

The Magic Hat

A communication and creativity project to promote accepting, valuing and passing on. Involving 3 or more geographically and/or organisationally disparate groups. Improving staff buy in, efficiency and satisfaction.

Outcomes:

Geographically and/or organisationally disparate groups share creativity with each other, forming links across departmental and social barriers.

Greater communication and understanding between groups:

After completing the project participants will be able to

- identify individuals in other departments/ offices
- accept and value others work for it's positive aspects
- see their own contribution in context with the larger work
- appreciate the development their work may go through when handed on to others
- communicate across departmental and geographical boundaries more efficiently and effectively
- use creative thinking to find resolutions
- empathise with colleagues in other areas
- avoid classic misunderstandings arising from 'them and us' mentalities having engaged in a more multi-team oriented activity
- call on their shared history with other groups

Participants will also develop improved presentation skills and confidence.

Increased acceptance of others input		improved buy in for projects and processes
Increased readiness to exchange information	<i>leading to</i>	higher efficiency and error detection
Increased willingness to report back		more useful feedback and greater satisfaction in completed tasks

What:

Involving 3 or more geographically and/or organisationally disparate groups.

Each group creates a fictional character or characters then passes them on to another group.

Each group creates a fictional location or setting then passes them on to a different other group.

All groups now create a story inspired by and including the character, the location they have been given and incorporating the magic hat being received, valued and passed on.

The handover of characters and landscapes is done by the creators who can answer questions and fill in extra details, this personalises the transfer and reinforces the links between the groups.

All groups share their final pieces with each other.

Facilitation:

It is expected that each group will receive the workshops separately, local to themselves to minimise disruption, room costs, transport etc.

All groups will have to come together for the final sharing and evaluation

Each group takes part in a number of separate sessions:

- An introductory workshop – Local ½ day
- A character creation session - Local ½ day
- Passing on their created character(s) to another group – Working out the best way to do this is part of the exercise and will be addressed at the end of the character creation session. Some groups may need an additional hour to prepare material for transfer and between 10 minutes and half an hour to carry out the transfer. This will not require the facilitators presence.
- Receiving a character created by a different other group – each group may choose a different way to pass on information so this may not be the reverse of the above.
- A location creation session - Local ½ day
- Passing on their created location to another group - as above, changes may be made to the transfer method in the light of previous experience.
- Receiving a location created by a different other group – see above
- Two story creation session(s) Local 2 x ½ day
- The final story sharing & evaluations day – Central ½ - 1 day (dependent on numbers)
- Local evaluation session (optional)

If preferred it can be delivered as a four day residential course to all groups simultaneously where the total number of participants is less than 25.

Why Magic Hat?

The Magic Hat is a device through which the concept of sharing (accepting, valuing, passing on) becomes intrinsic to the stories and the nature of the project.

Each story features a magic hat.

- The protagonist may or may not know it's a magic hat, they may find out or they may never suspect.
- The hat performs some act of subtle or blatant magic which effects the outcome of the story.
- Each protagonist acquires the hat, has one adventure with the hat and separates from the hat.

This reflects the experiences of the participants.

Summary:

Each participant experiences:

- Creating
- Letting go of their creation
- Receiving others creation
- Valuing others creation
- Adding to others creation
- Sharing the results

Via the device of The Magic Hat, these experiences of sharing (accepting, valuing, passing on) are incorporated within the story that they create and tell, reinforcing the exercise.

Communication between geographically and/or organisationally disparate groups is improved increasing staff buy in, efficiency and satisfaction.