



Learning Community Communication and Organization Workshop

Context:

In the Studium Individuale, the individualized study major at Leuphana University, we implemented classroom LCs in the upper-level course "Collaborative Research Project." Students complete a small-scale research project in teams during the semester. You can read more about the course as a whole in the Research-based Learning page in this toolkit.

The Classroom LC:

Students **formed their own teams** of 3 to 6 students in the first two weeks of the semester through identifying common areas and topics of interest. The teams then worked closely with a faculty 'supervisor' on their research. A student tutor, with previous management experience, gave **the following workshop to help support the teams** (or LCs) on group communication and organization of group work. The student tutor also meets with each team at least once throughout the semester to discuss how the group work is going and address any issues.

Note:

This workshop is included in the CREATES Toolkit for Co-creative Learning as an example for how to support students working in LCs. For more information and additional educational tools, visit: <http://europe-creates.eu>

WORKSHOP – TOPICS TOUCHED

COMMUNICATION	STRUCTURE / ORGANISATION
<p>Personal communication skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I-messages - Active listening <p>Communicating in groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - decision making - leader / follower - finding/change positions - push and pull - flow / grove <p>Group dynamics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - competition or cooperation with other group? - helping / ask for help (in group with other group) - learn by watching - efficiency - Speaking time - planning vs. trial & error - bonding moments - trust 	<p>Structuring and managing researchw</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gantt Chart for overview of stages & milestones - Kanban for To Dos <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o <i>wekan.leuphana.de</i> as online Kanban Tool - Identifying Research Periods (Research Question, Choice of Method, Literature review, Data Collection, Data Analysis, Writing (Assignments), holiday / unavailability) <p>Digital native's little helpers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shared documents / Cloud drives - Messenger Apps (group chats) - Organizational online tools - Transcription software - Literature database (Citavi etc.) <p>Group meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Frequency - Schedule & Structure. Taking Minutes - Blitzlicht-Runde ("Flashlight") - Roles/ministers: Feel-good-mgmt, time-keeper... - Plenum vs. Subgroups (delegations)

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WORKSHOP – INFOS

PARTICIPANTS

Max 24 students + 2 teachers + me
= approx. 20 people

GENERAL SCHEDULE

08:00 – 08:50 Communication (45'+5)
08:50 – 09:00 “5 minutes break”
09:00 – 09:55 Structure / Orga (50'+5)
09:55 – 10:00 post-it feedback

ROOM SETUP

Circle of chairs
+ tables to work on (groups)

METHODS

Inputs (no power point) from JFB
Blitzlicht-Runde (“Flashlight”) Opening
3 Exercises for Communication (partly in research groups)
Group Work (in research groups) – drafting a Gantt chart (15' work + 10' reflection)
Plenum Reflection
Plenum Discussion

MATERIALS

Nametags (crepe tape + pens)
Flipchart + big Post Its + pens (Kanban-Input, Group Work)
Post-It 653E (38x51mm) for Gantt chart Exercise
“Moderationskoffer”
Pin walls for Group work
A4 paper for painting / A3 printout for Gantt exercise

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PART I – COMMUNICATION

08:00	WHAT	CONTENT
<i>Prep: all put on name tags, no notes please, sit in circle</i>		
8' – 08:10	Plenum / Exercise 1 Blitzlicht (flashlight) round	“How are you feeling?” 1 sentence per person (not compulsory), others listen silently
3' – 08:10	Mini Input Intro: “Sanibonani” – I see you and I respect you	Short welcome and rough overview for the session (you already finished the first exercise, so don't be afraid)
10' – 08:20	Exercise 2 Flip That (in two groups)	All participants of each group (ca. 10) stand on one side of a blanket. Goal is to flip the blanket to the other side without anyone leaving it (in 7 minutes). (Exit is OK – if someone doesn't participate → watch)
12' – 08:32	Plenum Reflection Collection of impressions concerning: 1 st (6') “What happened, and what went well?” 2 nd (6') “How did you feel?”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - agreements - I-messages - decision making - leader / follower - finding/change positions - bonding (all together) - planning vs. trial & error - competition or cooperation with other group? - helping / ask for help (in group with other group) - learn by watching - efficiency
5' – 08:37	Exercise 3 Partner Painting (research groups divided in groups of two. (+observers))	Two Participants hold a pen (marker) together and paint on a A4 paper: house, cat, names, grade for your pic Without any talking.
8' – 08:45	Plenum Reflection Collection of impressions (<i>Looking at pictures of the others (3')</i>) 3 rd (5') “What was different new in this exercise?”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - push and pull - flow / grove - trust → “Man kann nicht nicht kommunizieren” <i>One cannot not communicate</i>
5' – 08:50	Input Summary + Focus on my most important aspects	- I-messages, active listening (1) accepting different standpoints, acknowledging the others in their position (2), cooperate, trust, One cannot not communicate (3)

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PART II – STRUCTURE / ORGANISATION

09:00	WHAT	CONTENT
10' – 09:10	Input on Gantt-Charts (JFB) + Collection of possible periods + sub periods in Plenum	Not too many details, not <u>how</u> it is done Periods: -> Research Question -> Choice of Method -> Literature review -> Data Collection -> Data Analysis -> Writing (Assignments) -> holiday / unavailability
15' – 09:25	Group Work: Design a rough Gantt Chart for your research (in Research Groups)	Students will face difficulties arranging the periods
10' – 09:35	Plenum Reflection Collection of Charts and Ideas in Plenum <i>→ Seems like there is a lot to do. Let's get in done...</i>	What was difficult? How to approach the process? -> collect all necessary information -> start from end -> dependencies -> short amount of time for much work
5' – 09:40	Input on Kanban (JFB) + Wekan (online tool)	Only three stages in one period / sprint To Do / Doing / Done Assigning tasks to individuals + Keeping Track...
10' – 09:45	Plenum Discussion Digital native's little helpers <i>→ digit. communication does not replace personal meetings...</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shared documents / Cloud drives - Messenger Apps (group chats) - Organizational online tools - Transcription software - Literature database (Citavi etc.)
10' – 09:55	Input + Plenum Q&A Group Meetings Roles/Ministries Delegations / division of labor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Frequency - Schedule & Structure. Taking Minutes - Blitzlicht-Runde ("Flashlight") - Roles/ministers: Feel-good-mgmt, time-keeper... - Plenum vs. Subgroups (delegations)
5' – 10:00	Open room Applause for everyone! – Post-it Feedback	☺ / ☹ / Take home (+ throw away, file for later)

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