

HANDOUT - BRIDGEBUILDING ROLE CARDS

ROLE CARD FOR THE EUROPEAN EXPERT TEAM

Your role and your mission:

You are a European expert in bridge-building. You will soon travel to Veram to teach the people there what you know, so they will then be able to build their own bridge. The culture of the people of Veram is very different from yours. The success of your mission will depend strongly on how empathetic you will be with considering their cultural identity when working together with them. The people in Veram though speak the same language.

Preparation phase for the bridge building session:

You have 20 minutes to prepare your visit in Veram. You are an expert about using this special technique for building bridges. You will have to practice it before you go to Veram as you will need to make the people of Veram learn this technique. In Veram the material that is needed for the bridge will be available. But the people there do not know how to use it. You have to make them use the material in order to teach them the bridge-building technique.

Technique of building the bridge:

You will have the following material available: Paper, 3 scissors, 3 glue sticks, 3 rulers, 3 pencils. The bridge will be made out of paper only. It should be at least 40 cm long. It has to be stable and needs to be able to carry a ruler. The bridge will be made from pieces of paper in the format of 14cmx6cm. Every piece of paper needs to be thoroughly measured and cut out. These pieces can be put together any way you like.

Bridge-building session:

After the 20 minutes preparation phase you will travel to Veram and will have a 30-minute bridge building-session together with the people of Veram. The goal of this session is that the people of Veram have once built a bridge on their own, so they will be able to build more bridges then in Veram.

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ROLE CARD FOR VERAM PEOPLE

Your role and mission:

You are a member of the people of Veram who will soon meet a European team of experts in bridge-building. They are supposed to teach you about bridge-building techniques so you will then be able to build a bridge on your own in Veram. Your culture differs a lot from the one of the European experts. Though you speak the same language.

Preparation phase:

Before you meet the European experts please practice your communication habits. You will have 20 minutes time for this.

Communication rules in Veram:

Greeting: You greet each other by making a bow. Other forms of greeting are offensive in your view and you will react by saying "Why don't you greet me?".

Touching while speaking: The most important rule in Veram is: The people in Veram always touch the shoulder of the person they talk to while speaking with somebody. If the shoulder is not touched this shows disrespect. If you are not touched by the experts you will put your hands on your ears and stop cooperating. When working together you always touch the shoulder of your cooperation partner as well.

Saying No/yes: In Veram everybody is very friendly and you never use the word "no". If you want to say "no", you say "yes" instead and shake your head at the same time.

Talking about behaviour: In Veram it is very impolite to ask somebody about his/her behaviour. In case the European experts ask you about your behaviour you say: "Why? I do not understand." in order to avoid an unpleasant situation. In general you avoid to explain your behaviour for the same reason.

Division of work: In Veram tasks are very clearly distributed and you are very strict about this. There is one (or more according to your group size) person who cuts and uses the scissors, another one who paints and uses the pencil and another one who measures and uses a ruler. Everybody has only one task and one tool for this task. In no case you will overtake the task of somebody else. Paper can be used by all persons in Veram.

Bridge-building session:

After the 20 minutes preparation phase you will meet the European experts who will teach you their bridge-building technique.

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ROLE CARD FOR THE OBSERVERS

You can develop your own concept for the observation or focus on the following aspects:

- Distribute roles: which observers will observe which group or which aspects, e.g. one half of your group can get the task to observe the people of Veram, the other half can be responsible for the experts
- You can also focus on certain aspects of communication and distribute tasks accordingly (body language, spoken language, tone of communication etc.)
- Watch closely which actions are followed by which reactions?
- What can be recognized as an obstacle, what can be a solution?
- Who is dominant in the interaction?
- How are goals communicated?
- How do the interaction partners negotiate?