

Make It Stick

*Activity Pack*

Identifying Difference as Opportunities

 **Helping lessons learned through training become part of *how we work*.**

**To the Learner Leader…**

This suite of activities has been designed to reinforce the key learning from the **Identifying Difference as Opportunities** course. They have been designed to be led by team leaders or designated trainers and do not require training experience, though for best results we recommend that whoever is leading the activities understands the principles of adult learning and has some experience in leading learning activities.

The suite of activities will provide you with up to six months of learning reinforcement. We recommend that an activity is run each month following the Identifying Difference as Opportunities course.

When running each activity:

* Ask the group to reflect back on the original course they attended:
	+ What takeaways did they have?
	+ What have they tried to implement?
	+ When revisiting some of these activities for a second time, ask them what additional ideas or thoughts they have in applying the concepts and tools in the activities to their job.

Each activity will take 10-15 minutes to run depending on the size of the group.

There is one activity to a page. Each activity has a brief introduction followed by instructions for the learner leader.

We suggest the following to optimise your learning experience:

* Have the group meet away from their normal workspace
* Make sure mobile devices are switched off so that everyone fully engages
* Make the environment ‘safe’ and encourage everyone to contribute
* Run these activities with everyone standing – try running them outdoors in the fresh air
* Have other team members take the lead and run an activity – this will build confidence and leadership skills
* Don’t be afraid to improvise – the learning needs to be about you and your group so make it meaningful
* When debriefing an activity, get the group to reflect on what the activity means for them and what they will do differently or continue to do that underscores the learning points from the activity

**Activities in this pack**

1. Spotting the strengths in others
2. Developing strengths in others
3. Overcoming weaknesses
4. Creating a culture of gratitude
5. Cultivating personal habits of gratitude
6. Customer empathy mapping

**Activity 1: Spotting the strengths in others**

**Introduction**

The benefits to organisations in playing to the strengths of their employees are numerous:

* An increase in focus and engagement of tasks
* Greater productivity
* Improved wellbeing
* More job satisfaction
* Greater life satisfaction
* To achieve goals more effectively
* To reduce stress levels

**Instructions**

We can learn to recognise and develop the strengths in others. Ask the group how they have observed the strengths in their team members using one or more of the following:

* A sense of urgency and engagement from the team member
* The team member losing sense of time because they are so engrossed and engaged in the activity
* A team member very rapidly learning new information or activities
* A repeated pattern of successful performance by the team member
* Exemplary levels of performance
* The team member prioritising tasks that use the strength over other tasks
* The team member having a yearning to use the strength
* The team member being drawn to things that play to the strength

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Split the group into pairs.

A participant asks their partner to speak about an area of weakness of theirs and observes their body language and how they use their voice. Then switch roles.

Now the participant asks their partner to speak about an area of strength of theirs and again observes their body language and how they use their voice. Then switch roles.

Now ask the group as a whole:

What changes do you notice in energy levels, animation and body language?

This should illustrate that working to one’s strengths improves mood and general well-being.

Also discuss the importance of balance – we can’t just do what we enjoy the most. Roles and tasks require us to do a range of things that we are responsible for some of which may be less satisfying or enjoyable than others.

**Activity 2: Developing strengths in others**

**Introduction**

Developing strengths in others comes from examining how they currently utilise their strengths.

**Instructions**

Ask the group to identify a key strength for each of their team members and answer the questions in the table below.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Team Member |  |  |  |  |
| Do I understand what their strengths are? |  |  |  |  |
| What opportunities can I provide for their strengths to shine? |  |  |  |  |
| How can I observe their strengths in action? |  |  |  |  |
| How can I encourage the use of their strengths? |  |  |  |  |

Now brainstorm as one group or in smaller groups the different ways in which strengths can be developed. This can include the following:

Push the limits

* Provide challenges
* Set the bar higher
* Allow them to grow

Education and Training

* Formal and informal learning
* Skill and knowledge acquisition

Mentoring

* Engage mentors
* Have the employee mentor others

Job shadowing

* Employee develops from observing more experienced operators
* Employee is observed so others can learn

**Activity 3: Overcoming weaknesses**

**Introduction**

Weakness is the opposite of strength. Awareness of our weaknesses means we can start to do something about them or at least compensate for their effects.

**Instructions**

This activity asks participants to reflect on their potential weaknesses and how they might be able to turn them around.

First, ask the group to reflect on the following questions to identify their weaknesses.

* What are the activities that you really dislike doing? Why is that?
* Are there things that you never seem to get done, or things that you always try to avoid? What are they?
* What are the activities that drain your energy when you have to do them? Has it always been this way?

Now ask each person to focus on one of the weaknesses they have identified and answer the following:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Describe an activity at work you dislike doing |  |
| Describe why you dislike it |  |
| How does doing this activity make you feel? |  |
| Do you have all the skills and knowledge to competently perform the activity? |  |
| Can you change when and how you complete the activity? |  |
| Are there benefits to you or the organisation in completing this activity? What is the upside, what are the positives? |  |
| Can you utilise more of your strengths in completing the activity? |  |
| Will gaining more confidence in performing this activity help moderate this weakness? If so, how will you do this? |  |

**Activity 4: Creating a culture of gratitude**

**Introduction**

Gratitude is one of the 24 character strengths identified by Petersen and Seligman – it is giving thanks and showing appreciation. It is core to attaining a state of happiness. Teams can create a culture of gratitude such that gratitude will be displayed by all team members without prompting.

**Instructions**

There are many ways in which organisations and teams can create a culture of gratitude.

Discuss the following with the group:

* Gratitude should not be confused with recognition
	+ A recognition program is not gratitude
	+ Gratitude is natural and spontaneous
	+ Gratitude is a way of being
* You have to lead the culture you want to create
	+ Lead by example
	+ Establish the behaviour you want
	+ Leaders serve their followers
	+ Leaders can only achieve through their followers
* Put gratitude at the centre
	+ Lead by example
	+ Establish the behaviour you want
	+ Leaders serve their followers
	+ Leaders can only achieve through their followers
* Cultivate a habit of gratitude
	+ Lead by example
	+ Establish the behaviour you want
	+ Leaders serve their followers
	+ Leaders can only achieve through their followers

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Brainstorm different ways of creating a culture of gratitude. Share what has worked and not worked when people have sought to change things. Here is a list of suggestions:

* Saying thank you – a simple thank you meant sincerely
* Adopting ‘It’s the thought that counts’ attitude so that you appreciate the effort someone has gone to
* Appreciate others and they will appreciate you
* Be OK with accepting kind words and compliments
* Thank the people you serve
* Understand that gratitude encourages the behaviour you want

**Activity 5: Cultivating personal habits of gratitude**

**Introduction**

Establishing personal habits of gratitude will help establish a culture of gratitude for your team.

**Instructions**

Split the group into pairs or small groups and have them brainstorm the myriad of ways in which they can get into a habit of being grateful. Come back together as one group and have each pair/small group present their ideas.

Here is a list of ideas to refer to and add to the list from the participants.

* Write down 3 things that you’re grateful for today and reflect upon the reasons why. Repeat this exercise for 7 days.
* Thank a person who regularly delivers a service to you, a shop assistant, receptionist or taxi driver, for instance. Tell them why what they do is important to you.
* Write a gratitude letter to someone who has had a positive influence in your life and tell them why you appreciate them.
* Accept compliments gracefully and thank the person for making the comment rather than brushing it off or dismissing it.
* Keep a gratitude journal and record the things that you are grateful for each day. Read through it from time to time.
* If someone gives you good service, send an email to their manager praising them as well as giving a personal thank you.
* Make a list of the ‘invisible’ people who make your life better: the emergency services, refuse collectors, farmers, service providers. Imagine life without them.

**Activity 6: Customer Empathy Mapping**

**Introduction**

An Empathy Map is a tool that helps develop a deeper understanding of and empathy for other people. It is often used to understand and improve the customer experience. The tool allows the user to explore what a customer might be thinking and feeling and sensing and then use that information to align products and services.

**Instructions**

7.What do they THINK and FEEL??

2.What do they need to DO?

1.WHO are we empathising with?

GAINS

5.What do they DO?

PAINS

4.What do they SAY?

3.What do they SEE?

6.What do they HEAR?

This activity will work best if the group has a common customer. The group is to work through the mapping activity to become more familiar with how the customer might be feeling. Some additional questions to answer:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **WHO are we empathising with?** Who is the person we want to understand?What is the situation they are in?What is their role in the situation | **What do they need to DO?**What do they need to do differently?What jobs do they want or need to get done?What decisions do they need to make?How will we know they were successful? |
| **What do they SEE?**What do they see in the marketplace?What do they see in their immediate environment?What do they see others saying and doing?What are they watching and reading | **What do they SAY?**What have we heard them say?What can we imagine them saying? |
| **What do they DO?**What do they do today?What behaviour have we observed?What can we imagine them doing? | **What do they HEAR?**What are they hearing others say?What are they hearing from friends?What are they hearing from colleagues?What are they hearing second-hand? |
| **What do they THINK and FEEL?**What are their PAINS – fears, frustrations and anxieties?What are their GAINS – wants, needs, hopes and dreams? |

Use a large sheet of paper or whiteboard to draw the final empathy map. Debrief the value in going through this exercise. In understanding difference, how can it expose opportunities?