

Human Billboards

Groups will tell each other about themselves by designing “human billboards”

TIME
20-30 minutes

MATERIALS
Paper, markers

TEAM STAGE
Forming, Norming

Learning & Development Outcomes

This activity provides a creative way for participants to communicate information and ideas in a visual way. It provides an interactive process for sharing about oneself while also exploring methods of visual communication.

Outcomes are focused on developing *21st Century Skills* and the *National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) Career Competencies*, including, but not limited to:

- Using communication for a range of purposes.
- Using a wide range of idea creation techniques.
- Communicating in a clear and organized manner so that others can effectively understand.
- Keeping an open mind to diverse ideas and new ways of thinking.

Preparation & Logistics



Set Up

- Make sure that participants have space to work independently and a solid surface in front of them.

Safety

- Preface this activity by creating a safe space. Set ground rules and remind participants to share only what they feel comfortable sharing, and to be respectful of each other while sharing. This activity should allow participants to be vulnerable and trusting with each other.

Additional Considerations

- Set aside additional time for a debrief.
- [Click here to watch it live!](#)

Instructions

Summary

Participants will create billboards that depict important things for others to know about themselves. They will have the opportunity to share and to get to know something about everyone in their group through this creative experience.

This activity is appropriate for all ages.

Step 1: Distribute materials

- Give each participant a piece of paper.
- Place markers in a central location where everyone can come up and get the colors they need.

Step 2: Give participants time to create

- Tell the participants they will be creating billboards for themselves. Have them draw or write anything they want to share about themselves on their paper.
- Give them ten minutes or so to fill their page. Play appropriate music while they work.

Step 3: Share the human billboards

- Give everyone time to mingle, holding up their paper for others to see.
- Allow participants to ask any (appropriate) questions they want to ask others about what is on their billboard. Give participants the ability to “pass” if they don’t feel comfortable answering a particular question.
- Encourage everyone to try to learn at least one thing about each person in the room while mingling and asking questions

How to end the activity

- The activity is over once participants have had adequate time to mingle, see each other’s billboards, and ask questions.



Can sharing be more structured?

"Yes. Instead of open mingling, have participants get in pairs or small groups to share. After a few minutes of sharing, have them switch to a new partner/group and share again."



If participants are minors and the facilitator is a mandated reporter, be aware that these types of activities can possibly open up an opportunity for participants to bring up sensitive issues such as abuse or suspected abuse, suicide or self harm, neglect, etc. Remind participants at the start of the activity of the responsibilities of a mandated reporter and that they should only share what they are comfortable sharing.



Debrief Questions



These questions are a starting point to guide your debrief. Pick the ones that best match your group's experience and add or change questions as needed!

What

- How did you choose what to include on your billboard?
- How did it feel sharing about yourself and learning about others?

So What

- In what other groups have you taken the time to learn about each other in this way?
- How do activities like this bring you together as a group?

Now What

- What can you do to continue sharing about yourself and learning about others?
- What can you do to create a space where the members of this group can feel more comfortable being themselves?

Adjustments for...

Small Group (1-9)

- Instead of mingling to share, give each participant a chance to share their billboard in front of the group and answer a few questions about it.

Risk Level

- To lower the risk level, provide specific prompts for participants to include on their billboard, such as: *what are your hobbies or what are your favorite snacks.*

Group has prior experience

- Have participants create billboards that represent something specific, such as their growth over the past year or their goals for the future.

Online

- Have participants either draw their billboards on paper and hold them up to the camera to share, or create them on their computer using a design application and share their screen to share. Remember to enable screen-sharing for all participants for this.



Each adjustment is its own unique idea for how to facilitate this activity for different groups and situations! Choose any or all that work!