



Categorize This

Participants try to sort themselves by the various markers on their foreheads

TIME

20-30 minutes



MATERIALS

Small colored stickers

TEAM STAGE

Storming, Norming

SUMMARY

This activity demonstrates how we act on assumptions and simulates how we act according to expectations.

SET UP


- Ask participants to close their eyes, then place a sticker on each participant's forehead.
- Allow participants to open their eyes and tell them not to touch the stickers unless they feel like they are falling off.


INSTRUCTIONS

- Tell participants that there will be no talking or mouthing during this activity.
- Tell the group that their objective is to arrange themselves into groups.
- When participants decide they are done dividing up, have them sit down in a circle with their group.
- Discuss why they placed themselves in the groups that they did, how the process was for them, and if they would do anything differently next time.
 - **Facilitator Note:** There is no right or wrong way for participants to group themselves. The purpose of this activity is to have participants think critically about their perceptions of the instructions given and the expectations they had of the activity that led them to group themselves the way they did.

VARIATIONS

- Instead of placing one sticker on each participant's forehead, try assigning each participant several stickers.
- Try facilitating multiple rounds of this activity. Allow participants to speak in some rounds and restrict speaking in other rounds.
- Instead of stickers, try this activity with random objects. Give each participant an object to hold. In this variation participants can see what they have been given, but the rest of the instructions still apply.

 **Large Groups:** To facilitate this activity for a large group, give participants a time limit for getting into groups.

 **Online:** To facilitate this activity virtually, create a shared whiteboard space with a collection of random images. Message each participant to let them know which image they will be responsible for moving, then task the group with arranging the images into groups without talking. For a more challenging option, do not assign participants specific images and allow them to move any image they would like. [\[click here for video\]](#)



DEBRIEF QUESTIONS

- What:
 - How did you decide who belonged in which group?
 - What did you expect other participants to do during this activity? Were you correct?
- So What:
 - Why is it important to consider others' thought processes?
 - How can paying attention to our expectations and assumptions help us see other perspectives?
- Now What:
 - What can you do to make sure you are considering ideas from multiple perspectives?
 - How can your group identify and challenge assumptions you make?

■ **Facilitator Note:** These questions can be used to guide your debrief, however, pick the questions that best match your group's experience and add or change questions as needed.