

# SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE



## FORUM THEATER

TOOL DESIGNED TO DEVELOP SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS BY MEANS OF THEATRE PERFORMANCE

**The goal is to learn** and develop social intelligence through situations that are presented and staged, creating awareness of personal and community issues.

With this tool communication skills will be empowered and the role of the oppressed/oppressor will be exploited in order to make it easier to change the behaviour in reality of individuals / young entrepreneurs.

Putting young entrepreneurs in various situations and trying out more solutions to get out of a certain situation or relationship / problem, will develop Social Intelligence.

**Advice:** Group size 10 – 30 participants, 1hour, open space with tables and chairs that can fit a lot of people.

### Instructions

To start the tool properly the following preparatory activities are needed in the group:

- Selection of the roles between participants, defining especially Oppressor, Oppressed and Joker role
- Selection of the topic/problem to be addressed
- Creation of a Forum Scene in which the problem of oppression and discrimination is presented in a very specific way
- Rehearsal, Refining and character build up.

Joker is the character who explains the rules to the audience and guides them through the process, therefore he is introducing the activity to the participants/audience.

Once the topic is addressed and roles are defined, the Joker mediates between the actors (Oppressor and Oppressed) on stage and the audience (rest of the participants). The Joker needs to motivate the audience to participate in the scenes, asking relevant questions for the problem, and opening the discussion. This is the time where the audience is encouraged to suggest any solution, as long as they are ready to realize it on stage, working, acting, directing with the "actors".

Once they make a conclusion that the oppressed actors have failed to cope with the repressive situation, they begin to perform that short play again. At any time in another performance, anyone in the audience can say "stop!" and take on the role of an "actor" representing an oppressed individual. The role of the Oppressor cannot be changed because that would be a "magic solution".



Through this process, participants understand and experience the challenges of making the progress they have proposed. The audience is then encouraged to not only imagine the change, but also to practice it, collectively reflect on the suggestions and thus become empowered to generate social action.

**Reflection in the learning community:** The essence of this model is not to indicate the correct answer, but to discover all possible answers that can be further questioned. Observers learn more through performance although it is fictional because it is a simulation of artistic practice in reality. When in reality they find themselves in a situation similar to the one tried in theater, people awaken a desire to be proactive because they feel more prepared and have more self-confidence when resolving a conflict or a particular problem.

#### Tips for facilitators

- Select the topic that clearly presents a problem of oppression/discrimination and which will be addressed in the short play.
- Select a Joker - a person who plays a Joker is a moderator of the whole activity and he/she needs to be neutral but active during the process. Joker is fundamental: he needs to be ready to motivate the audience to participate in the scenes, asking questions and encouraging discussion.
- Be clear on the main aim: the goal is not to offer an ideal solution but to offer as many opportunities as possible in a certain role. Understanding dynamics of oppression and developing social intelligence.

