



AIM: An exercise allowing the participants to explicitly talk about stereotypes and afterwards reflecting on what stereotypes does to people and how principles of dialogue can overcome prejudices.



Participants: 15 - 40



Duration: 45 – 60 minutes



Required Material: post-its or adhesive papers in different colors with statements written on them; alternatively blank ones, if the variation below is used.



Category: Dialogue exercise / inter-cultural, homogeneous

THINGS TO CONSIDER

The facilitators put themselves on the line, thus applying the dialogical principles of trust, openness, honesty and equality. It works well with a diverse group of participants and in preparation for intercultural dialogue. The exercise is only appropriate if there are several facilitators working together.

Be aware that there is a certain vulnerability associated with subjecting oneself to people's prejudices, even when you are a facilitator. Think about what you are ready to put up with, so that it creates learning for the participants but does not leave you feeling dejected. Speak openly with the other facilitators about this during your planning.

When a safe space is created, this exercise would be easier to do among the participants, but be sensitive.

STEPS

Preparation
(5 minutes)

Prepare and write labels on post-its

<p>Activity (30 minutes)</p>	<p>The facilitators introduce themselves by name and nationality. It is not revealed that the exercise is about prejudices, so call it a 'labelling game' or the like.</p> <p>Participants are divided into three groups, depending on the number of participants. Each group should consist of 6-7 persons. Each group is given slips of paper or labels in different colors (e.g. post-its) with the same statements about the facilitators. These might be for instance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Speaks fluent German - Cannot cook - Plays the violin - Went to a Catholic school - Is not a Muslim - Smokes - Has a boyfriend/girlfriend - Does not speak Arabic - Used to sing in a church choir - Likes Christmas food - Has never been to Europe <p>The statements are phrased so that it is doubtful or surprising for participants whom the statements match, for example, that one facilitator who is Egyptian Muslim, went to a Catholic school. Some statements could also be rather controversial and not hold true for anybody.</p> <p>Now the groups guess, based on their immediate assumptions, which facilitators fit the various statements. The groups read each statement aloud for everyone present, after which they stick one label at a time on each of the facilitators who fit the statements, according to what they have decided.</p> <p>Afterwards, the facilitators reveal who really matches each statement.</p>
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<p>Reflection (20 minutes)</p>	<p>Questions for reflection:</p> <p>What was it like to stick labels on the facilitators?</p> <p>What was it like to realize the labels were right or wrong?</p> <p>How do prejudices work in your lives?</p> <p>Have you ever been subjected to prejudice?</p> <p>How does that fact that we have prejudices affect communication (dialogue) between people? Ask for specific examples.</p> <p>What can be done about prejudices?</p> <p>How can dialogue be used to overcome prejudices?</p> <p>In what situations are assumptions an advantage? For example, in order to be respectful or polite when you are on uneasy ground.</p> <p>The reflection can be expanded to include the media's influence and how it contributes to creating and maintaining prejudice.</p>
<p>Conclusion (5 minutes)</p>	<p>Thank everyone for their participation, summarize what was learned.</p> <p>Some prejudices are unavoidable, everyone has them, and there is nothing wrong with this. However, it is important to be aware of one's own prejudices and be ready to challenge and overcome them.</p>