



Center for Leadership & Educational Equity

Liar's Poker

Developed by Debbie Bambino from memory of the activity modeled by Nancy Mohr.

Purpose

A team building exercise that invites discussion of status in school

Materials and Set Up

You'll need a deck of cards and space to mingle, as well as a space to line up numerically at the end. (This can be used with very large groups but you will need a card for each person.)

Time

10-30 minutes, a good after lunch movement activity

Process

- Ask your group to stand in a circle.
- Fan the playing cards out face down and ask each individual to pick one and place it on their forehead without looking at its card value.
- Remind folks not to read their cards in the reflection of other people's glasses.
- Announce that aces are high and everyone wants to talk to them!
- Ask folks to mingle for 6-7 minutes, keeping in mind that aces are the highest cards.
- Step back and observe the interaction.
- After 6-7 minutes ask folks to line up without looking at their cards. They should place themselves according to the treatment they received during the mingling period, with aces at one end and deuces at the other.
- After the group has assembled, ask them to check their cards and adjust where necessary.
- Get back in the circle and discuss how it felt to be a 2, a 5, an ace, etc.
- Ask folks how this stratification and treatment might reflect dynamics in their schools, etc.
- Debrief