



Trust-building Activities

Note to Facilitator: Honest self-assessment requires a sense of trust and confidence in one's colleagues. Trust-building activities like the following may make it easier to talk about self-assessment issues that arise.

Check In

Each trustee takes 30 seconds to a minute to share something with the team about their “non-team” life. This is a time to ask for support. Other trustees should not comment on each other's check-ins unless invited to do so. Everyone has the right to pass.

Life Highlights

In the life highlights game, participants are asked to take a moment to consider which 30 seconds of their life they would most like to relive and why. Each employee then presents and explains the 30 seconds they have chosen to the group. Afterwards, the employees reflect on why they chose these 30 seconds, whether their current life relates to their current work and role, and what this moment tells them about in regards to how they should spend their time.

Three Minute Speeches

This exercise is a way to build a sense of community and shared vision in training sessions.

Allowing four minutes per person will give you a fairly realistic time frame. It is best not to tell people about this exercise too far in advance. This adds somewhat to the drama and risk involved.

Twenty to thirty minutes before Three Minute Speeches, tell the participants about the exercise and ask them to ponder upon a specific question. One very good question is "What is the deep core reason you do the work you do?" Tell trustees they can tell a story from some part of their lives, about a particular person whose influence figures greatly, or any other reasons that they are involved in the school board service. You may want to craft to other appropriate questions. People should be encouraged to extend themselves and to let others know some of the deeper reasons for their dedication to public education.

- Facilitator gives announcement of activity sometime prior to the time to begin.
- Just before the speeches let people know that there will be a timekeeper who will give them a "one-minute warning" by holding one finger in the air. Speaker can select a timekeeper or there can be one or two volunteer time keepers.
- Responses can be quite profound. Facilitator should provide an appropriate closing, such as a quote about public service, the value of education or a poem.



Some possibilities are:

The purpose of life is not to be happy - but to *matter*, to be productive, to be useful, to have it make some difference that you have lived at all

Leo Rosten

It seems to me that any full grown, mature adult would have a desire to be responsible, to help where he can in a world that needs so very much...

Norman Lear

You give but little when you give of your possessions.

It is when you give of yourself that you truly give.

Kahlil Gibran

It is a greater work to educate a child, in the true and larger sense of the word, than to rule a state.

William Ellery Channing

The first duty of a government is to give education to the people.

Simon Bolivar

A quality education has the power to transform societies in a single generation, provide children with the protection they need from the hazards of poverty, labor exploitation and disease, and given them the knowledge, skills, and confidence to reach their full potential.

Audrey Hepburn



Who's got a loonie?

A designated leader (facilitator/chair) stands up and asks the team "who's got a loonie," waiting patiently, until eventually someone reaches into their pocket or purse and comes out with a loonie.

The leader walks over, asks for the loonie and holding it together with the giver, asks the giver

"What are your hopes and aspirations for our school district (or our board)? In other words, what kind of an organization would you like us to become?"

When the giver has answered the question, the leader walks over to another person and hands them the dollar asking the recipient the same question, and listening to their answer. Next, the leader asks the group, "Who's got a toonie?" More fidgeting and then someone will come up with a toonie. The same question is asked of the giver, and then of the recipient of the toonie. Now, the coach asks, "Who's got a five dollar bill?" "Who's got a ten dollar bill?" "Who's got a \$20 bill?" Again the question is asked and transfer of money takes place. At an appropriate point the leader stops, asks for the money to be returned to its rightful owners, and explains the importance of trust to the performance of teams. The leader asks each person to silently reflect on their thoughts and feelings about taking risk and trusting that the money would be returned while the exercise was in progress. Did you volunteer your money, that is, take risk. How did you feel? A little sheepish? What about when the ante was upped to ten dollars? Twenty? Did you think the volunteers were foolish?

We may not all be as trusting as we thought.