

12. EXPLORING AGREEMENT



Target group:
Any age



Group size:
4-20 participants



Duration:
60 - 90 minutes



Type of activities:
Drama exercises
Active involvement



Resources:
See extra sheet



Atmosphere needed:
See details below



Aim

- To find different perspectives on conflict.
- To explore possible ways to reach a compromise by increasing awareness of the interests and needs behind a conflict.
- To discover the ZOPA - Zone of Possible Agreement.

Learning Outcomes

- To investigate conflict using useful and more rational perspectives.
- To investigate the other side's position in a positive and constructive way.
- To increase knowledge about the ZOPA concept.
- To learn about techniques that help with finding different routes to an agreement.

Before you run the workshop you should familiarise yourself with the following terms, used often in negotiations:

BATNA – Best Alternative To a Negotiated Agreement – it means the best result you, as a party of the conflict, may achieve if you leave the negotiation table and try to find a solution to the dispute elsewhere (i.e. in court). Usually BATNA helps assess if mediation or negotiation is more profitable than another way of solving the conflict and it shows how much a party can gain in the process.

WATNA – Worst Alternative To a Negotiated Agreement – the opposite of BATNA and helps to assess what is the worst possible scenario if the parties do not find a solution to the conflict on their own.

Example: You are a school class leader responsible for organising a two-day hiking trip for the whole school year. You are discussing the schedule with your peers from other classes and their ideas are quite different from your own.

Your BATNA: Your class goes on a trip on their own, without your peers from other classes. Your position in a group rises and people respect you more now. During the trip all of you have fun but miss your peers from other classes.

YOUR WATNA: No one goes to the school trip because the pupils cannot agree on the plan. Your position as a leader weakens and you lose respect of your friends.

ZOPA – Zone of Possible Agreement – is the place in the middle. This term explains the space where all the parties to the conflict may find some agreeable grounds. Finding your place in ZOPA requires stepping down from some expectations and giving in some aspects – in order to gain in others. The Zone of Possible Agreement covers only the concessions the parties are willing to make while still staying satisfied with the result.



Preparation/materials

- energetic/ hard rock music (e.g. “Thunderstruck” – AC/DC) for the first activity;
- battleship soundtrack (e.g. sinking boats, cannon shots...);
- tape or something different to use to divide the space into two separate areas (or more if there are more teams);
- the description of a conflict which has to be adapted to the target group (description of the situation and of the position of ONE part to each team) IMPORTANT: The description of the conflict has to be VERY clear;
- the workshop leader should be familiar with the concept of ZOPA.



Atmosphere

This workshop works better if you create a dramatic sense of conflict that you later explore and find constructive solutions to. The points below will help you with this:

- Before the workshop, prepare the setting with two separated areas, facing each other (in conflict). If there are more than two teams, prepare an area for each team.
- At the beginning, the participants should sense an adversarial atmosphere: thanks to the music (hard rock or energetic music), the space divided in opposite corners and the description of the adversarial positions of each team, the participants will feel the motivations and the “pride” of their position.
- Each team has to “yell” to the other its position and point of view. We want the participants to feel frustrated, angry and upset. The music is there to help this.
- Then, during the game, the participants will become more rational, analysing the interests and the needs behind their own positions, the tension will decrease (and also the music volume), the feelings will be more calm and the teams will start to listen and rationalise the other side’s interests and needs without yelling. Now they feel more calm and safe, they are getting ready to understand the other side’s point of view and to find a ZOPA.

Intro to the workshop (5 min)

Welcome from the facilitators and participants. Explanation of the workshop, its aim and brief agenda. Make a formal introduction about conflict in general and introduce the activities of the session.

When the group arrives, make an energiser to help the participants to get to know each other better and to put them in a co-operative mood. Always remember to explain clearly the rules of the energiser.

EXERCISE 1. YELLING CONTEST

Prepare the setting: divide the chairs in two or four groups and make them face each other.

There is a conflict (related to the target group experience) and each team has to receive a card in which their position is explained. Very clearly explain the conflict to each group, because the situation must be well understood. Each side has to analyse its own position. To help the team consider its position in the conflict, give it two cards with two questions written on them: "How do you feel?" and "What do you want the most?" Explain that after some time for consideration (8-10 minutes), they will have five minutes to inform the other team about their position and feelings. There will be lots of noise (maybe a band is practising nearby) so they will have to shout.

Now each team has five minutes to explain its position and feelings at the same time and over the top of the loud music.

The result will be that the two teams will yell at each other creating chaos with a high level of stress and frustration. Give them more time if you think that they did not yell enough at each other, sometimes the teams need more time to "feel" the conflict and to shout their positions out loud, so it would be better not to stop them before this happens.

Debrief with the participants about their emotions and introduce the next step: the deeper analysis of the interests and needs behind THEIR OWN positions (DO NOT EXPLAIN just now that they will eventually analyse also the other side's position!).

EXERCISE 2. BATTLESHIPS

Each team begins by answering questions about their side of the conflict:

- What would you accept?
- What do you want the most?
- What would you never accept?

When all the questions are answered, it is time to play the game of battleships. See the rules of the game in the final part of this workshop called "Battleship Game Explanation".

ZOPA

After the game each team has a clear frame of the conflict. Explain to them that asking questions was the key point of finding out the interests and needs of the other side. Put all the symbols on the ZOPA-flipchart (that you have already prepared): explain which, between all the needs and priorities of the teams, is INTO the ZOPA and which is not: this is the way to define the Zone of Possible Agreement.

A		B
WATNA (What "A" would never accept)		BATNA (Best-case scenario for "B")
	(What "A" would accept) ZOPA (What "B" would accept)	
BATNA (Best-case scenario for "A")		WATNA (What "B" would never accept)

Evaluation (and debriefing)



Each participant will receive two different coloured sticky notes. On one they should write something (a word or a sentence) about how they feel at the end of the workshop. On the other they should write any learning outcomes that they have from the workshop.

Depending on the group, you can get each person to stick up their notes on the flipchart and explain them to the group (if they want it: do not push them). Or they can all be collected and shared without names if you feel that works better.

BATTLESHIPS GAME EXPLANATION

Preparation



Create charts for the game (two for each team) as in the diagram. If you have a really active group, you can make the chart bigger and make the game last longer; for a less active group, make it smaller so that they do not get bored.

BATTLESHIP

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
A										
B										
C										
D										
E										
F										

You can have two or four teams but each team only plays against one other team.

Each team receives ONE battleship scheme as shown below. They will have to place three ships, one heart and one vortex in the field, as follows:


1. Three ships (three squares each) representing what they would accept;

WHAT WOULD YOU ACCEPT?

1. _____

2. _____


3. _____



2. One heart (one square) representing what they want the most;

WHAT DO YOU WANT THE MOST?


• _____



3. One vortex (two squares) representing what they would never accept.

WHAT WOULD YOU NEVER ACCEPT?

• _____



Playing the game

Explain battleship rules clearly. First of all, both teams have to answer questions connected to each element. Next they must place the symbols connected to each element on the battlefield (chart).

After this, each team will receive another battleship chart. This is the one they will use to find out the other team's fleet and the other team's answers to the questions.

Now the teams take it in turns to ask for a "letter/number combination" in order to find out the position of the other team's fleet. When they find and destroy the ships/heart/vortex, they should ask the questions: "What would you accept? / What do you want the most? / What would you never accept?" (according to which element they find).

BATTLESHIP

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
A										
B										
C										
D										
E										
F										

WHAT DO YOU WANT THE MOST?

• _____

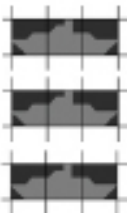


WHAT WOULD YOU ACCEPT?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____



WHAT WOULD YOU NEVER ACCEPT?

• _____

