

4 More Group Management Strategies

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“TIME IS UP” SIGNAL: Before the class or training, explain to the group that, if a whole class discussion has taken up too much time (or one individual in the class discussion has done so), you will quietly hold up a "T" (use both hands to make a capital "T" for "time is up") which will signal the end of the discussion or the end of individual's turn to talk. This will keep the class on track with timing and aid individuals who lose track of how much time they've spent talking during a class discussion.

PARK IT: If participants have a lot of questions that can't be easily answered within the time-frame allotted for questions, suggest that they write their questions on sticky notes and "park" the questions on a chart paper titled "PARK IT HERE" or "PARKING LOT." Becky Pike Pluth, current president of the Bob Pike Group, uses a chart with a basket image titled "ASK-IT BASKET." Then either assign more time later in the training to address the questions, or answer the questions via email after the training is over. For larger audiences, invite them to email their questions to you.

“DIDN'T GET IT; REPEAT PLEASE” SIGNAL: Before you begin the training or presentation, show your audience the signal for "Didn't get it; repeat please" (I circle my hand above my head). Explain that, if they don't understand something, or perhaps didn't hear it, they can use this signal instead of raising their hand and waiting to be called on. If someone uses the signal (and they will), stop and review the content you just covered.

RIGHT TO PASS: This is, perhaps, the most powerful group management strategy I've come across, and I always use it in all my classes and presentations. Before I begin, I let participants know that, anytime there is an activity, they have the "right to pass" and can choose to observe rather than participate. This is a "psychological safety net" for many folks – the choice is in their own hands and not in the hands of the presenter, and they no longer feel forced to participate if they don't wish to do so. As long as they don't disrupt the learning, they are welcome to "pass" anytime they wish.

For more brain-based activities that engage training participants from the moment they arrive to the moment they leave, log onto www.Bowperson.com. Content from:

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