



Knowledge to lead

## Organizing a Role Play

### Step by Step

#### 1. Preparing

- Create a scenario describing the situation in two-or-three sentences to give to all participants.
- Set Role cards (minimum two) containing instructions for different roles: characters, tasks and objectives.
- Set Observer role card (minimum one) containing specific, measurable items to be observed: negative and positive points, behaviors, suggestions.
- Reserve sufficient time for exercise completion and feedback.

#### 2. Launching

- Introduce the exercise and its objectives. Be very clear about what you want people to get out of the role playing experience. Muddy thinking at the outset will result in muddy outcomes. Clear thinking and role play preparation result in clear outcomes.
- Define it as an experience around a specific situation which contains two or more different viewpoints or perspectives.
- Give the time involved and outline the expected results. It is important to say it is a play in order to dedramatize the stake.
- Assign roles and ask players and observer to get ready for the role play according to the instructions on the card.
- Instruct participants to take their positions: players are seated facing each other. The observer/s is/are seated in front of the role players.

#### 3. Managing

- Monitor the role play. The trainer and the observer should not interfere during the play.

#### 4. Debriefing

- Explain that the players will first give their own feedback, then the observer, then the trainer. The order of feedback is important.
- Guide the comments: first positive comments, then points to be improved, then suggestions. Feedback should broadly follow SMART principles (Specific, Measurable, Agreed, Realistic, Time-bound).
- Summarize lessons learned for participants.

#### 5. Replaying

- Take the same situation (or a different one) but give everyone a chance to role-play and critique.



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