



# PB&J Challenge

Try to teach someone how to make a PB&J sandwich with detailed written instructions

## TIME

10-20 minutes



## TEAM STAGE

Storming, Norming, Performing

## MATERIALS

Paper, writing utensils, PB&J ingredients (optional)

## SUMMARY

You may know how to make a PB&J sandwich, but would you be able to describe how to make one to someone who doesn't know where to begin? Tap into your detail oriented side to teach someone this skill.

## SET UP

- If you choose to have your group actually make PB&J sandwiches, you will need to set up these supplies.  
 **Safety:** Be aware of any food allergies in your group before deciding to do the activity in this way.

## INSTRUCTIONS

- Pass out a piece of paper and writing utensil to everyone in the group.
- The instructions for the activity are simple: Write a detailed list of instructions on how to make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich.
- In the first round, the facilitator should not give any more instruction.
- **Optional:** After everyone has written their instructions, put them to the test!
  - Ask for a few volunteers from the group. Tell them they must follow the instructions they are provided EXACTLY how they are written. This means silly things like if they aren't told to use a knife to spread the peanut butter, then don't use a knife. If the instructions aren't detailed and leave room for interpretation, then have fun with it!
  - Ask for a few participants to read their instructions aloud while a volunteer follows their instructions. Sit back and watch what happens! It can get pretty messy and silly so be prepared!
  - Make sure to lead a discussion afterwards about what happened.
- In the second round, encourage participants to be as detailed as possible so that there aren't any mistakes. Inform participants that they should think about all of the tiniest of details when doing this.
  - For example: "Get two slices of bread" can be broken down into more detailed instructions like "Twist the tie on the bread package, open it up, take out two slices of bread, and place the bread slices next to each other on a plate."
- As participants make their list of instructions, the facilitator should walk around the room and ask them questions to help them get even more detailed.
  - **Facilitator Note:** Every participant does not need to have a complete set of instructions for the activity to end. Once participants start to understand how detailed they should be, it is justifiable to end the activity so it does not take up too much time.
- At the end of the activity, give a few participants the chance to read their instructions.



## VARIATIONS

- The “how to” list can be for anything, like brushing your teeth. It does not need to be how to make a PB&J. Try getting creative, or letting participants choose what they would like to write instructions for.
- This is a great activity to link to creating a detailed action or project plan.
-  **Large Group:** To facilitate this activity for a large group, have participants get into groups to write their instructions.
-  **Online:** To facilitate this activity virtually, put participants into breakout rooms to write their first set of instructions. Bring participants back to the main session room and play a video of the "Exact Instructions Challenge" such as [this one](#). Then, put participants back into their breakout rooms to make their instructions as detailed as possible. [\[click here for video\]](#)
-  **Asynchronous:** To facilitate this activity asynchronously, have participants submit their detailed list of instructions to a shared folder. Then, have them watch a video of the "Exact Instructions Challenge" such as [this one](#) and assign each participant a new set of instructions to try to make as detailed as possible. Ask them to submit their final drafts to the same folder and then to respond to the debriefing questions in a discussion thread.

## DEBRIEF QUESTIONS

- What:
    - How was your process different in creating your instructions between the first and the second round?
    - Which set of instructions are you more satisfied with? Why?
  - So What:
    - When is it important that we are detailed and accurate as a group?
    - What happens if we aren't detailed, clear, or accurate in our project and event planning?
  - Now What:
    - What steps can we take as a group to be more detailed in our planning and communications?
    - In what other areas of your life will this skill help you?
-  **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.