



## Market Exchange - Culture Shock Simulation Exercise

### *Instructions for a large group*

**Purpose:** This is a simulation exercise. Like other simulation exercises, this one will give the group an experience you can *participate in* rather than just *read or hear about*. Each person present will participate and share in this experience. The simulated aspects provide a model against which you can look at your other real life experiences, analyze them, and understand them in new ways. As in all simulations, time is compressed so please listen carefully to instructions. Experimentation is encouraged because mistakes in simulated setting produce no ill effects. Of course, you must still remain respectful towards your peers and facilitators.

#### **Materials:**

- Six pairs of scissors
- Green, Yellow, Red star stickers
- Blue, Green, Red dot stickers
- 2 Staplers
- Construction Paper
- Six facilitators/assistants

#### **General Instructions**

You must create crowns for your business. Each crown can be sold for additional supplies at the “market”. We have provided you with some starter materials; however you may not have everything you need in order to fulfill your orders. You may trade, barter or sell with other groups to acquire the missing materials.

One entrepreneur in your town has a monopoly on one crucial item. She has published prices for the services.

The goal of your business is to create more crowns than other groups and to “sell” the most at market for a prize at the end of the business day. Use your best negotiating skills to help your group ‘win’.

#### **Activities:**

1. Divide participants into six groups. Each group will have a different goal, and be given different supplies. Give each group their individualized instruction sheet and the following supplies:
  - a. 2 Orange teams: 1 piece of paper, minimal stickers (monopoly on Green stars), no scissors
  - b. 2 Red teams: No paper, most of the stickers (monopoly on green dots), no scissors
  - c. 2 Blue teams: Receives most of the paper, minimal stickers, no scissors

2. Set up 2 “stapler stations” with a price list for all to see. This station will be managed by a facilitator, who will speak another language (real or not).
3. Set up 2 markets where the scissors will be purchased and the crowns will be sold. Two facilitators will run the market and speak another language (real or not). Give the market facilitators the rules of operation, but these rules will not be communicated to the participants. Participants will have to try and figure out the rules.
4. Allow participants to play the game and create their crowns. Facilitators should remain in character and make it as realistic as possible. Facilitators may modify and change the rules at will.
5. Once a set amount of time has lapsed, end the simulation and discuss the results.

**Notes:** A major aspect of the type of culture shock simulated in this game is its sneaky nature. In real life, people often are not aware of the differences between the other group and their own group until the differences sneak up on them. To simulate this element, the differences are kept hidden from the players; no elaborate scenario is provided at the beginning of the activity. Only as the activity unfolds, and especially during the debriefing process, do the real-world analogies emerge.

The game helps its players understand that unless they recognize and respect the different assumptions underlying their interactions, they run into interpersonal conflicts. This insight – that cultural differences may bring more of a “clash” when hidden amidst apparent similarities and therefore unexpected and unprepared for – is a source of the rich follow-up discussion the game generates among its players.

## Discussion

During this activity, participants may have experienced some strong anger, frustration, sadness, or pride. Encourage participants to recall what was going through their minds and how they felt.

- What were your greatest frustrations and/or successes?
- What did you think of the people you were playing with?
- What did you notice? How did this make you feel?
- How do you think you can cope and support each other as you face these challenges, similar to what you just experienced, throughout your journey together?

Some possible principles this game may illustrate:

- When we notice a violation of a rule, we tend to attribute it to ignorance, lack of skill, disrespectful nature, etc. of others. Persistence of such violations tends to elicit suspicions of dishonesty.
- Expectations and prejudices contribute to our reactions to rule violations (assumptions)
- It can take a long time for people to figure out that there is another (legitimate) set of rules in operation.
- Friction between those who are “different” is made worse by communication difficulties – language barriers
- People are easily embarrassed when they have to use non-conventional means of communication.

Participants are likely to share their problems/frustrations, and insights they encountered during the simulation. These are some prompts to aid discussion:

- During the game, all did their best, but each group was operating out of a different set of circumstances and ground rules
- Many discovered or suspected that the rules were different, but didn't always know how they were different
- Even if people knew how the rules were different, they didn't always know what to do to bridge the differences
- Communicating with others across difference is difficult; it demands sensitivity and creativity
- When the differences are very few or hidden, it may be even more difficult to bridge them than when they are many and obvious
- In spite of many similarities, people have differences in the way they do things.
- Each one of us carries around a set of "rules" upon which we operate. When our "rules" are in conflict with those of others around us and we have no way of talking about what is going on, then tension may arise.

**Ways of Coping:** It is important to end the simulation by coming up with ways that participants can cope, either individually, or as a group, when these feelings arise during the trip. Possible methods of coping:

- Daily debrief discussions as a group
- Writing in a journal
- Establishing a 'safe word' to indicate to others you are feeling frustrated
- Allowing time to 'recharge' – either alone or relaxing with others
- Getting fresh air or exercise

# Market Exchange Instruction Cards

## Orange Team

You must create crowns for your business. Each crown can be sold for additional supplies at the “market”. We have provided you with some starter materials; however you may not have everything you need in order to fulfill your orders. You may trade, barter or sell with other groups to acquire the missing materials.

One entrepreneur in your town has a monopoly on one crucial item. She has published prices for the services.

The goal of your business is to create more crowns than other groups and to “sell” the most at market for a prize at the end of the business day. Use your best negotiating skills to help your group ‘win’.

**GOAL:** You must create a crown with 7 peaks which has 2 red stars, 3 green dots and one staple

---

## Red Team

You must create crowns for you business. Each crown can be sold for additional supplies at the “market”. We have provided you with some starter materials; however you may not have everything you need in order to fulfill your orders. You may trade, barter or sell with other groups to acquire the missing materials.

One entrepreneur in your town has a monopoly on one crucial item. She has published prices for the services.

The goal of your business is to create more crowns than other groups and to “sell” the most at market for a prize at the end of the business day. Use your best negotiating skills to help your group ‘win’.

**GOAL:** You must create a crown with 6 peaks which has 1 yellow star, 3 blue dots, one green dot and one staple

---

## **Blue team**

You must create crowns for your business. Each crown can be sold for additional supplies at the “market”. We have provided you with some starter materials; however you may not have everything you need in order to fulfill your orders. You may trade, barter or sell with other groups to acquire the missing materials.

One entrepreneur in your town has a monopoly on one crucial item. She has published prices for the services.

The goal of your business is to create more crowns than other groups and to “sell” the most at market for a prize at the end of the business day. Use your best negotiating skills to help your group ‘win’.

**GOAL:** You must create a crown with 5 peaks, which has 3 green stars, 1 red star, 2 red dots and 2 staples.

---

---

## STAPLER STATION

For each staples, charge

- 1 blue dot or 1 red star
- 1 red dot
- A curtsy for each staple.

(according to the sign, but you may arbitrarily change the rules at some point)

---

# Price List

1 STAPLE =

1 X blue  OR Red 

1 X Red 

1 X curtsy

*Prices subject to change*

## Market 1

### Rules:

- **Sell Scissors for 3 green dots**
- Don't speak the same language as the participants
- Boys get paid more for their crowns than girls
- Participants must hand the crown over with **their left hand**. Take great offense when someone tries to hand it to you with their right hand.
- Crowns sold in bulk fetch a better price than individually sold crowns.

	<b>Orange Team</b>	<b>Red Team</b>	<b>Blue</b>
<b>Crown</b>	7 peaks 2 red stars 3 green dots <u>One staple</u>	6 peaks 1 yellow star 3 blue dots 1 green dot 1 staple	5 peaks, 3 green stars, 1 red star, 2 red dots 2 staples
<b>Payment</b>	1 yellow star 2 green dots 2 red dots	1 red star 2 green stars 3 blue dots	2 yellow stars 2 green stars 2 green dots 1 red star

## Market 2

### Rules:

- Don't speak the same language as the participants
- Girls get paid more for their crowns than boys
- Participants must hand the crown over with **their right hand**. Take great offense when someone tries to hand it to you with their left hand.
- Crowns sold in bulk fetch a better price than individually sold crowns.

	<b>Orange Team</b>	<b>Red Team</b>	<b>Blue</b>
<b>Crown</b>	7 peaks 2 red stars 3 green dots <u>One staple</u>	6 peaks 1 yellow star 3 blue dots 1 green dot 1 staple	5 peaks, 3 green stars, 1 red star, 2 red dots 2 staples
<b>Payment</b>	1 yellow star 2 green dots 2 red dots	1 red star 2 green stars 3 blue dots	2 yellow stars 2 green stars 2 green dots 1 red star