

# Working Agreements

## What is the purpose of this activity?

Working agreements stimulate individuals and groups to think about their own roles and behaviors in a group and the roles and behaviors that they need from others in order to individually and collectively do their best work. It is a group contract that covers some of the general rules of operation and expectations for all group members and their leaders.

## How do I do this activity?

Introduce Working Agreements by reviewing the Outcomes:

We will do our best work here.

We will support each other's work.

We will have our individual needs met.

Explain the directions. Refer participants to the handout on their table.

- ♥ Tell participants to individually think of 3 or 4 personal needs they have in order to do their best work here. For example, I need to have one person talking at a time or I need to have side conversations take place outside the room.
- ♥ Ask them to write their ideas on a slip of paper.
- ♥ Pair with the person next to you and share your needs. Keep add to or edit your list so that together you have 3 or 4 ideas.
- ♥ Share round robin (this means go around the group one person at a time) your individual and pair needs.
- ♥ Using a marker create a group list on a table tent or chart pad. Make sure everyone in your group agrees with the list when you make it. Write large enough for all in your group to easily see.

## Hints:

Reinforce the idea that during think time quiet must be enforced. This is a real learning need for some people.

Teach participants "thumbs up" as a quick way to make sure everyone agrees. (see Common Ground Info Sheet)

## What are some variations of this activity?

- ♥ Introduce by stating a group agreement agreement, one you would like to see adopted by the group. (ex. one person talking at a time.)
- ♥ Do for the whole group with a chart on the wall that they complete as they enter the room. Use this to help participants begin their conversations.
- ♥ In some cases you may want to have each group chose 3 or 4 that they would like the large group to use. Ask them to post it on a chart in the front of the room.
- ♥ Other names for this activity may be Best Working Conditions, Full Value Contract, Social Contract, Group Constitution or Group Contract. Used to be called rules or Robert's Rules of Order.
- ♥ Chart on wall during centering to start one's thinking. What do you need in order to do your best work today?

## When would I use this activity?

- Entering Procedure
- Opener
- Icebreaker
- Team Builder
- Energizer
- Content
- Assessment/Evaluation
- Management
- Closing Activity

**Time for set-up:** none

**Preparation:** none

**Performance:** 20 minutes

**Cleanup:** none

**Group size:** any size

**Material:** handout (a few per table)  
overhead (optional)

**Room Set-up:** varies

## Notes/Questions to ponder: