

Line Them Up

Arrange a series of items into an order that makes sense

TIME
10-20 minutes

MATERIALS
Note cards, markers or pens

TEAM STAGE
Forming, Storming,
Norming, Performing

Learning & Development Outcomes

Participants will collaborate to put information in an order that makes sense. They will be asked to make judgments and decisions about how to organize and interpret data.

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

- Assuming shared responsibility for collaborative work and valuing the individual contributions made by each team member.
- Synthesizing and making connections between information and arguments.
- Collaborating with others to achieve common goals.
- Making decisions and solving problems using sound, inclusive reasoning and judgment.

Preparation & Logistics



Set Up

- Create several sets of note cards. Each set should have eight to ten cards. The first set should have a color written or drawn on each card. The next set should have an animal written or drawn on each card. The third set should have a shape written or drawn on each card.
- Create additional sets of cards so that there is one set for every four participants in the group. Additional ideas include states, books, vegetables, or fictional characters. Sets can also be duplicated.

Safety

- Participants may have the false idea that there is one correct solution in this activity. Because of this, there may be tension if disagreement arises within a group. If this happens, remind participants that all perspectives are valid and no perspective is better or more "right" than any other.

Additional Considerations

- Set aside additional time for a debrief.

Instructions

Summary

Participants will work together to put note cards in an order that makes sense to them.

To adjust this activity for an older audience, challenge participants to avoid organizing note cards in obvious orders such as alphabetical or color order. Additionally, you can have other groups guess the order instead of having groups share how they decided to arrange their note cards.

Step 1: Distribute note cards

- Put participants in small groups of about four.
- Give a set of note cards to each small group.

Step 2: Explain the task

- Tell participants that their task is to line their note cards up in an order that makes sense to them.
- All participants in the small group must be in agreement before the line can be considered final.

Step 3: Share the line ups

- Have each small group share out their line up and why they decided to do it that way.

How to end the activity

- The activity is over when each small group has shared their line up.
- If one or more small group(s) is having trouble coming to a consensus, impose a time limit for lining up the note cards before sharing.



What if all groups finish quickly?

"Have each small group share their line up with a different small group. Then have them trade note card sets and challenge them to create a new line up that is different than what the previous group did."



For a different take on this activity, give each small group a copy of the same set of note cards rather than giving each small group a different set. See how many different line ups can come out of the same set of cards!

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 your group decide on your final way to line up your note cards?
- What are your thoughts after hearing how other groups lined up their note cards?

So What

- Why does it help to work with others to complete a task like this?
- What is the value in hearing different perspectives on how to complete a task?

Now What

- What are some other tasks that require you to work together with a group?
- How can you make sure you are considering multiple perspectives when completing a task?

Adjustments for...

Large Group (25+)

- Make multiple copies of each set of note cards. It's okay if more than one group has the same set.

Small Group (1-9)

- Do this activity with all participants together instead of in small groups. If there is time, do multiple rounds with different sets of note cards.

Risk Level

- The more abstract the note card sets are the more challenging this activity can be. Choose more abstract concepts to increase the risk level or choose more concrete concepts to decrease it.

Group has prior experience

- Instead of coming up with one best way to line up the note cards, challenge each group to come up with as many ways as possible to line them up.

Online

- Create the note card sets on an online collaborative space using a slide for each small group and a sticky note for each note card in the set.



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