

“Solution Snowballs”

A fun way to generate lots of possibilities based on what is working well. You can introduce it to the participants as a way of sparking their creativity. If you are using a Solutions focussed approach it can work well when a group has had the chance to identify what they want (their “future perfect”) and have “scaled” where they currently are.

Resources needed

Participants will need a sheet of A4 paper each and a pen.
Facilitator will need a few extra pieces of paper to add into the activity as it progresses (snowballs have a habit of melting!) something to make a noise (bell/ whistle)

Set up

You will need enough space for the participants to have a “snowball fight” and the furniture cleared out of the way so that they do not injure themselves. If you have a quite physical group (I have done this with high spirited groups of graduates) you may need to mention safety in a light hearted way.

Time

About 15 to 25 minutes – (Depending on feedback process chosen)

Instructions

- ✧ Ask each individual to write on their piece of paper one thing that they have identified that the group does well in relation to the issue they are working on. (Mention that they need to write clearly as other people will need to read it.
- ✧ Then ask them to write the question “What else?” on the paper.
- ✧ When everyone has finished ask them to screw up their paper into a snowball and invite them to have a snowball fight with it.
- ✧ Encourage them to keep this going, picking up the balls and continuing the fight for 30 seconds.
- ✧ Ring the bell to call time.
- ✧ Invite them to find a snow ball, open it and answer the question,
- ✧ Then ask them to write a new question and get ready for another round.
- ✧ You can repeat the process for as many rounds as you feel is working for the group. (I find about 6 rounds tends to be enough).
- ✧ In each round you can vary the new question you ask them to write e.g.
 - What else? (I tend to use this at least twice)
 - What skills/qualities/ attributes do you/the group have that can contribute positively to the issue?

- What helps you when you are performing at your best on this issue?
 - What would customers say you are good at in relation to this issue?
 - What would your boss say you are good at in relation to this issue?
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- ✧ After you have had your last round you need to share the answers. How you do this depends on the size of the group.
 - ✧ With up to 12 participants you can stand in a circle and ask the participants to read the responses. Say this is just so we hear it all and we will not debate the lists “just listen at this point”.
 - ✧ Go round the circle on each question; keep the energy levels up by asking them to “quickly” read the answer, even if it is the same as a previous one.
 - ✧ With a bigger group you can do a second phase of small groups sharing, and generating lists to put up round the room. Then invite everyone to spend 5 mins looking at all the lists
 - ✧ Close by complimenting the group on how they have done in the exercise and what qualities, skills and attributes you have noticed.

Adapted from a process described by Daniel Meier in “The Accelerated Learning Handbook: a creative guide to designing and delivering faster, more effective training programmes”.

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