

## 'Lost and Found'

When I'm leading group activities, I have a simple phrase I introduce to participants early on in the program. It's 'Lost' and 'Found'. Now most people associate this phrase with lost socks at summer camp, but it is an easy way for participants to find a partner during an activity.

I use this phrase primarily when participants in the group need to find a partner. Here is how I usually say it: "If you are looking for a partner at any time during today's program, put your arm up in the air like this (demonstrate by putting your arm up in the air) and announce, 'Lost!'. This is the universal sign for 'I'm lost and need a partner!' If there are other participants that are looking for a partner they will do the same thing. This will make it easy to identify who also needs a partner. Then, when you get near your new partner, shake their hand and proclaim 'Found!' (demonstrate this by shaking someone else's hand)."

This is an easy way for participants to manage themselves. I have found that if you introduce this concept at the beginning of your program, participants will naturally do this the rest of the time you are together. This technique works particularly well in icebreaker activities like Spot it, Ubuntu Championship Find and Icebreaker Wheelies.



## Saving Voice with Attention Getters



Have you ever had trouble getting the attention of your group? If you're like me, you're lucky you can whistle loud enough for the dog to hear. And if you're also like me, you will lose your voice in no time if you try to be louder than your participants.

So, what can you do if you forget to say "In a moment, but not yet" and mayhem ensues? Or you just need to get everyone's attention at the end of an activity or discussion? Try some of the following attention getters. They will most certainly save your voice. Plus you'll look cool.

**1. Scream at the top of your lungs.** (kidding)

**2. "If you can hear my voice..."**

Say (in your indoor voice): "If you can hear my voice, clap once [and then clap your hands once]. If you can hear my voice, clap twice [and then clap your hands twice]."

You will usually have enough people join in after the first and second clap that the rest of the talkers will realize something's going on. By the time you get to "clap three times" they should be with you. If not, you may want to start over with "clap once." Or try a variation. I saw this one from Chris Cavert in the book *The More the Merrier* (by Cavert, Evans & Sikes). "If you can hear me, put your hands on your head. If you can hear me, put your hands on your hips. If you can hear me, put your finger on your nose.....not in your nose!" Chris suggests ending with "If you can hear me, place your arms at your sides and listen for the following directions." It's sort of Simon Says-esque.

**3. Back to Back**

Another favorite is Back to Back, which serves a dual purpose: getting the group's attention, and at the same time setting them up for paired sharing. I find that this one works best if you first introduce it when you already have everyone's attention, either at the beginning of your program or activity. Then you can continue to use it throughout the program with the same group.

Explain to the group that when you say "back to back" participants should pair up and stand back to back. (For whatever reason, most people will stop talking when they are no longer looking at each other). I suggest, however, that when you introduce Back to Back the first time, you instruct participants to cease all conversation after you give the command "back to back." Once you have their attention, you can throw in the "In a moment, but not yet, I will say 'Face to Face,' at which time, you will turn to your partner and share 2 things you learned in the last activity."

## Saving Voice with Attention Getters

### 4. Hey! Hey What?

This one is a lively prompt-response attention getter. You say (in your outdoor voice) "Hey!" You may get a few people to stop talking and to look at you, but most won't say "Hey What?" until you prompt them. So say "Hey!" again, and indicate with a "give it back to me" hand motion and maybe lip movements that they should ask "Hey What?" It may take 2 or 3 times, but they'll get it. Once you have the entire group's attention (you'll know because it will be silent following their "Hey What?"), you say something like "Let's all line up in a circle to get ready for the next activity."

### 5. The Silent Treatment

What if you don't need to get everyone's attention? You know what I mean; everyone's listening except one or two chatterers on the side lines. I call them the Side-Talkers. For those situations, I often use the Silent Treatment. What I mean is, I just stop talking (mid-sentence seems to be most effective) and look at them. Most of the other participants will look at them, too. Some will even "shoosh" them. The Side Talkers will eventually catch on, look my way, and stop talking. I usually say something like, "I know, there is so much to discuss! I just have a couple more things that I need everyone to hear, and then we will....." It's important not to be "mad" at them or cause them too much embarrassment (just enough so they get it).

### 6. Using Props as Attention Getters

There are many ways to use props as attention getters, too. Chimes, cowbells, bike horns, slide whistles, and clickers are all effective. Recorded music works too.

**NOTE:** Whatever attention getters you decide to use, just be careful not to over-do it. Your participants may tire of the repetition and you don't want your techniques to lose their effect. Mix it up. Have fun. Create your own.

## As If

### As If

**Type of Initiative:** Icebreaker

**Source:** Setting the Conflict Compass, by Michelle Cummings

**Props Needed:** None

**Group Size:** 2–100

**Directions:** Divide your group into pairs. Begin this activity by letting participants know that you will give them a relationship role to play for the upcoming interaction. Have the pairs stand about 8 feet apart from one another. Have them determine which partner will be the “greeter” and which partner will play out the “role.” Each interaction is approximately 30-60 seconds in duration. Then announce the first interaction.



Ask your group to greet another person in the room **AS IF** you are:

- long-lost college roommates

Let this interaction go on for 30-45 seconds. Afterwards, briefly process what happened in this interaction, what some of the feelings were, and the general mood of the interaction. Then proceed with another role.

Here are some examples of other roles you could use:

- someone you have had a conflict with at work
- your boss
- A controversial character like a former president of the US
- the author of your favorite business book

Briefly debrief each interaction. Create new scenarios to fit your group.

## Rock Paper Scissors Activities

### Championship Rock, Paper, Scissors (Time filler/Brain Break/Energizer)

This is a fun, light-hearted, competitive (and noisy) activity. Ask everyone to find a partner and play Rock, Paper, Scissors. The person who wins the match advances, the person who lost joins the winner's "team" as an enthusiastic fan and cheerleader. Winners continue to play by finding another undefeated participant to play against, while their growing fan bases cheers them on. Play until one person wins the final match and all the fans. Congratulations!

### Rock Paper Scissors Splitz (Time filler/Brain Break)

Have participants pair up and start the game being toe to toe with one another. Play one round of RPS, whoever wins takes their front foot and puts it directly behind their back foot. Whoever loses that round must slide their front foot forward to meet toe to toe with their opponent again. Another round of RPS is played. Whoever wins takes their front foot and puts it directly behind their back foot. Whoever loses that round must slide their front foot forward to meet toe to toe with their opponent again. This continues until someone loses their balance and falls over or ends up in the splits!



### Olympic Rock, Paper, Scissors

Demonstrate to the group 3 different areas, one for Bronze, one for Silver, and one for Gold. Everyone starts out in the Bronze area. Ask them to find a partner and play Rock, Paper, Scissors. The person who wins the match advances to the Silver area. The person who lost stays in Bronze and finds a new person to play with. Once in the Silver area, players find a partner and play again. Whoever wins advances to the Gold area. Whoever loses returns to the Bronze area. Game continues for 3 minutes. Have fun!

### Evolution

The prior knowledge of the famous, "Rock, Paper, Scissors" is a necessity for this game. Everyone starts out as an egg, in a very egg-like position. Eggs waddle over to other eggs and play rock, paper, scissors. Whoever wins advances to a Chicken. Whoever loses remains an egg. Chickens must squawk and walk very chicken-like over to another chicken. They play rock, paper, scissors. Whoever wins advances to a velociraptor. Whoever loses remains a chicken. The Velociraptor lets out a velociraptor yell and walks very velociraptor-like over to another Velociraptor. They play rock, paper, scissors. Whoever wins becomes Immortal and can no longer be effected by anyone. Whoever loses remains a velociraptor. This continues until you have many Immortals. You could have the remaining eggs, chickens, and velociraptors jokingly bow down to the immortals and say, "We're not worthy! We're not worthy!"

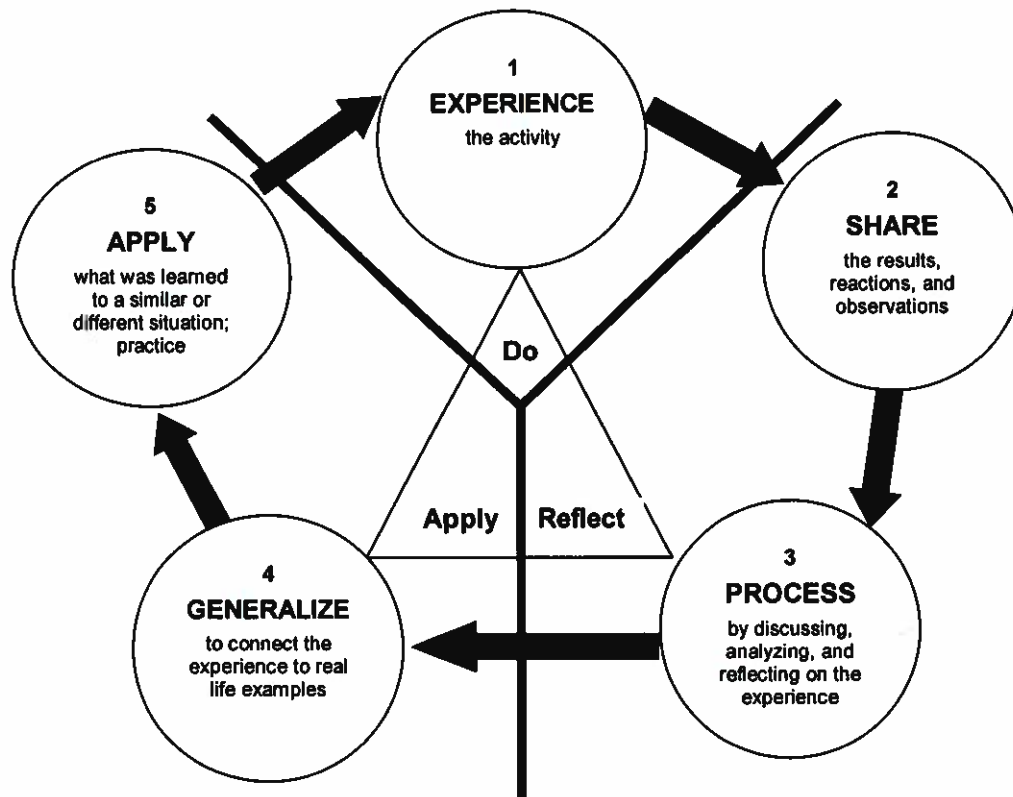
### Rock Paper Scissors Baseball

Set out a diamond – form two teams and have both teams start behind home plate. One team sends one member toe-to-heel walking towards first base, the other team sends one member toe-to-heel walking towards third base. When they meet they stop and yell, "Oy, Eechi Eechi Hoy!" three times. When they both say HOY the third time, they show their Rock, Paper or Scissor sign. Whoever wins continues toe-to-heel walking in the direction they were originally heading. Whoever loses returns to the end of the line and the next member of their group starts walking toe-to-heel. Each team is trying to prevent the other team from rounding the bases completely and scoring a point. You can either end the game when a point is scored, or play to 5 points. Either way is fun! J

## What is Processing?

Processing helps learners make connections between their educational experiences and real life, as well as future learning. It helps them realize that they can apply the lessons they learn and skills they use in a "contrived environment" to real life issues such as resolving conflicts with co-workers and bosses, not to mention friends and family members. Processing helps create purpose, meaning, and focus of an activity and helps learners take advantage of teachable moments.

### Experiential Learning Cycle (based on the work of David Kolb and others)



One of the most basic models of our work, the Experiential Learning Cycle (Kolb, et al), proposes that after Activity comes Reflection, followed by Application of the new information we have learned. The complete cycle is required for learning to take place. Unfortunately, some trainers and facilitators interrupt the model after the activity segment, and then are surprised when their participants fail to retain the information presented.

*Experience in itself is neither productive nor unproductive;  
it is how you reflect on it that makes it significant or not significant...*

Gavin Bolton, 1979  
*Towards a Theory of Drama in Education*