

UNESCO/APC MULTIMEDIA TRAINING KIT

Exercises: Cooperative Problem Solving Raising an Issue

Developed by: Search for Common Ground

Exercise: How to raise an issue

I. Part One (10 minutes):

1. Imagine that you want to bring a problem to someone's attention. You want to resolve the problem in a positive manner. You are about to raise the issue. What are some ways not to do this? (Write down everyone's answers, such as shouting, making accusations, confronting the person near a group, etc.)
2. Why aren't these good approaches? (Write down the responses given, such as showing disrespect, causing a fight, generating defensiveness, etc.)

If we look at the opposite of how not to raise an issue, we come up with four basic steps. Review the "Guidelines for Raising an Issue" (Guide to Cooperative Problem Solving, page 9):

i. Prepare:

- o Time: Don't be rushed
- o Place: private
- o "Take a deep breath"

ii. Put it on the table:

- o State the problem and why it's a problem
- o Be respectful; talk about behavior, not personal traits
- o Speak for yourself – not others
- o Be brief

iii. Invite cooperation:

- o "I'd like to come up with a solution that makes sense to both of us"
- o "How can we solve this together?"
- o Etc.

iv. Listen and learn:

- o "Listen actively" – active listening
- o Be patient and tolerant of different styles of communication

II. Practice (10 minutes):

- 1a. **[If this unit is being conducted as part of the whole CPS Module]:** Please refer to your personal scenario that you developed in Unit 2,
- 1b. **[If this unit is not being conducted as part of the whole CPS Module – But please remember that it should at least be followed by Unit 4, “Listening,” and Unit 5, “Discovering Interests”]:** Now you will have an opportunity to practice raising an issue. Please think of an issue that you would like to resolve cooperatively with another person. (Give a few moments for people to think of one.)
2. Ask people to form into pairs.
3. Ask the pairs to decide who will be partner “A” and who will be partner “B”.
4. Instructions: There will be two rounds, so that each person has an opportunity to practice raising their issue. The other partner’s job is to actively listen. Listeners, please refer to your “Rules for Active Listening” as a reminder (page 9 of the CPS Guide). Speakers, please refer to the “Guidelines for Raising an Issue” (page 9 of the CPS Guide).
5. Partner “A” raises their issue, while Partner “B” listens.
6. After a few minutes, ask the partners to reverse roles.
7. In the large group: ask how it went – what was difficult/easy? What lessons were learned? How can this skill be used after the workshop?