

## **SPARKLE® Coaching Game**

### **Game Description**



The game follows the stages of the SPARKLE® coaching process model in order to inspire participants to come up with new ideas to their dilemma and find creative ways to resolving problems.

#### **Preparation:**

All players and the Game Master sit around the table. The Game Master explains the basic idea of the game and which variation (individual, shared problem or team/organization focus) will be played. Some ground rules:

- All players are equal. The Game Master does not participate in the game, s/he is only to facilitate the process.
- "One at a time": while one is speaking, all the others listen – always.
- Brainstorming without criticism: when gathering ideas, no judgements are to be made. Even the craziest-sounding idea is captured and may prove to be beneficial in the final solution.

The Game Master prepares the stacks of cards sorted by letters and the other game components:

- 3 wooden blocks (2 silver and 1 black)
- 1 wooden arch (red)
- 2 pawns (1 white, 1 black)

A flipchart with markers is also needed for documentation.

#### **Stage 1: "Situation" – Ice breaking**

Based on the decision of the Game Master, the player from the right or left starts by drawing a card from the stack marked „S". The player reads out the question loud and answers it for him/herself. Then the next player answers the same question and so on, until all or minimum 5 players answered. If there are more than 5 players, then after the first 5 the Game Master asks the rest of the players who else would like to answer the same question. This stage ends when all the players have drawn one card.

## **Stage 2: "Positioning" – Constructing together (4 constructing steps)**

The Game Master decides who is going to start this round.

The starting player draws a card from the stack marked "P". The player reads out the question on the card loud and answers it for him/herself. Then the next player answers the same question and so on, until all or minimum 5 players answered. If there are more than 5 players, then after the first 5 the Game Master asks the rest of the players who else would like to answer the same question.

Each player has the right to pass if s/he cannot or does not want to answer. After discussing the question, the player who drew the card starts constructing the building.

The building will be constructed using 3 wooden blocks (2 silver and 1 black) and an arch (red), arranged in any layout the players create for themselves. The arch must be the last piece added to the building. There is no particular order for the 3 wooden blocks, although participants will typically reconstruct the classical staircase.

Up to 5 players, each player draws one card; above 5 players the Game Master decides who will be the next player (for example: using a dice or ball). After discussing each question, the player who drew the card can construct the next part of the building.

This stage of the game ends when the 3 wooden blocks and the arch are laid out on the table as the game field.

The importance of this part of the game is to have a clear understanding of the SMART goals for the group.

### **Selection**

Using the players' different SMART goals they must decide which one will be addressed during the next stages. If they are unable to get an agreement within reasonable time, then the Game Master intervenes to make the choice.

Starting from now, for the rest of the game the Game Master will ask the questions and the players will be the supporter of the white pawn that represents them on the game field. The white pawn must be first placed at the "start" of the game field, in front of the first wooden block.

The players together must summarize in one short sentence the topic chosen, write it down on a flipchart or board and place it in a way so that everybody can see it during the game.

After the Selection process, the unselected other topics/SMART goals will be captured and saved for later work.

## **Stage 3: "Alternatives" (6 steps)**

In this stage, the Game Master draws one card from the stack marked "A" and s/he reads out what is on the card: this can be a question or a task to complete. The players answer the question one by one as before or pass if they feel it is not relevant to them. The Game Master notes down the answers on a flipchart in a way that all players can see it.

After each answered card the white pawn is moved ahead one step at a time on the wooden blocks until it reaches the last wooden block before the arch.

This is the end of the Alternatives stage.

Some of the "A" cards have a Black Pawn mark. This represents a setback for the team and the black pawn must be placed in front of the white pawn. The players answer the question on the card as before but they cannot move the white pawn further on the game field until they answered the next question from a new card. Then the black pawn can be removed from the game field and the white pawn can move further on towards the arch.

#### **Stages 4 & 5: "Route" (3 steps) & "Key Obstacles"**

The Game Master draws a card from the stack marked "R". As before, the question should be read out loud and answered by the players. There is a possibility to pass as before.

The aim of this stage is to choose the best possible alternative from the previous stage. The Game Master might help here but only by asking questions. The Game Master helps to visualize (may use color markers, etc.) the results of the discussion on the notes that have been taken during the previous stage.

After each question is answered the white pawn moves one step ahead. Black Pawn cards as key obstacles also exist in this stage and must be played the same way as in the previous stage.

This stage finishes when the white pawn reaches the 3<sup>rd</sup> spot on the last wooden block.

#### **Stage 6: "Leverage" (1 step)**

The Game Master draws a card from the stack marked "L" and reads it out loud. The players take turns answering the question or accomplishing the task. The players can pass but then a new card should be drawn.

Upon answering the card, the white pawn moves to the top of the Arch. (no Black Pawn card in this stage)

#### **Stage 7: "Evaluation" (1 step)**

The player who started the game draws one card from the stack marked "E", reads it out loud and all the players answer it.

At the end of the game the Game Master gives to each player a "To Do" card and the players should make notes for the alternatives they like the best or what should be done to achieve the goal, etc. After completing the To Do card, all the players evaluate the game and give feedback on its usefulness: what developments they achieved, what are the most important outcome(s) of the day, etc.

The Game Master facilitates a debrief session to summarize the next steps the participants should take and thanks all the players for the game.