Elegance	Meaningful work	Teaching
Entertainment	Ministering	Tenderness
Enlightenment	Money	Thrill
Equality	Morality	Unity
Ethics	Mystery	Variety
Excellence	Nature	Wealth
Excitement	Openness	

The counsellor guides students to use ticks and crosses to mark off values or use a rating to help them work out which are more important. There may be

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	<p>some additional personal values that are unique to them. Students can add anything else that just feels right.</p> <p>After considering their core values, they select the five most important values and try to reflect on them. They try to think why they are important for them and what do they do to serve them in their lives.</p> <p><u>C: Implementation</u> The students do the homework exercise according to the instructions.</p> <p><u>D: Next Session</u> At the next meeting, the school counsellor may discuss with the students about their values and what drives and motivates them about those values and why.</p>
<p>Evaluation & Reflection:</p>	<p>School counsellors can share with students that using one's values in one's job, is more likely to result in a person perceiving their work to be meaningful.</p> <p>Learning about one's values, strengths and talents is crucial in developing deeper meaningfulness in identifying and pursuing an occupation. Using one's talents and values at work is associated with greater meaning and well-being.</p> <p>It is important for school counsellors to help students process, how the information gained through such activities relates to their developing of awareness of their values and interests.</p> <p>School counsellors can ask students what they learned about their values, if the experience helped them identify additional areas they want to explore, and what information and experiences they now want to pursue as result of this experience.</p>

Title of the Activity:

Balance your Group

Duration:	(45 minutes)
Type of Activity:	Group
Level of Difficulty:	Beginner
Objectives (including skills which are expected to be enhanced):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn that meaning at workplace increases when engagement is in balance • Engaging all participants in one group activity by having the same goal. The better they do the exercise, the better the results. • This activity aims to enhance engagement along with other objectives like team work, self-management, critical thinking, negotiation and decision making.
Instructions:	<p>Material:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pen / Pencils (in case that students' / participants want to take notes) • Flip chart or Blackboard (for the career counselor / facilitator) • Markers (for the career counselor / facilitator) <p>Implementation Procedure:</p> <p>The facilitator explains that keeping employees engaged is a challenge at workplace. It's also a huge opportunity to gain long-term commitment and effort from your team members. This may result into to higher sales and fewer mistakes.</p> <p>The facilitators prompts the participants to get into pairs and to discuss in which ways an employer can engage the employees. All participants engage in discussion.</p> <p>The facilitator then asks pairs to hold hands and sit down then stand up, without letting go of one another's hands. Then the pairs are asked to join with another pair in order to become 4 people in a group. Repeat the same exercise in groups of four people. The 4-member groups join into groups of eight people holding hands in a circle.</p>

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	<p>While they perform the activity, the facilitator asks members in each group to assign numbers for each member from 1-8. The facilitator gives a signal and the team members who have even numbers fall backwards while the odd numbers fall forwards. The effort is to achieve a group balance.</p>
<p>Evaluation & Reflection:</p>	<p>Increasing "profitability, productivity, customer satisfaction, innovation, health and safety, turnover and wellbeing" are some of the outcomes when engaging your employees at work.</p> <p>Employers must provide a concise and well-organized strategic plan in order to implement actions and tasks necessary for the increasing productivity of the organization.</p> <p>Participants may reflect their thoughts about the outcomes of the exercise on a paper how they felt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How well do you feel you contributed to the team? - How well do you think team members worked together? - Do you feel your understanding of engagement was clear?

Reference:

<https://gethppy.com/employee-engagement/15-employee-engagement-activities-can-start-now>

Alliance, Supporting Community Action on AIDS in Developing Countries

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Title of the Activity:	Going to the right high scoring
Duration:	(45 minutes)
Type of Activity:	Group
Level of Difficulty:	Beginner
Objectives (including skills which are expected to be enhanced):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage engagement in teamwork • Achieving the same goal when engagement in work tasks • Increase Teamwork and decision making • Increase critical thinking, negotiation • When new working tasks are added the employees learn to re-position and re-structure strategical plans and actions.
Instructions:	<p><u>Material:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pen / Pencils (in case that students / participants want to take notes) • Drinking straws • Paper balls • Large piece of paper <p><u>Implementation Procedure:</u></p> <p>The facilitator explains that engagement assist in the development of working relationships, in the enhancement of teamwork and team management.</p> <p>A discussion is made with all participants.</p> <p>All participants draw scoring circles on a large piece of paper</p> <p>Create small balls with paper.</p> <p>The participants must work all together to blow some balls (with the drinking straws) to the scoring circles. The facilitator avoids to give directions as to which scoring circle the balls should get into. While they are doing this, the facilitator adds more balls.</p> <p>More balls come into the game, and the participants must decide with others how they will place the paper balls into scoring circles without moving balls that are already in place. The facilitator asks the participants to decide together to put all the paper balls in one scoring circle.</p>

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Evaluation & Reflection:

Employers must provide a concise and well-organized strategic plan in order to implement actions and tasks necessary for the increasing productivity of the organization.

If the decision making is put on the employees, then the responsibility increases which necessitates strong engagement and teamwork by all members.

Participants may reflect their thoughts about the outcomes of the exercise on a paper how they felt:

- How well do you feel you contributed to the team?
- How well do you think team members worked together?
- Do you feel your understanding of engagement was clear?

Reference:

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1997). *Finding Flow: The Psychology of Engagement with Everyday Life*

Gutknecht, D., & Lahey, S. (2017). *Meaning at Work and his hidden language.*

<https://www.huddle.com/blog/team-building-exercises/>

Title of the Activity:	Fun at Work
Duration:	(45 minutes)
Type of Activity:	Group
Level of Difficulty:	Beginner
Objectives (including skills which are expected to be enhanced):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived Impact in the Workplace. • Increase <i>cooperation</i> and <i>decision-making skills</i>. • Increase <i>engagement</i> among team members. • Increase <i>communication</i>.
Instructions:	<p><u>Material:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pen / Pencils (in case that students participants want to take notes) • Jigsaw puzzle (50 medium- large pieces - depending on the number of participants) • Small bags to divide the puzzles • Projector <p><u>Implementation Procedure:</u></p> <p>The facilitator explains that cooperation is a valuable asset when it comes to the development of positive working relationships and to make work fun. A discussion is made with all participants, regarding how fun at work can facilitate meaning at work.</p> <p>All participants are provided with a picture (depicted on a projector). The facilitator provides each participant with a bag including puzzle pieces. The facilitator asks participants to cooperate and put together all puzzle pieces to create the picture depicted on the projector. The facilitator avoids to give directions as to how they will work but he/she monitors and writes down the process that participants followed.</p> <p>When the participants finished, the facilitator presents to them (in bullet points) the process they follow.</p>

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Evaluation

& Reflection:

A feeling of togetherness increases when people collaborate together. Employees when working together with trust and respect, enjoy higher level of job satisfaction and meaning and hence generate and cultivate positive environment at work. In these kinds of environments, people may thrive as it provides them all the necessary tools to pursue challenging goals, as well as cultivates positive emotions.

In the contrary, when employees' workplace lacks positive characteristics and tools to facilitate social emotional skills, then their interest dissolves into "office politics, ego management, and passive-aggressive avoidance of tough issues" Cranston, S., & Keller, S. (2013) (online article in the McKinsey Quarterly "Increasing the meaning quotient of work).

Participants may reflect their thoughts about the outcomes of the exercise on a paper how they felt:

- How well do you feel you contributed to the team?
- How well do you think team members worked together?
- Do you feel your understanding of engagement was clear?

Reference:

Teambuilding with Teens: Activities for Leadership, Decision Making, and Group Success, by Mariam G. MacGregor)

<https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/increasing-the-meaning-quotient-of-work>

<p>Title of the Activity: Duration:</p>	<p>Don't smirk (45 minutes)</p>
<p>Type of Activity:</p>	<p>Group</p>
<p>Level of Difficulty:</p>	<p>Beginner</p>
<p>Objectives (including skills which are expected to be enhanced):</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meaning increases when influenced by others. • Recognize team influence. • Enhance <i>collaboration skills</i>. • Improve <i>negotiation skills</i>. • Increase trust and <i>commitment</i>.
<p>Instructions:</p>	<p><u>Material:</u> N/A</p> <p><u>Implementation Procedure:</u> A 15' discussion with all participants on topics such as trust and commitment should be made. The facilitator just coordinates the discussion and asks participants to write their thoughts on their notebooks first. (Probes: 3-4 questions for discussion-Why trust is important in the workplace? Think about a person you can trust in your class, What skills does the (authority /person) need to encompass in order to be trusted by others, etc.) Have participants stand in two parallel lines (each line is considered one team). Each line facing the opposing line/team. The last member of the line (either left or right end) is going to lead the other team members to walk from one end of the line to the other. Don't give instructions. Let them designate the leader. They need to designate one person from each team to walk between the two lines at the same time with instruction III. Ask all participants not to laugh or talk until they go from one end of the room to the other. If one member smiles/giggles/laughs/talks then he/she will leave the team and go to the other team. The team with more members</p>

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	wins.
<p>Evaluation & Reflection:</p>	<p>This exercise is very important to convey the meaning of collaboration, trust and good teamwork capabilities. All members and the leader, play a vital role in influencing each other. Precise and consistent coordination and management skills are also important in the workplace that increases unity and a sense of “working together” and trusting each other.</p> <p>A person experiences a meaningful life when he/she responds promptly to any situations and challenges and discovers its own responsibility in life that allows him/her to experience and believe in a superior meaning (Frankl, 1962).</p> <p>Participants may reflect their thoughts about the outcomes of the exercise on a paper how they felt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How well do you feel you contributed to the team? - How well do you think team members worked together? - Do you feel your understanding of engagement was clear?

Reference:

MacGregor, M. Teambuilding with Teens: Activities for Leadership, Decision Making, and Group Success.

Cranston, S., & Keller, S. (2013). Increasing the ‘meaning quotient’ of work (<https://www.mckinsey.com/quarterly/overview>)

Title of the Activity:	Blindfolded Trust
Duration:	(45 minutes)
Type of Activity:	Group
Level of Difficulty:	Beginner
Objectives (including skills which are expected to be enhanced):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meaning increases when an individual's efforts and skills are recognized by others as well. • When a person's capabilities and efforts are recognized builds trust and improves performance. • Increase a feeling of being valued. • Increase <i>commitment, team work, team dynamics</i>.
Instructions:	<p><u>Material:</u> N/A</p> <p><u>Implementation Procedure:</u> A 5' discussion with all participants on how commitment increases trust and engagement. (Probes: Think about a person you acknowledge his/her capabilities in your class. What have you pointed out? Can you trust this person to work with? Will you be influenced by this person? Why? etc.) Ask participants to get into groups of 2. Ask all groups to map a walking route (it can be a complex one) in the room with a chalk. Ask them to walk the route before they start implementing the exercise. Prompt them to decide who will be the leading member and ask them to give 3 reasons why? (Understanding and recognize abilities). The person who is responsible for leading the blindfolded person, leads the person without giving instructions and talk about anything else. Ask them to change roles. Follow the same pattern. Both in the group are blindfolded and walk with instructions. One group at a time. The rest of the participants observe and take notes for feedback.</p>

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Evaluation

& Reflection:

This exercise is very important to convey the meaning of trust and good teamwork capabilities. All members and the leader play a vital role in influencing each other. When a person's capabilities and efforts are recognized by other team members, then it increases self-confidence and willingness, it builds trust and improves work performance.

Participants may reflect their thoughts about the outcomes of the exercise on a paper how they felt:

- What were the competencies (leadership, clear structure, etc.)?
- How well do these competencies promote the successful accomplishment of the exercise?
- Trustworthiness is understood and recognized through honesty, sincerity, integrity, promise-keeping, loyalty. Which of the above were presented in the activity?

Reference:

<http://ipm-info.org/group-dynamics-exercises/blindfold-exercise/>

Hobbs, S. Blindfold Obstacle Course. From the business ethics activity book.

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Title of the Activity:	Communication Construction
Duration:	(45 minutes)
Type of Activity:	Group
Level of Difficulty:	Beginner
Objectives (including skills which are expected to be enhanced):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meaning increases when communication is maintained. • Communication increases understanding. • Increase <i>commitment</i> and <i>team dynamics</i>. • <i>Communication</i> can increase employee job satisfaction.
Instructions:	<p><u>Material:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Papers • Scissors • Glue • Color pencils/markers <p><u>Implementation Procedure:</u></p> <p>Ask participants to think about an event in their life, when they received a very positive feedback and how did it influence their performance? Discuss 10' minutes with the group. Let all participants present one life-event.</p> <p>Encourage the participants to think about an event in their life when they received a very bad feedback and how did it influence their performance? Discuss 10' minutes with the group. Let all participants present one life-event.</p> <p>Ask participants to get into group of 2. Assign participants with labels A and B. Participants will sit with their backs facing each other. Provide Participants A with this craft</p> <p>e.g.,</p>

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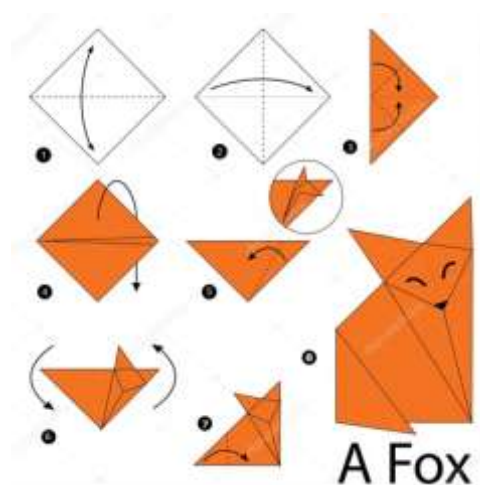


source: [Obraz Różne Rysunek Jesienny Liść rąk](#)

Ask participants A to choose two leaves and to give directions to participants B in order to draw, cut and replicate the two chosen leaves.

When participants B finish, then Participants A provide a feedback (not positive nor negative). How do A and B feel?

Provide participants B now a new hand craft:



Source: [Krok po kroku instrukcje jak zrobić origami Lisa A — Wektor stockowy](#)

Ask participants B to give clear instructions to participant A in order to produce the exact replica of the drawing.

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	<p>When participants A finish, then Participants B provide a positive feedback only. How do A and B feel?</p> <p>Participants B provide a Negative feedback only. How do A and B feel?</p>
<p>Evaluation & Reflection:</p>	<p>Clear directions and positive feedback is necessary for an effective communication at workplace and therefore increasing meaning and job satisfaction. If employers are able to actively listen to employees and respond positively and constructively then it increases employees job satisfaction.</p> <p>Participants may reflect their thoughts about the outcomes of the exercise on a paper how they felt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How well do you feel you contributed to the team? - How well do you think team members worked together? - Do you feel your understanding of engagement was clear?

Reference:

Effective Communication in the Workplace (<https://www.skillbuilderlms.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Communication-in-the-Workplace-Reference-Guide.pdf>)

Experiential Learning Games (<http://www.experiential-learning-games.com/feedbackgames.html>)