

GOAL-SETTING



THE WASTEBASKET

A GAME WHERE PARTICIPANTS REFLECT ON THE IMPORTANCE OF SETTING AND COMMUNICATING GOALS EFFECTIVELY TO ACHIEVE DESIRED OUTCOMES

The goal is to learn the importance of setting and communicating goals effectively.

Objectives of this game are to:

- experience the importance of setting SMART goals
- work as a team to achieve goals
- reflect on the importance of communicating goals effectively to achieve desired outcomes

Participants will be able to recognize and master these skills: goal setting, communicating goals, team effort.

Advice: Materials for the game: spacious room, A4 paper (preferably used from the recycle bin), chair, wastebaskets, blindfolds (e.g. scarves), pen, timer, flipchart.

Instructions

- Form teams (minimum of 5 participants per team) and sit them in circles with chairs. Place one wastebasket in the middle of each circle and provide participants with plenty of paper. Inform participants that the game evolves in 5 rounds.

Round 1: No instructions – no goals

- The facilitator starts talking about the importance of goal-setting.
- A minute later, the facilitator informs participants that they were supposed to throw paper in the wastebasket and asks them why they didn't do so.
- The facilitator asks how they felt and explains the importance of having specific goals.

Round 2: Partial instructions – incomplete goals

- The facilitator instructs participants to "Throw pieces of paper into the wastebasket".
- A minute later, the facilitator stops the process and counts only crumpled-up papers which are in the wastebaskets. The facilitator assigns one point for each crumpled-up paper in the wastebasket of each team.
- The group discusses their feelings about having incomplete instructions.

Round 3: Clear instructions – clear goals

- The facilitator instructs participants to "Crumple-up pieces of paper and throw them into the wastebasket".



- A minute later, count the papers inside each team’s wastebasket and assign one point for each paper.
- The group discusses the importance of having a solid understanding of the process through clearly-defined instructions.

Round 4: Nearly impossible goals

- The facilitator asks participants to cover their eyes with one hand and then to “Crumple-up pieces of paper and throw them into the wastebasket”.
- A minute later, stop the process and count the number of papers, assigning one point per paper in each team’s wastebasket.
- Discuss feelings and the importance of setting Achievable goals.

Round 5: Communicating instructions – setting and achieving goals

- Each team appoints one “Thrower” and one “Holder” from within their team. Holders hold the wastebasket in the middle of each circle, and Throwers throw the papers. Both Holders and Throwers are blindfolded.
- Team members discuss and set specific goals on the number of papers that Throwers will be able to get in their wastebasket within a set time of 4 minutes.
- The task ends when the team achieves their specific goal or the 4 minutes limit ends.
- Teams that manage to achieve their set goal get three points for each paper inside the wastebasket.
- Count overall points and announce the winner(s).

Reflection in the learning community:

- Remind participants the discussions about the importance of communicating and setting goals at the end of rounds 1-4.
- Explain SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time- bound) approach for goals, and ask participants to identify these dimensions in the task of round 5.
- Ask participants to reflect upon their experience of this workshop and share amongst their team members their thoughts on the following question “What will you do differently as a result of what you learned?”
- Invite teams to discuss and choose one learning point from the workshop that they believe is the most important to take away and, in turns, share it with the rest of the group.

Tips for facilitators

- Before asking teams to set specific goals for round 5, you may allow teams to try the task for a couple of minutes to get a better feeling of what is achievable.
- A prize (e.g. a bag of sweets) for the winning team could boost motivation to compete.
- A further discussion on the importance of effectively utilising resources to achieve goals could be included in the debriefing session.

