

FIND VALUE IN ALL IDEAS

THE NEED

Great teams achieve exponentially greater outcomes than individuals. Successful organizations are built by groups of people that are **fully aligned towards a common goal**. This is why team building is a pervasive focus of great leaders.

For teams to operate at their greatest potential, **everyone must know that they are valued** and will be supported by the others. This allows for everyone to take more risks and contribute more to the team. Together they achieve more.

HOW DOES IMPROVISATION HELP?

Improv teaches us to **treat every idea as a gift**.

Improvisation is spur of the moment collaborative creation. Improvisers generate lots of ideas while accepting and adding to each others. No matter what is offered we treat it as a gift rather than “knocking it down.”

This creates a strong trust that allows everyone to take more risks and offer more ideas. Because of this we are able to create more together than we would alone.

TRY THIS

The Gift Giving Game

Here's an easy to lead game that you can try with your team. It is a simple game that is very popular with the groups we work with. It works well with groups of any size.

Objective

To increase the number of ideas created in a group by using our imaginations and supporting each others ideas.

Play

- ▶ Split the group into pairs.
- ▶ Player 1 offers an imaginary gift and presents it to player 2. Player 1: “I got you a gift!”
- ▶ Player 2 imagines a great gift, thanks Player 1 for the gift, and names it. Player 2: “Thank you so much for the new car!”
- ▶ Player 2 then presents an unnamed gift to Player 1 using the same formula. Take turns offering, naming, and thanking each other for gifts for at least 2 minutes. This time is needed to stretch their imaginations and help them practice continuing to be eager and grateful for each offer.

What Did We Notice?

After each round, ask the group “what did we notice?” and “how can we do better?”

Have a discussion about what gifts were received and how they were received. Make note that these are all gifts that we have “given” to ourselves, since the only one naming the gift is the person getting it. What kind of gifts do we give ourselves? What did it look like if someone received only “bad” gifts? Did it get harder or easier to name gifts as time went on? How does this apply to our work and our lives?

Play Further

Try this exercise again, and utilize “Yes! And...” thinking. Your goal this time is to have player 1 name what the gift is as they offer it and make it a seemingly horrible gift. The receiver of the gift now has to find a reason why that gift is the best gift ever.

For Example:

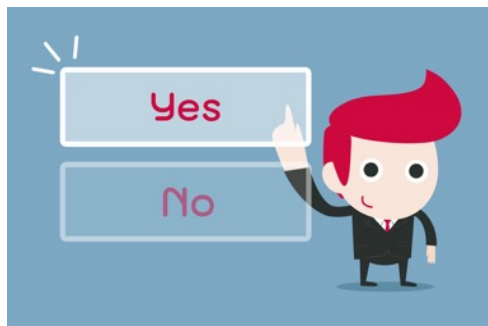
- ▶ **PLAYER 1** says “I got you a gift, it’s an over baked cake!”
- ▶ **PLAYER 2** will say “Thank you so much for the cake! I just saw a recipe for using over baked cake as the perfect topping for ice cream! It’s perfect!”

What did we notice?

Discuss how taking something that appears negative and finding a reason why it’s positive helps us support each other’s ideas. The exercise demonstrates this at an extreme level so that we can begin to recognize this dynamic at more subtle levels. This reminds us of the value of exploring and supporting others ideas, whether from clients, in brainstorming, or from unforeseen circumstances.

Final Note

Applaud! Applaud after each round and always include lots of verbal praise as the group improves each round. Everyone needs to be encouraged, especially when trying something different.



LEARN MORE

For a free consultation on how we can strengthen your team with improv please contact:

Kat Brown

Director of Community Engagement

(619) 306-6047

info@finestcityimprov.com