

Professional Development Activities for New Team Members

The following activities—Two Truths and a Lie and The Truth Seat—help new members get to know the other team members, and vice versa, to ease the new members' transition. An experienced team may also use the activities to deepen commitment to the team or establish rapport among members. Activities such as these give board members and superintendents a deeper understanding of each other and help them make difficult decisions as team members.

Two Truths and a Lie

This activity encourages team members to share information about themselves and learn things about their team members in a fun and low-pressure environment.

Time Frame

This activity takes fifteen to thirty minutes to complete.

Materials

The team will need a facilitator to encourage responses, pens or pencils for every participant, and notepads.

Process

The facilitator helps the team do the following.

1. Each team member should write down three statements about him- or herself: two truthful statements and one lie.
2. Each person should read his or her three statements aloud in random order. Members should try to state them in the same voice so the lie is not revealed.
3. Once a team member reads the three statements, other team members should guess which one is a lie.
4. The person who shares the statements now clarifies which statement was a lie and explains circumstances about any of the statements made.
5. After everyone has shared their statements, the facilitator summarizes the purpose of the activity and asks for members to share what they have learned about their team members from the activity.

Results

Participation in this activity builds capacity for the team to make difficult decisions by helping team members understand more about each other.

The Truth Seat

This activity promotes honesty and trust through vulnerability.

Time Frame

Teams will need thirty to forty-five minutes to complete this activity.

Materials

The team will need a facilitator to organize the order of team member questioning.

Process

To prepare, the team positions chairs in a half-circle facing a single chair (the *truth seat*). Then, the facilitator supervises the following.

1. Team members take turns sitting in the truth seat until all have had an opportunity.
2. Once a team member is in the truth seat, the other members have a list of questions and may ask the truth seat participant one question. Team members may use the list of questions in figure 2.2 (available online at go.SolutionTree.com/leadership), or create their own.
3. The facilitator concludes the activity by discussing points of commonality, any surprising disclosures, what everyone learned about each member, and how it may help strengthen the team.

Results

Participation in this activity builds capacity for the team to make difficult decisions by helping team members express vulnerability and find commonalities. And while the emphasis may be for new team members, veteran members will benefit from participation as well.