



EXPERIENTIAL
LEARNING

DESIGN

CASE STUDY

TEAM DEVELOPMENT

USE OF COLOURBLIND® PRODUCT

Colourblind® – an experiential learning activity 'to catch people in the act of being themselves!'

Outlined below is a description of how and where a simple but powerful experiential learning activity can be used to 'catch people in the act of being themselves' - providing the powerful emotional component to learning that can really help people to reflect, and then seek to change their behaviour for the good of the organisation and themselves.



Background:

Here is the original enquiry we received from the client:

Client

Hi – I am running my workshop on Sunday and after HOURS of reading about your products on the RSVP Design website, I think what I need is two sets of Colourblind® (my group is about 30 people - seems easier to run two separate groups of about 14 each). Can you deliver to me in time?

RSVP Design

Yes –we can! Our standard Fedex Ground Shipping option in the US might not reach you in time so I would consider adding the Fedex Priority or DHL Express option – the Colourblind® link on our secure shop page is here: <https://shop.rsvpdesign.co.uk/colourblind>

Client

I just received an updated roster. We have about 40 (not including me and another person who I will have facilitate the second group during the exercise), which is larger than I thought. So if I split into two groups, how best to arrange? From what I gather, it's best at 14 people in a group, two pieces each/two missing. The others end up as observers? So perhaps I should use three groups? How do you suggest setting up for three groups? Also, I would love to get a short phone appointment with you sometime this week if possible.

RSVP Design

Yes – I can do a call this week.

For three groups, you would need three facilitators but these could even be participants – as long as they are instructed to offer no more information than the color of the shape that is held up once the exercise starts! This way you could move between the three groups to get a sense of how each is going. I would let them finish in their own time – if a group finishes first get them to remove their blindfolds and quietly observe other groups. The debrief of three groups in their groups first followed by a plenary should provide lots of rich information!

Client

Thank you for the call – the suggestions and questions raised during it have really made me think about how I organise the composition of the three groups and how to structure the Review – I will let you know how it goes!

Workshop Feedback

I ran Colourblind® for my group this past week at our Leadership Retreat. As you suggested, I organized into three groups (about 10-11 people in each), by role/seniority as it applies to our company. I had two other facilitators so that we each had a group.

Group 1: Our coaches (usually organized, structured, accountable, trained as coaches) and MCAs (run the offices from an operational standpoint and the financials) - they CRUSHED IT in about 15-20 minutes. These roles are usually a fit for people who like systems. Great teamwork, all on a high, loved it, super positive experience. No clear leader emerged, which I found super interesting. More collaborative.



Group 2: Our agents (running sales teams, developing leadership, used to being in charge of their own businesses) and a couple of higher level MCAs who are more outgoing/stronger leaders than the usual profile) - they figured it out in about 45 minutes. A couple of leaders developed, overall collaborative effort and positive outcome, but not even close in terms of Group 1's speed of getting to the answer.



Group 3: My group, in theory the more “senior” people. Our GM (general manager - seasoned leader but newer to this group), our TLs (team leaders of each office who are the leaders of their offices on a day to day basis - in charge of growth/recruiting, some coaching and training, usually high “I”s on the DISC but also need lots of “D”, social, etc) - they weren’t even close after 45 minutes. It was painful to watch. Everyone talking over and interrupting each other. One by one, about half the group shut down during the exercise. The GM took/was given the leadership role, but he was constantly raising his voice to be heard and it became more and more like giving orders. The energy in the group was frustrated and increasingly negative and disjointed. Even during the debrief, they were interrupting each other until someone outside the group called them out. They just couldn’t stop doing it.



All in all a resounding success which generated tons of discussion and insights. The speed with which the first group finished was such a stark contrast to the trailing groups, providing clear evidence that the exercise was very solvable. Definitely got the takeaway and a-ha’s about systems, communication and listening vs talking. The group that “failed” clearly had some major a-ha’s around their communication styles and how some of the group disengaged. Pretty cool all in all that our most “senior” group had the most growing to do here. Fortunately we are big on self-awareness and growth, so the implied feedback was well received. I know some in the group were very unsettled by the process/outcome - huge growth here which is a coach’s optimal outcome.

Thank you so much for your time and additional insights. Without our call, I wouldn’t have thought to segment the groups the way you suggested, and it provided a huge extra dimension and learning experience.

Client details on request