LEADERSHIP INSPIRATIONS

Party Planner

Work in groups to plan the perfect birthday party

TIME	MATERIALS	TEAM STAGE
20-30 minutes	Paper, pens, sticky notes	Storming, Norming, Performing

Learning & Development Outcomes

This activity will give participants practice using systems thinking to create comprehensive project plans. It will allow them to think through all of the steps required to achieve a desired outcome.

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

- Prioritizing, planning and managing work to achieve the intended result.
- Analyzing how parts of a whole interact with each other to produce overall outcomes in complex systems.
- Prioritizing and completing tasks to accomplish organizational goals.
- Planning, initiating, managing, completing, and evaluating projects.

Preparation & Logistics

Set Up

- There should be space for several small groups to sit together and work collaboratively.

Safety

- This activity might bring up cultural or personal differences of opinion about what makes the "perfect" birthday party. Remind participants that there is no single best way to plan a party. Assure participants that what their group comes up with may be different that what they would individually want to plan, and that is okay.

Additional Considerations

- Set aside additional time for a debrief.
- *Click here to watch it live!*

K-2 3-4 5-6 7-8 9-12 ASB

© 2022 Leadership Inspirations

Instructions

Summary
Participants will work in groups to come up with a detailed plan for the perfect birthday party.

This activity is appropriate for all ages.

Step 1: Create party plans

- Put participants into groups of four or five.
- Give each group a piece of paper and a pen.
- Have each group come up with a plan for a birthday party. Encourage them to write down as much detail as possible. The plan should be so detailed that anybody could read it and execute the party exactly the way the group has envisioned.
- Each party plan should include:
  - Who the party is for.
  - When the party will take place.
  - Where the party will take place.
  - What people will do at the party.
  - What materials will be needed.

Can groups review more than one?

"Absolutely! Repeat steps 2 & 3 as many times as you would like. The more people look through each party plan and ask questions, the more solid the final plan will be."

Step 2: Review party plans

- After each group has had about 15 minutes to create their party plan, have them pass it to a different group.
- Give each group a pack of sticky notes.
- Have each group read through the party plan they were given and think of questions they have about the plan. What details are missing? What is unclear? What questions are unanswered by the plan?
- Participants should write each question on a sticky note and attach it to the party plan they are reading.

Step 3: Revise party plans

- Have each group take back the party plan that they wrote and read the questions on the sticky notes.
- Give each group a few minutes to revise or re-write their party plans to include the answers to the questions that were asked on the sticky notes.

How to end the activity

- The activity is over once each group has a party plan that they feel good about.

Participants might not immediately have any questions to ask in Step 2. Be prepared to check in with groups and help them think about the plans in greater detail. Encourage them to imagine that they were given the plan and need to do everything exactly how the other group is picturing the party. What extra details or clarifying questions might they want to ask about?

© 2022 Leadership Inspirations

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

- What was easy or hard about creating a party plan?
- What was easy or hard about coming up with questions for someone else's party plan?

So What

- Why is it important to create detailed and specific plans?
- What is the benefit of having multiple people review a plan?

Now What

- What types of plans might this group need to create?
- How can you make sure that multiple people can review and contribute to plans that this group makes?

Adjustments for...

Small Group (1-9)

- Have the whole group work together on creating the party plan. Then, give each participant some sticky notes and have them think independently or in pairs about questions to ask.

Risk Level

- To lower the risk level, come up with some basic framework for the party that all participants will have in common - such as who the birthday party is for.

Group has prior experience

- Instead of questions, have participants write suggestions on the sticky notes. Rather than thinking about details that are missing, they should think about alternative ideas or other options for each aspect of the party.

Online

- Create a shared document with a page for each group using a platform such as Google Slide, Google Jamboard, Google Docs, etc.
- Put each group in a breakout room and have them create their party plan on their designated page. Then switch to a different page and use a notes or comments feature to add in their questions.

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

© 2022 Leadership Inspirations