What’s Your Style

In communicating with others we are often trying to achieve a goal. Many of those goals need groups or committees to work together to accomplish those goals. The way that you communicate with others can affect how a group works or even agrees on even the simplest of things. Learn about a few common styles of communication that can help (or hinder) your group in different situations.

Youth Will Learn:
*Workforce Skills*: Communications, problem-solving, working with others.
*Success Indicators*: Youth will explore four common styles of oral communication. They will use process drama to act out different styles to learn appropriateness of each style and when to use those styles of communication in working with others.

What You Need:
Time Involved: 20-30 minutes
Suggested Group Size: Any size
Materials Needed:
- Description of each character on a note card.
- Props for acting (optional)
- “Communication” Handout

Facilitator Tips:
Place the group in the front of the room at tables and chairs (facing the rest of the group) so it is easier to hear.

Try This Too:
Using current happenings or local “settings” may help to make youth more comfortable in this process drama.

The Activity

1. Ask the youth to think of a time where they were working in a group. Did the group always agree or get along? What kind of things can happen if a group does not agree on something?

2. Explain that there are four common types of personalities that can appear in a meeting. We are not just one type but often many types blended together depending on the situation and what we feel strongly about.
3. Explain that you need 4 volunteers to act out one of the personalities. Hand each volunteer a card with traits explaining their character for the drama. Use the scenarios on the following page as a guideline for ideas.

4. As they are acting out the situation, stop the group and ask them to identify who they think has taken on what role.

5. Once they have correctly identified each person, you can give another group and opportunity or move into discussion following the activity.

**Talk It Over**

Once the groups have finished with their process drama, begin discussing what they expected versus what they saw from the group of actors. Was their behavior negative, positive or both?

**Share**
- What personality was the easiest to figure out?
- What personality was more difficult to figure out?
- What emotions were most shown by each personality?
- What non-verbal clues did you have about the person?

**Process**
- Was it hard to act out the character you were given?
- What kind of emotions were you trying to portray?
- What positive (and negative) things can happen when a group is discussing an idea?
- Now that you have experienced the drama would you change anything about your character?

**Generalize**
- Why is it important to be able to understand the different roles that people take within a group?
- What kinds of things make it easier for those personalities to remain relaxed and productive?
- What opportunity for conflict can occur from these characters?

**Apply**
- What situations at camp or school can you think of that understanding these personalities might be helpful for?
- What can you do to encourage a productive environment when you encounter one of these stronger personalities?
Common Styles of Communication

**Talker**
- Immediately begins conversation.
- May interrupt others while they are talking.
- Can frustrate the group with their constant talking.

**Thinker**
- Often very quiet.
- Needs time to think about what the situation is.
- Can become frustrated if forced to make a decision quickly.

**Pusher**
- Seems very set on a specific idea or concept.
- Is not willing to work with others or compromise.
- Often appears aggressive if not getting what they want.

**Push-Over**
- Seems to want to make everyone happy.
- Allows others to change their opinions very quickly.
- Does not like conflict and can become very upset if people begin to argue.

Scenarios to Try

- Trying to pick a camp theme that includes the color orange.
- Choosing a company to buy office supplies from.
- Where to hold prom since the high school gym was destroyed during the homecoming dance.
- Helping select winners for the talent show.
- Discussing the extension of lunch from one hour to two hours.
- Choosing between the large marshmallows and the small marshmallows for making s’mores over a campfire.
- Selecting the colors for the curtains in the booth/exhibit building for Jr. Fair.
- Selection procedures for all teen leadership including Camp Counselors, Jr. Fair Board and Jr. Leadership.