



SYP Tool: Show Respect

Title: Yes And

Objective: Participants will practice a strategy to help build on new ideas/comments instead of pointing out what is wrong with the idea.

Setup: New ideas are shot down during meetings or conversations with the inclusion of the word "but". People think that they are helping the other person out by pointing out what is wrong with their message instead of trying to build on their idea. "Firehosing" is common in most meetings and this can kill new ideas/discussion and leave the speaker feeling disrespected.

The "Yes, but" syndrome is entirely counterproductive. It allows people to focus on why something can't work instead of focusing on building ideas. Use the "Yes and" improv technique to help the team learn how to respect each other's ideas and comments.

Activity: Have one person set the scene. For example, "What a hot and miserable day to be a ranch hand." Following the "Yes and" method, the second person will accept the premise and add onto the situation. For example, "Yes and the boss said we don't get any water until this fence is mended."

Summary: After working on "Yes And" exercises, participants ultimately learn how to embrace ideas and concepts offered by fellow team members without using the "yes, but" language. You don't actually need to say the words "Yes and" for the system to work. Simply affirm what the person is saying and allow it to build to a new idea.

Debrief:

- Do you hear more "yes, but" or "yes, and" phases in our meetings?
- What is the impact of "yes, but" on the speaker? The team? What is the impact of "yes, and" on the speaker? On the whole team?
- If you hear more "yes, but" what can we do to change it to more "yes, and"?