EM-CITY TRAINING MODULE FOR YOUNG VOLUNTEERS

MODULE 1. GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER

https://www.emcityeu.net/

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Duration of Module: 1h

Aim of the Module is to give the trainers tools to encourage participants to engage in early conversations within their own comfort zones. This involves creating an environment where participants and trainers/facilitators interact and build trust, fostering engagement and interaction among everyone involved. These initial sessions aim to facilitate the development of rapport and establish a comfortable working relationship among participants.

Learning Objectives:

- Get to know each other
- Encourage interaction
- Get the group warmed up
- Create a positive learning environment
- Encourage open communication
- Have fun

Learning activities/teaching methods:

Energizers, ice breakers, games

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1.1 Getting to Know Each Other

1.1.1 Introduction and Objectives

The trainers/facilitators should begin by introducing themselves, sharing their background and experience in a concise manner. They should then provide an overview of the training, setting the stage for what participants can expect to learn and accomplish. This involves explaining the training's purpose, discussing the structure, agenda, and learning objectives,

highlighting the benefits participants can gain, and addressing any logistical or administrative matters. Through this approach, the trainers/facilitators establish their credibility and enthusiasm, motivating participants and ensuring a smooth and engaging training experience. As part of this, a brief presentation or storytelling about the 'EM-CITY project' can be utilized, emphasizing its objectives, activities, and achieved results.

1.1.2 Icebreakers and Energizers

In this section, we can incorporate a range of icebreakers and energizers that participants can utilize to foster engagement and maintain a lively atmosphere. Icebreakers and energizers are interactive activities employed during training or workshops, but they serve distinct purposes:

Icebreakers are employed at the beginning of a session to help participants familiarize themselves with one another, develop a sense of comfort within the group, and break down initial barriers or resistance to participation. Their focus is on building rapport, fostering a positive ambiance, and establishing a sense of community among the participants.

Energizers, on the other hand, are utilized throughout the training or workshop to sustain participants' engagement, concentration, and vitality. They are designed to rejuvenate the mind, body, and spirit, instilling a sense of enthusiasm and motivation. Energizers often involve physical activity, playful elements, and interactive exercises such as games, challenges, and movement activities.

By incorporating both icebreakers and energizers, we can create an inclusive and dynamic learning environment that encourages active participation and maintains participants' energy and enthusiasm.

1.1.3 Self Introduction and Sharing

This section focuses on effective strategies for participants to introduce themselves and share information in a manner that cultivates connections with others. In a training program, self-introduction and sharing activities serve the purpose of creating a supportive and secure learning environment where participants can connect, exchange experiences and ideas, and foster a sense of community. Encouraging participants to share their entrepreneurship-related experiences or ideas is crucial as it helps identify common themes, areas of interest, and highlights the diversity of perspectives within the group. Providing prompts or guiding questions can further facilitate deeper reflection on experiences and insights.

To ensure a positive environment, clear expectations and guidelines for sharing should be established. Emphasizing active listening, confidentiality, and respect for diverse perspectives and experiences helps create a safe and supportive space where participants feel comfortable expressing their thoughts and experiences. Additionally, collaboratively establishing rules during the training by engaging in a discussion with participants and documenting them for everyone to see throughout the training can be beneficial. It's important to note that in non-formal youth training, flexibility in the rules should be maintained. For example, rules regarding respecting training hours or refraining from eating in the class can be established.

Overall, incorporating self-introduction and sharing activities can significantly contribute to building connections, fostering collaboration, and facilitating meaningful learning in a training program for young people.

1.1.4 Expectations, Contributions and Fears

The objective of this section is to guide participants in recognizing their individual expectations, potential contributions, as well as any fears or concerns they may have regarding the training or workshop. This activity aims to establish a secure and supportive learning environment, enhance participant engagement, and foster a sense of ownership in the training process.

Typically, participants are prompted to reflect on and share their expectations, contributions, and concerns related to the training topic or goals. This can be accomplished through written exercises, group discussions, or small group activities. Participants are encouraged to consider how they can actively contribute to the group's learning and growth, what they hope to achieve through the training, and any apprehensions or worries they may have about the process. The trainer or facilitator plays a pivotal role in guiding the discussion, promoting active listening, and fostering empathy among participants.

The outcomes of this activity encompass heightened self-awareness, a sense of investment and ownership in the training process, improved communication and collaboration among participants, and the cultivation of a positive and supportive learning environment. Furthermore, it enables the trainer or facilitator to tailor the training to meet participants' needs and expectations, and address any concerns or fears that might hinder their learning or engagement.

1.1.5 Understanding and Valuing Diversity

An integral component of the EMCITY project is the promotion of inclusion and diversity, with a specific focus on empowering young individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds to become interactive bridges in emergency management. Therefore, it is essential to allocate a portion of the training program to explore methods of celebrating and appreciating the diverse backgrounds and experiences within the group, while highlighting their potential contribution to fostering an inclusive and welcoming environment.

1.2 Examples of Activities/Techniques to be Used During the Sessions

Activity 1.1 Names and Gestures

Aim of the activity/technique: The purpose of a name icebreaker in a training session is to facilitate the learning of participants' names and foster relationship building. By engaging in this activity, a more relaxed and amicable atmosphere is created, encouraging participants to feel at ease and receptive to the learning experience. Remembering and using someone's name is a fundamental aspect of establishing rapport, and a name icebreaker helps to dismantle barriers among participants, promoting communication throughout the training. Through the simple act of learning each other's names, participants begin to view one another as individuals rather than strangers attending the same session. This activity contributes to the development of an inclusive, interactive, and supportive learning environment, ultimately enhancing the overall effectiveness of the training and promoting successful learning outcomes for all participants.

Duration: 10-15 minutes

Preparation/Materials/Equipment: No need

Outcomes of the activity:

Knowledge:

- Understanding the importance of building relationships and rapport in a training setting.
- Familiarity with the names of the participants attending the training.
- Awareness of the benefits of creating a relaxed and friendly atmosphere for learning.

Skills:

- Active listening skills to remember and retain participants' names.
- Communication skills to engage with others and address them by their names.
- Interpersonal skills to initiate conversations and establish connections with fellow participants.

Attitudes:

- Open-mindedness and willingness to participate in the name icebreaker activity.
- Respect for others and valuing the importance of remembering and using individuals' names.
- Positive attitude towards building relationships and creating a supportive learning environment.

Instructions/Suggestions for Trainers/Facilitators:

1. Gather the participants in a circle and explain the purpose of the activity: to create unique hand gestures that represent something about themselves and to learn each other's names in an engaging way.
2. Begin by demonstrating your own hand gesture and sharing something about yourself that it represents.
3. Give participants time to create their own hand gestures that reflect their interests, hobbies, or personality traits.
4. Instruct each participant to introduce themselves by stating their name and performing their hand gesture simultaneously. Encourage the rest of the group to repeat the name and gesture back.
5. Once everyone has introduced themselves, explain that you will play a game similar to "tag" where participants will repeat each other's names and gestures without any repeats.
6. Remind participants to pay attention and keep track of whose name and gesture have already been used.
7. Start the game by having one participant share their name and gesture, and then the next participant repeats the previous name and gesture before adding their own.
8. Continue the game in a clockwise or counterclockwise direction, with each participant repeating all the names and gestures before adding their own.
9. Monitor the game and provide assistance if needed. Consider ending the game when everyone has had a chance to participate or after a designated time limit.

10. After the game, discuss the experience and allow participants to share their thoughts or observations.
11. Explain how the hand gestures can be incorporated into the rest of the theater class, such as using them as a way to call on participants or discreetly get their attention.
12. Emphasize the importance of active participation and encourage participants to utilize the gestures in other theater games or activities throughout the training program.
13. Conclude the activity by expressing appreciation for everyone's involvement and willingness to share their gestures and names.

Activity 1.2 Interview Pairs

Aim of the activity/technique: The aim of the Interview Pairs activity is to facilitate meaningful conversations and interactions between participants, allowing them to get to know each other on a deeper level. By pairing participants and providing a structured interview format, the activity encourages active listening, empathy, and understanding.

Duration: 10-15 minutes

Preparation/Materials/Equipment: List of questions, papers, pen

Outcomes of the activity:

Knowledge:

- Increased understanding of different perspectives and life experiences: Through the interview process, participants have the opportunity to learn about the backgrounds, interests, and values of their partners, expanding their knowledge about diverse topics and experiences.
- Enhanced knowledge of effective communication: Engaging in meaningful conversations during the activity can help participants develop better communication skills, including active listening, asking thoughtful questions, and expressing themselves clearly.

Skills:

- Active listening: The activity promotes active listening as participants focus on their partners' responses, giving their full attention and demonstrating empathy and respect.

- Interviewing and questioning skills: Participants practice asking open-ended and engaging questions, honing their skills in interviewing and conversation facilitation.
- Empathy and understanding: By actively engaging with their partners' stories and experiences, participants develop empathy and understanding, which are valuable skills in building relationships and fostering a positive social environment.

Attitudes:

- Open-mindedness and appreciation of diversity: The activity encourages participants to embrace diverse perspectives and appreciate the uniqueness of others, fostering an open-minded and inclusive attitude.
- Respect and empathy: By actively listening and showing genuine interest in their partners' stories, participants develop a deeper sense of respect and empathy for others, promoting a positive and supportive attitude.
- Increased self-awareness: Through the process of asking and answering interview questions, participants may reflect on their own experiences, values, and aspirations, leading to greater self-awareness and personal growth.

Examples of questions to be used:

1. What is your favorite book or movie? Why do you enjoy it?
2. What is something you're really proud of accomplishing in your life?
3. Who has been a major influence or role model in your life? Why?
4. Can you share a significant life experience or a challenging situation you've faced? How did you overcome it?
5. What is your dream travel destination? Why does it appeal to you?
6. Is there a particular skill or talent you would like to develop or improve? Why?
7. If you could have dinner with any historical figure, who would it be and why?
8. Can you recall a time when you had to step out of your comfort zone? How did it impact you?
9. What is something you believe in strongly or a cause that you are passionate about?
10. If you could have one superpower, what would it be and how would you use it?

Instructions/Suggestions for Trainers-Facilitators:

1. Explain that the aim of the activity is to facilitate meaningful conversations and interactions between participants.
2. Randomly pair up participants, ensuring diversity in pairings.
3. Set ground rules for active listening, respect, and confidentiality.
4. Provide a list of interview questions or allow participants to add their own.
5. Instruct participants to take turns interviewing each other, with one person asking the questions and the other responding.
6. Encourage active listening and asking follow-up questions.
7. Set a time limit for each interview to ensure equal participation.
8. Facilitate a group discussion after the interviews for reflection and sharing insights.
9. Conclude by expressing gratitude and emphasizing the value of connecting with others and fostering empathy.

Activity 1.3 Human Bingo

Aim of the activity/technique: The aim of the Human Bingo game is to help participants get to know each other by finding individuals who match specific characteristics on a bingo card.

Duration: 15 minutes

Preparation/Materials/Equipment: Human Bingo Cards for each participant, pen/pencil. An example of a human bingo card is given below. Please keep in mind that you can make any changes on the cards.

HUMAN BINGO				
Favorite color is red	Has a little brother/sister	Enjoys rock music	Plays football	Likes to camp
Wears glasses	Likes to draw	Likes pizza with ananas	Has a celeb's autograph	Can touch their nose with tongue
Does not like ice cream	Has curly hair	FREE	Is the youngest child	Born in winter
Has a dog/cat	Likes to collect things	Can drive a minibus	Knows to play a card game	Speaks more than 2 languages
Plays an instrument	Is vegetarian/ vegan	Has been on airplane	Has a facebook	Is left handed

Outcomes of the activity:

Knowledge:

- Increased knowledge of participants' names and characteristics: Through the game, participants learn the names, interests, and characteristics of their fellow participants, expanding their knowledge about their peers.
- Awareness of diversity: By interacting with a diverse group of individuals, participants gain knowledge and awareness of different backgrounds, interests, and perspectives.

Skills:

- Active listening: Participants practice active listening skills as they engage in conversations and try to find individuals who match specific characteristics on their bingo cards.

- Communication skills: The activity provides an opportunity for participants to improve their communication skills by asking questions, exchanging information, and expressing themselves clearly.
- Interpersonal skills: Participants develop interpersonal skills such as building rapport, initiating conversations, and engaging in positive interactions with others.

Attitudes:
- Open-mindedness and inclusivity: By playing the Human Bingo game, participants cultivate an open-minded attitude towards diverse characteristics and backgrounds, fostering inclusivity and acceptance.
- Connection and camaraderie: The activity promotes a positive attitude of connection and camaraderie among participants, encouraging them to support and appreciate one another.
- Willingness to engage: The Human Bingo activity encourages participants to actively engage with others, breaking down initial barriers and promoting a positive attitude towards collaboration and teamwork.

Instructions/Suggestions:
1. Explain the aim of the activity: to help participants get to know each other by finding individuals who match specific characteristics on a bingo card.
2. Distribute Human Bingo Cards and pens/pencils to each participant.
3. Instruct participants to mingle, engage in conversations, and find individuals who match the characteristics on their Bingo Cards.
4. Encourage participants to write the names of the matches in the corresponding squares on their cards.
5. Set a time limit of 15 minutes for the activity.
6. Gather participants for a brief group discussion after the activity to share experiences and reflections.
7. Thank participants for their participation and emphasize the value of building connections and fostering an inclusive environment.

Activity 1.4 Hot-air Balloon

Aim of the activity/technique: The aim of the Hot-air balloon game is to encourage participants to share their expectations, contributions, and fears related to the training or workshop

Duration: 20-30 minutes

Preparation/Materials/Equipment: Printed or drawn hot-air balloon in A3 size paper

Outcomes of the activity:
Knowledge:
● Increased awareness of individual expectations: Participants gain insights into their own expectations and objectives for the training or workshop.
● Understanding of shared contributions: The activity promotes knowledge of the various contributions participants can make to the overall learning experience.

Skills:
● Effective communication: Participants practice expressing their expectations, contributions, and fears, enhancing their communication skills.
● Active listening: By actively listening to each other's inputs, participants develop their ability to attentively receive and understand information.

Attitudes:
● Openness and collaboration: The activity encourages an open and collaborative attitude among participants as they share their thoughts and expectations.
● Support and empathy: Through sharing fears or concerns, participants foster an atmosphere of support and empathy, establishing a safe space for learning.
● Positive mindset: By voicing their expectations and contributions, participants cultivate a positive mindset towards the training or workshop, fostering enthusiasm and motivation.

Instructions/Suggestions:

1. Draw or print a picture of a hot-air balloon, and cut out several small balloons that will fit inside the larger balloon.
2. Ask participants to think about their expectations for the training, what they hope to contribute, and any fears they have.
3. Distribute the small balloons to the participants and ask them to write their expectations, contributions, or fears on the balloon.
4. Once everyone has written on their balloon, collect them and place them inside the large balloon.
5. Position the large balloon in a highly visible location where it can be easily seen by everyone.
6. Ask participants to take turns selecting a small balloon from inside the larger balloon and read aloud what is written on it. Then, they can share any thoughts or feelings they have about the expectation, contribution, or fear.
7. Encourage active listening and respectful dialogue as participants share and respond to each other's contributions.
8. The hot-air balloon activity can help create a safe and collaborative learning environment by allowing participants to express their expectations, contributions, and fears in a non-threatening and creative way. This activity also promotes active listening, empathy, and understanding among participants.

1.3 Useful links and resources

The trainers can find more activities and informatşon about non-formal training methods from the following links:

https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/toolbox/

https://symondsresearch.com/quick-icebreakers/ Access date: 13.04.2023

https://www.cleverism.com/10-ice-breaker-activities-meetings-training-team-building-sessions/ Access date: 13.04.2023

https://www.mindtools.com/a2dl2jd/ice-breakers Access date: 13.04.2023

https://www.mindtools.com/akp37i0/team-building-exercises-and-activities 28.04.2023

Tudor, S. L. (2013). Formal–non-formal–informal in education. Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 76, 821-826.

Gough, S., Walker, K., & Scott, W. (2001). Lifelong Learning: Towards a Theory of Practice for Formal and Non-formal Environmental Education and Training. Canadian Journal of Environmental Education, 6, 178-196.

Denkowska, S., Fijorek, K., & Węgrzyn, G. (2020). Formal and non-formal education and training as an instrument fostering innovation and competitiveness in EU member countries. Journal of Competitiveness, 12(3).