

Establishing Ground Rules

Contributed by Heather O'Donnell

I have chosen the following activity to establish then ground rules with learners with the aim of setting out a learning environment that assists good delivery of learning.

The learning objectives within the task are for the group to:

- Establish an agreed set of ground rules for the team.
- Explore the value of having ground rules.

Resources Required

Pens, pre-prepared slips of paper, flip chart, blue tac.

If the learners are in a group of six or less; ask them to sit in a circle.

If the group is larger break them into working groups of equal numbers if possible.

Method:

- Prepare slips of paper with possible ground rules on, some draconian, some just plain silly, others ambiguous.
- Give the slips out to the group ensuring there are enough for each student to have at least one.
- Learners take turns to read out a possible ground rule, saying whether they agree or disagree with it and why. The rest of the group can say whether they agree to accept

or reject the rule. Slips are posted up on a large sheet of paper or blank wall under the headings 'Agree' and 'Disagree'

- Once all the slips have been dealt with learners are invited to add any rules they think have been missed.
- Alternatively you can carry this exercise out on the Inspiration Activity Link.

Reflecting and consolidating

The activity can end with the learners considering some discussion questions.

- Why are ground rules important?
- Should ground rules be fixed, or should they be revisited at regular intervals and changed in the light of experience?
- If someone in the team breaks one of the ground rules, how will the team deal approach it?

I have adopted this approach to give empowerment and responsibility within the group as well as with the individual learner.

I could vary this approach in different situations such as leaving college for an off site activity, or when the group or the tutor feel that the ground rules are in jeopardy and need to be refreshed or revised.

The task of setting ground rules underpins a code of acceptable behaviour because the learners are part of the process thus encouraging responsibility.

It also helps individuals to consider a good learning ethos for their environment that assists in their process for learning and the aim towards a successful outcome.

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