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Tips for Trainers

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- **Non-verbal sequences**

Objective

To enhance awareness of non-verbal ways of showing dominance, submissiveness and being nice.

Time

15-20 minutes

Procedure

In the following sequence, watching and discussing slides leads to a lively group-forming exercise which leaves participants animated. Steps (1) and (3) can also be used on their own.

1. Participants sit in pairs and are shown a sequence of slides of interactions (dominance, submissiveness, finger-pointing, sitting listening and so on). They are asked to discuss and reflect on the non-verbals they see.
2. Form larger groups (5-10 people each depending on numbers) and ask each group to stand in a circle facing inwards.
3. One person removes a shoe and puts it in the centre. The group chooses a person to count the mimes. Groups then compete by thinking up the largest number of mimes illustrating behaviour which is dominant or superior. When a team member has an idea, he or she picks up the shoe and places it in front of his/her feet. She/he must then demonstrate the non-verbal. All others then repeat it together at least once. Only when all the group members (including the counter) have repeated the mime does it count in the score. Continue until the groups are running out of ideas.

4. Ask for the scores from each group, then ask each group to choose the best mime and show it to the others.

5. Repeat for submissiveness, and then finally for being nice.

6. At the end, Raul's¹ three rules for village work can be shown on an overhead:

1. Be nice to people
2. Repeat rule no. 1
3. Repeat rule no. 2

Comments

Encourage the use of props (sticks, chairs etc.). Demonstrate a mime with the group, for example wagging your finger to show dominance.

Be careful that "*being nice to people*" does not become "*being too nice to people*" (especially with mixed cultures and sexes).

In discussion, encourage reflections. If no one else picks it up, mention the importance of how we indicate feelings through our eyes, since this is usually missed in the exercise.

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¹ From Raul Perezgrovas.