

The assumption game

Length		5-10 minutes
Difficulty		Beginner
Group size		Medium
Aim	To help participants to recognize and analyse their own prejudices.	
Description	A game in which people try to identify the assumptions they make about their fellow participants and reflect on whether being aware of our assumptions is important.	
Materials	Pens and post it notes.	
Source	SweFOR https://krf.se/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/KrF_stor20121.pdf	

Tips for facilitators

If there is reason to expect significant prejudice or tensions between group members, it is not advisable to use this exercise until trust has been built up in the group.

Outline and instructions

Divide participants into groups of three or four, with as few people as possible in the group having known each other prior to the training. Give each person several post-it notes and a pen.

Explain that we all make assumptions about people we see based on the way they look, dress, walk, their accent, ethnicity, gender, profession, which country or part of the country they come from and so on. Without really being aware of it, we make assumptions about their attitudes, knowledge, lifestyle and values. Sometimes our assumptions are correct, sometimes not. Sometimes they are positive and sometimes they are not.

Ask participants to think about any assumptions they have about their fellow group members' background, lifestyle or opinions and to write down one assumption on each post-it note. (If there is reason to expect significant prejudice or tensions between group members then skip this exercise or tell them to only write down positive assumptions.)

Once everyone has finished writing, ask them to give the notes to the concerned member of their group.

Bring the groups together to stand in one circle. Ask each person to read out the post-it notes written about them and comment briefly on whether the assumptions are true or false.

Explain that when we are unaware of our assumptions and prejudices they influence our behavior without us knowing it. When we are aware of them, we can choose how to act.