
INTERACTIVITIES

“Interactivities” are activities in which people interact with one another. They serve several purposes: First, interactivities can illustrate points that you want to make in a way that’s not the traditional “lecture” strategy, reaching those members of the audience who learn best in other ways. Second, they get your audience *moving*. Especially in longer presentations, it’s good to vary the pace and do something kinesthetic. Sometimes you may want to do this just after a break; other times it may make sense for it to *be* the break. And third, interactivities make good transitions, helping you cross the gap from one topic to another. The best interactivities incorporate both content and activity—and don’t compromise participants’ dignity by asking them to do things that might embarrass them. Here are a few interactivities, some of which have been adapted from the Search Institute publication *Get Things Going: 85 Asset-Building Activities for Workshops, Presentations, and Meetings* (2011), but you may know others you’re comfortable using.

To Open the Presentation: “Back to the Assets”

1. Provide each participant with a list of the **40 Developmental Assets**.
2. Tape a **strip of paper with an asset printed on it** to the back of each participant without showing it to the participant.
3. Ask participants to mingle, introducing themselves and asking each other, “What would you do to help a young person strengthen the asset I have on my back?”
4. As participants guess which assets are taped to their backs, they can move the strips to their name tags, folders, or other visible areas.

To Share Ideas: “Share the Wealth”

1. At the beginning of your presentation, give each participant a piece of **play money**; ask participants to write on the back of the bills their best asset-building idea.

2. Pause several times during the presentation and announce that it's time to circulate the "money." Allow a few minutes for participants to exchange the play money, read what others have written, and jot down ideas of interest to them.

To Reflect on Participants' Communities and Organizations: "Asset Stretch"

1. After presenting information on the eight categories of assets, ask participants to stand.
2. Ask participants to use their arms and the rest of their bodies to show how important they think each of the categories is for their community or organization. Read the categories, and pause after each one for participants to use their body language to tell how important they think it is.
3. Next, ask participants to use body language to show how well they think their community or organization is actually building each category of assets. Follow the previous procedure.
4. Discuss participants' responses.

To Motivate Participants to Build Developmental Assets: "Asset-Building Affirmations"

1. Distribute six 3" x 3" **sticky notes** to each participant. (If you wish, you can order asset-building sticky notes from Search Institute in advance.)
2. Tell participants that you're going to read to them nine asset-building affirmations, and you'd like them to choose two that they feel they can act on. Say that you'll read the list twice—once for them to hear all of them and again for them to write two down. Add that you'd like them to write each affirmation three times, one to a note.
3. Read the following affirmations:
 - "I know and use young people's names regularly when I see them."
 - "I regularly encourage the people I work with to build assets for and with young people."
 - "When young people are in trouble, I begin my interactions with them by focusing on their strengths."
 - "Each day, I'm involved in spontaneous acts of asset building."
 - "I'm expanding my positive influence by pursuing relationships with young people I don't know."
 - "I work hard to maintain relationships with the young people I'm already connected with."

- “I take the time to listen when young people speak to me.”
 - “I help young people visualize themselves performing at higher levels.”
 - “I smile at and make eye contact with young people as I go about my day.”
4. Give participants the following instructions:
- “Now that you’ve written down your affirmations, share them with the people you work with. This is a public declaration of your intentions and also a way to get support to act on your affirmations. Every morning for at least the next week, read and visualize the affirmations you’ve chosen. Do this in a quiet place—for example, in your car or the parking lot. Post the affirmations in places that will remind you to act on them, for example, your car, refrigerator, bathroom mirror, clock, or planning book. Act on your affirmations for at least a week.”

To Close the Presentation: “Golden Nuggets”

1. Distribute to each participant one piece of chocolate or other kind of candy wrapped in gold paper or foil.
2. Remark that at presentations like these, people often come away with a “golden nugget,” a great idea they think they can use or relate to someone or just think about.
3. Ask volunteers to share their “golden nugget” and then eat their candy. (Those who don’t wish to share don’t have to, and those who don’t wish to eat their candy can give it to someone else or take it home.)

