

Debriefing Strategies

See Our [Forum](#) to Share Your Strategies for Debriefing

Debriefing is an important part of team building activities which allows students to process and reflect on their experience. The debrief should be facilitated by the instructor, with students taking control of their learning and leading the discussions.

Intrapersonal Benefits

- Confidence
- Self-concept
- Leadership skills
- Reflective thinking skills
- Willingness to take risks

Interpersonal Benefits

- Cooperation
- Communication skills
- Trust in others
- Sharing of decision making
- Problem solving skills

The Process

The What

Students describe the events that transpired during the activity.

- What happened? And then...?
- How did you feel or think when ...?
- How are you feeling about it now?

So What

Students explain what they feel they learned from the experience.

- What did you notice?
- What was that important?
- What was the main point of the activity?
- How did you work with your team?
- When were you really effective? At your best?
- Why do you think that?

Now What

Students explain how they can apply what they learned from the activity in different situations.

- Have you experienced this type of situation before? When?
- What did you learn?
- What would you do different?
- How does this relate to outside the classroom?
- How will you use what you learned in this activity?

Strategies for the Teacher

- Choose a goal for the activity.
- Take notes and record what you hear during the activity.
- Use "stop actions" in the midst of a challenge for groups to stop, look around, and identify what is working or what is not working?
- Everyone sits in a circle, including the facilitator (teacher).
- Give students plenty of time to think about the question.
- Allow the students to drive the discussion.
- Each person participates at their comfort level.

Strategies for the Students

- Avoid judging the answers as right or wrong and be aware of your body language.
- What is spoken in the group stays in the group.
- One person speaks at a time without interruptions.
- Put downs are not permitted.
- Active listening is important.
- Ask for clarifications if you are unsure of someone's response.
- Piggyback off of each others' ideas.
- Be encouraging and disagree constructively.

Questions to Facilitate Discussion

- What do you think about that?
- Tell me more about...
- Can you give me an example...
- How do you feel about that?
- Ask about a specific part of the activity
- Do you agree with what X said? Why?
- Does anyone want to add anything to what X said?

Questions for Student Observers

- What did you notice that perhaps the participants did not?
- Any "big picture" observations?
- How would you rate the group's teamwork?

Debriefing Techniques

Thumbs Up, Thumbs to the Side, and Thumbs Down

Rate how the group (or you) did, and explain why you rated it that way.



Yard Stick or Ruler

Each student shows how they rated the activity by touching a number on the ruler and sharing why they touched that number.



Traffic Light

Each student chooses either the red, yellow, or green light to represent what they thought about the activity and then explains why. Green light = full speed ahead, amber = proceed with caution, red = stop!



Headliners

The students create a headline about the activity that they just completed.



One word

Students use one word to characterize how the group conducted itself. You can use the answers to create a [word cloud](#).

Complete the Sentence

When we were doing the activity I felt...

I AM GLAD THAT I...

Crumpled Paper

Students write anything they want about the activity, themselves, or the group and throws it into the center circle. After mixing up the crumpled papers, everyone takes a piece of paper and reads it aloud to the group.



Apple and Onion

An Apple is a positive comment about themselves, a group member the group, or the activity. An Onion is something they did not like about the experience.



Faces

Pass around laminated sheets and each student will choose one picture that represents how they currently feel or how they felt during the activity.



Beach Ball

Write questions on a beach ball. Throw the ball to whoever wants it. The person who catches the ball answers whichever question is closest to them.



Rocks

Pass around a bag of rocks and tell students to take as many as they want from the bag. After each student has at least one rock, tell them that for each rock they took they will explain one thing about the activity to the group.

4 Corners

After a statement is read, each participant moves to a corner labeled as strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Feeling/Chiji/Expression Cards

Students choose a card that best represents an experience, feeling, thought, or emotion that they had during the activity.

Each person will show their card and share what it represents to them. The cards can be pictures, quotes, etc.



- If you could pick an object to represent the group, which one would it be?
- Using the cards, create a story representative of how the group communicated, functioned as a team, resolved conflict, etc...
- Lay out the cards and ask the group to come to agreement on three cards that represent three important skills they used in the activity.

