





The blind spot of communication

Developed by IKON, exercise 26 p. 74 in 'The dialogue pilot - a handbook in dialogue'


 **AIM:** A fun and creative exercise that illustrates how we understand things differently making communication challenging.

 **Participants:** 5 – 15, 15 - 30

 **Duration:** 20 – 30 minutes

 **Required Material:**

- A chair for each participant.
- Room enough for two chairs to stand back to back. It is important that each pair do not sit too close to each other, because they are not allowed to see each other.
- Print the handout with figures illustrating geometrical figures for half of the participants.
- A blank paper and pen for the other half of the participants.

 **Category:** Dialogue exercise, energizer / inter-cultural, homogeneous

THINGS TO CONSIDER

- A. Consider how the participants should sit in the room. Spread them around, so they don't see each other's illustrations.
- B. Consider how advanced the illustration should be. Consider the age group and language barriers when they explain the illustration.
- C. This exercise is good to use when opening a workshop as it will give the participants time to reflect on the importance of communication.
- D. Options: if you want to complicate the exercise further, you can choose to put the illustration in a different room, so the one who has to explain the illustration has to run back and forth and explain to the other person. This will put further pressure on the communication skills.

STEPS	
Preparation (3 minutes)	Ask the participants to get into pairs and let them sit with their

	backs to each other on the chairs, but approximately 1-1.5 meters from the other pairs.
Activity (10 minutes)	<p>Explain the exercise to the participants. Each pair has to decide who is person A and who is person B. Person A receives the paper with the figures (Handout) which he/she cannot show the person B. Person B will get a pen and paper. Now it is the task for Person A to explain the pictures so that it is possible for person B to draw it on his/her paper. They are not allowed to look at each other. Person A should be careful not to let the other pairs see the illustration.</p> <p>After a while (5-10 minutes), the pairs exchange papers to see whether the illustrations match.</p> <p>If there is time left, the pair can now switch roles, giving them a new illustration.</p>
Reflection (10 minutes)	<p>Engage in a dialogue with the participants in plenary. Ask those who were person A how it felt, and if there were any complications? Were they able to find the right words to describe their drawings?</p> <p>Then ask those who were person B how it was. Did they get enough information? Did they understand the information?</p> <p>This is a good opportunity to challenge the participants and discuss how important it is to have good communication. What the consequences can be when the communication is not sufficient, when there are misunderstandings etc.</p> <p>Which drawings were most similar and why? Was it because of good communication or good imagination/creativity? Which drawings were very unlike the original drawing and why?</p>
Conclusion (2 minutes)	<p>Summarize lessons learnt.</p> <p>Point may be: The way we communicate is cultural – a mathematician and a nurse will perhaps explain something in two different ways.</p> <p>How we speak and our body language play a major role when we communicate.</p>

