

IV. Nonverbal Communication Activities

1. Line Up

Supplies: No supplies needed

Directions:

- Instruct participants that they will need to line up in a particular way, as quickly as they can, **WITHOUT TALKING** (or writing or texting or using words at all).
- Round one: Shoe size (Identify where the person with the smallest shoe size should stand, and where the person with the largest shoe size should stand — with everyone else in between).
- Round two: Birthday — month and day. (Again, identify where person whose birthday is closest to Jan 1st should stand and where person whose birthday is closest to Dec 31st should stand).
- Round three: Alphabetical by last name (Identify where 'A' should go and where 'Z' should go).

Possible Discussion Questions:

1. How did you communicate? (eye contact, gestures, pointing, hands/fingers, nodding, etc.)
2. Was everyone communicating the same way? If not, how did you understand each other?
3. How easy/difficult was it to communicate without words? Explain what was difficult and what was easy.
4. Did anyone take the lead to make sure you were in the right order? Would that have helped?
5. What was frustrating about this activity?

2. Charades

Supplies: words/phrases written on index cards (or pieces of paper)

Directions:

You can divide the group into two teams and do a charades relay race, or you can have participants act out the words/phrases for everyone to guess for fun. No talking allowed.

For the team relay race, you will need two sets of the words/phrases and at least two people to facilitate the race.

- Divide the group into two teams.
- Each team has a facilitator that holds the team's cards.
- The group decides what order they will play the game (who will go first, second, third, etc).
- Once the order for each team has been established, the teams race to act out all of the cards one at a time and have their team guess it correctly.
- The first person acts out the first card and once it is correctly guessed by the team, the second person goes to the front, grabs the best card and acts it out. Play continues until one team has correctly guessed all of the cards.

Discuss the challenges of relaying a message without using words.

Was it easier or more difficult than the 'bug activity'? Why?

Is non-verbal or verbal communication more important? What evidence supports your position?

How has technology helped communication? How has it hurt communication?

3. Picture/Video Clips without sound

Supplies: pictures or video clips

Directions:

Show the pictures and/or video clips (without sound) to participants and have them guess what is going on.

- How do you think the person feels?
- What might the person/people be saying?
- What is being communicated?
- How easy is it to identify feelings and/or understand messages without words?
- Is it easier or harder than trying to identify feelings, messages without nonverbal cues?