

PRACTICAL ADVICE CARD GAMES



improving performance playfully

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Workshops by Thiagi, Inc.
4423 East Trailridge Road
Bloomington, IN 47408
USA

www.thiagi.com

+1 812.332.1478

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Contents

Part 1. Background

Two Basic Ideas	1
15 Reasons for Playing Practical Advice Card Games	3
25 Practical Advice Card Decks	5
20 Different Games To Play	8

Part 2. Facilitation Guide for the Games

1. ACTION PLANS	10
2. CHAT	14
3. CLUSTERING	17
4. COLLABORATIVE CLASSIFICATION	20
5. DRAMA	25
6. EXPLAIN AND APPLY	28
7. EXPLAIN AND DECIDE	30
8. HEADLINES	32
9. MINGLE	34
10. ONE A WEEK	37
11. ORIGINAL OR NEW?	40
12. PRECAUTIONS	43
13. SIMILAR AND DIFFERENT	45
14. SINGLE	49
15. SUITS	51
16. SWEET SIXTEEN	53
17. TEACHING AND LEARNING	55
18. THIRTY-FIVE	58

19. TIME TRAVEL61
20. TRIPLE FILTER64

Part 3. Invitation for Collaboration

Eight Ways You Can Help Us67

Two Basic Ideas

Practical advice card games are based on two basic ideas:

1. Don't read too much.
2. Play games with what you have read.

Don't Read Too Much

On the topic of leadership, I have read nearly 20,000 pages from books, research reports, case studies, questionnaires, job aids, and articles. However, they were all less useful than a recent tweet that I read. This tweet said, *Walk the talk. Behave in ways that you want your followers to behave.*

Pithy pieces of practical advice can be more useful than lengthy treatises. Based on my experience related to a variety of interpersonal skills, I am tempted to give you this piece of practical advice:

Don't read hefty books and count the number principles that you have mastered. Instead, master a few principles and make them count.

Play Meaningful Games

One of the reasons that authors provide voluminous content is their fear of learners misusing, abusing, or overusing brief pieces of advice. However, smart learners like you and me can reflect on the piece of advice and figure out how to apply it.

How do we encourage smart learners to reflect on a piece of practical advice? In the words of my smart friend Andy Kimball, we need *Genuine Alternatives to Mindless Explanations*. If you contract this phrase into an acronym, you get **GAME**.

Recently I have developed games that require and reward players to read brief pieces of advice, reflect on them, and share their insights. These games require the players to discuss, analyze, compare, evaluate, arrange, select, apply, and modify the pieces of advice.



About This Book

The games in this book incorporate a deck of cards on a specific interpersonal skill (such as *leadership, feedback, coaching, or teamwork*). Each card in the deck presents an actionable suggestion. These games may involve 1 to 100 players and last for 5 minutes to 52 weeks. All the games involve the players reflecting on each piece of advice and sharing their insights with each other.

And here's my parting piece of practical advice about these games:

Learn a game by playing it, not by reading about it.



15 Reasons for Playing Practical Advice Card Games

Here are 15 reasons why you should play (and facilitate) practical advice card games:

1. **Solid, valid content.** We did not make up the pieces of advice off the top of our head. Instead, we reviewed several books and training packages and selected the most useful pieces of advice on each training topic. We also talked to subject-matter experts and practitioners in the field. Most pieces of advice are based on empirical evidence.
2. **Variety of topics.** The decks of cards deal with key competencies related to popular corporate training sessions. We are continuing our needs analysis and collecting of validated pieces of advice on additional topics.
3. **Open approach.** The pieces of advice are not limited to a specific book or a proprietary model. Instead, these tips leverage what the players may have learned from a variety of books they read, training sessions they attended, and experiences they have accumulated. The games encourage mutual learning from a diverse group of players.
4. **Practical nature.** All pieces of advice involve specific actionable ideas. They are not abstract theoretical constructs or philosophical principles.
5. **Self-contained ideas.** The piece of advice on each card can be immediately implemented to produce measurable results. You don't have to master a comprehensive conceptual framework or a lengthy step-by-step procedure to achieve the desirable outcomes.
6. **Variety of games.** You can play several training games that incorporate the same deck of practical advice cards.
7. **Field-tested content and activities.** We have been working on the content on the cards and the activities in the training games for the past 14 years. We have tried out and improved all components of this system in several workshops around the world.



8. **Comprehensive processing.** The key activities in the training games require the players to examine each piece of advice from different angles. The players discuss, analyze, compare, evaluate, arrange, select, apply, and modify the pieces of advice. They also figure out the costs and benefits of implementing the piece of advice and discover how to reduce the disadvantages and increase the advantages.
9. **Any number can play.** The set of practical advice card games can accommodate different numbers of player from 1 to 100+. The games can be used from individual coaching to large-group planning sessions.
10. **From rapid to reflective.** The time required for the play of these games vary from 10 minutes to 52 weeks. You can select the best game to suit your schedule.
11. **Player friendly.** All practical advice card games have been repeatedly play-tested with groups of players around the world. They have been continuously revised to improve their relevance, flexibility, simplicity, efficiency, and intellectual stimulation.
12. **Facilitator friendly.** The facilitators' manual is designed for effective use by the trainer. Each game is described in a step-by-step fashion using our structured text approach that clearly specifies the purpose of the game, number of participants, time requirements, supplies, room set up, and preparation.
13. **Companion website.** We have established a website with updates and enhancements of the practical advice card games. This web site will also contain lists of recommended books, instructions for new games, modifications and variations of the existing games, and tips for facilitators.
14. **Same game, different content.** Once you learn how to conduct any of the games with cards that deal with a specific topic (such as *motivation techniques*), you will discover that the same game can be used with practical advice cards that deal with other topics. From the player's point of view, they leverage learning the game to learning from the game.
15. **Reinforced by another deck of cards.** Each topic in the practical advice decks will have a companion deck of cards (sold separately) with an entirely different type of content and with different play activities. You can use these decks (called *Fluency Cards*) to strengthen the understanding, analysis, and recall of the different topics.



25 Practical Advice Card Decks

1. **Building Trust.** How to rapidly increase and improve your trustworthiness and maintain it over a long period of time.
Sample piece of advice: *Admit your mistakes as soon as you become aware of them.*
2. **Change Leadership.** How to systematically implement organizational change in a sustainable fashion.
Sample piece of advice: *Appeal to hearts and minds. Create change-related messages that unite ideas with emotion.*
3. **Coaching for Performance.** How to improve the performance of your employees and team members.
Sample piece of advice: *Take notes either during or immediately after the coaching session.*
4. **Conducting Job Interviews.** How to discover the best candidate for a job through effective, objective, and behavioral interviewing.
Sample piece of advice: *Encourage the candidate to use the problem-action-results structure to frame the responses. If necessary, summarize his or her first response using this structure.*
5. **Conflict Management.** How to handle a conflict to produce a collaborative win-win outcome.
Sample piece of advice: *Collaboration creates synergy. Employ a collaborative approach when you require creative solutions.*
6. **Critical Thinking.** How to identify — and remove — cognitive biases, logical fallacies, and illogical arguments that distort objective reality.
Sample piece of advice: *Be skeptical about the "everyone-does-it" argument. The stupidity of the crowds sometimes exceeds the wisdom of crowds.*
7. **Customer Service.** How to delight your customers through outstanding service.
Sample piece of advice: *Always think "How can I do more?" when a customer asks for help. Never think "How can I make a profit from this?"*
8. **Facilitation Techniques.** How to effectively facilitate a group to identify and achieve desirable goals.
Sample piece of advice: *Use this standard sequence: Open the session, discuss the agenda, establish ground rules, generate ideas, make decisions, and debrief the participants.*



9. **More Facilitation Techniques.** How to effectively facilitate a group to identify and achieve desirable goals.
Sample piece of advice: *The main task of the facilitator is to ensure full participation by every member of the group in every discussion and in every decision.*
10. **Feedback Techniques.** How to give — and receive — effective feedback and how to benefit from the feedback given to you.
Sample piece of advice: *Give feedback, not advice. If the other person asks for advice, start a collaborative problem solving conversation.*
11. **Influencing Others.** How to persuade others to support your ideas and goals.
Sample piece of advice: *A successful pitch may cause decision makers to believe that they came up with the idea. That's exactly the outcome you want.*
12. **Leadership Skills.** How to improve the process of inspiring your followers to achieve common goals.
Sample piece of advice: *Ask — and answer — these questions about yourself: What are your core values? Beliefs? Visions? Goals? Strengths? Motives? Know yourself before you lead the others.*
13. **Leading Innovation.** How to encourage your employees to come up with innovative products and processes.
Sample piece of advice: *Conduct **Failure Celebrations** and distribute **Great Mistakes Awards** for the errors that generate most learning.*
14. **Listening Skills.** How to listen effectively, empathetically, and critically.
Sample piece of advice: *Avoid multitasking. Don't check your email, send text messages, read a book, surf the Internet, or watch the TV. Close the book and turn off all electronic devices.*
15. **Making Workplace Connections.** How to relate to others in the workplace and achieve mutual goals.
Sample piece of advice: *Acquire and reveal your sense of humor. Laugh with others, not at others. Be ready to poke fun at yourself.*
16. **Management Essentials.** How to improve the performance of employees and help the organization achieve its mission.
Sample piece of advice: *Identify skill gaps among team members and develop an efficient action plan for closing them. Invest in training and development.*



17. **Managing Globally.** How to work with people from different countries and cultures.
Sample piece of advice: *Be brief. Talking too much to make the other person understand you usually backfires and creates more confusion.*
18. **Motivation Techniques.** How to achieve desired results by inspiring your employees.
Sample piece of advice: *Discover what the employee thinks is the purpose of his or her job. Do this through open-minded conversations.*
19. **Negotiation Skills.** How to negotiate effective and ethically.
Sample piece of advice: *Identify all issues that are relevant to the negotiation. Include such factors as the price, warranty, service support, quality, features, financing, and delivery date.*
20. **Small-Talk Techniques.** How to improve your social networking through conversational skills.
Sample piece of advice: *Start the small talk with interesting and nonthreatening topics such as weather, traffic, TV, books, or hobbies.*
21. **Personal Effectiveness.** How to increase your productivity.
Sample piece of advice: *Effectiveness is measured by output value against effort. So figure out how to increase the output value and to decrease the level of effort.*
22. **Presentation Skills.** How to make an effective and inspiring presentation to instruct and influence the audience members.
Sample piece of advice: *Be playful. Incorporate games and activities in your presentation.*
23. **Teamwork Techniques.** How to organize and facilitate high-performance teams.
Sample piece of advice: *Make sure that the team has a clear and worthwhile goal. Make sure that the team members agree that this goal is clear and worthwhile.*
24. **Training Techniques.** How to design and deliver effective and engaging training.
Sample piece of advice: *Set up the training room to encourage teamwork and discussion. Arrange the seats around tables. Avoid theater seating.*
25. **Workplace Civility.** How to replace rudeness, bullying, and harassment with politeness, charm, and kindness.
Sample piece of advice: *Don't laugh off an offensive comment. Instead, have a private conversation with the offender and discuss your reactions to the comments.*



20 Different Games to Play.

1. **ACTION PLANS.** 8 or more players, 30 to 60 minutes.
Objective: Identify action steps involved in implementing a piece of practical advice.
2. **CHAT.** 3 to 50 players, 12 to 30 minutes.
Objective: Discuss a piece of advice from different perspectives.
3. **CLUSTERING.** 6-30 players, 20 to 40 minutes.
Objective: Arrange a set of practical advice cards in logical categories.
4. **COLLABORATIVE CLASSIFICATION.** 3 to 7 players, 40 to 60 minutes.
Objective: Classify a set of activities according to their usefulness.
5. **DRAMA.** 6 to 42 players, 30 to 60 minutes.
Objective: Apply a piece of practical advice.
6. **EXPLAIN AND APPLY.** 3 to 51 players, 12 to 30 minutes.
Objective: Explain a piece of practical advice and give an example of its application.
7. **EXPLAIN AND DECIDE.** 9 to 100 players, 20 to 40 minutes.
Objective: Compare different pieces of advice and select the most useful one.
8. **HEADLINES.** 3 to 28 players. 4 minutes (for each round).
Objective: Write a meaningful and memorable headline for a piece of advice.
9. **MINGLE.** 12 to 100 players, 20 to 30 minutes.
Objective: Review, compare, and evaluate pieces of practical advice.
10. **ONE A WEEK.** 1 to 100 players, 20 to 30 minutes each day of the week for 52 weeks.
Objective: Enhance the implementation of each practical piece of advice.
11. **ORIGINAL OR NEW?** 2 or more players, 20 to 45 minutes.
Objective: Write an original piece of practical advice.
12. **PRECAUTIONS.** 3 to 102 players, 15 to 30 minutes.
Objective: Improve the positive outcomes (and reduce the negative outcomes) of implementing a piece of advice.



13. **SIMILAR AND DIFFERENT.** 3 or more players, 20 to 30 minutes.
Objective: Identify similarity and differences among different pieces of practical advice.
14. **SINGLE.** 5 or more players, 15 to 30 minutes.
Objective: Identify the single best piece of practical advice.
15. **SUITS.** 8 or more players, 20 to 30 minutes.
Objective: Select the most useful pieces of practical advice.
16. **SWEET SIXTEEN.** 12 or more players, 15 to 20 minutes.
Objective: Evaluate 16 pieces of practical advice and select the best one.
17. **TEACHING AND LEARNING.** 4 to 100 players, 20 to 30 minutes.
Objective: Teach and learn as many pieces of practical advice as possible.
18. **THIRTY-FIVE.** 6 to 100 players, 20 to 30 minutes.
Objective: Identify the most useful pieces of advice.
19. **TIME TRAVEL.** 4-30 players, 30 to 45 minutes.
Objective: Imagine and share long-term results of applying a piece of practical advice.
20. **TRIPLE FILTER.** 1 to 100 players, 10 to 15 minutes.
Objective: Select pieces of advice that can be easily implemented in a variety of situations to produce high impact outcomes.



ACTION PLANS

Selecting a suitable piece of practical advice is just the first step. Before implementing it, you have to come up with a plan. This activity helps people experience the steps in action planning.

Synopsis

Two teams independently identify the main tasks and subtasks involved in applying a specific piece of practical advice. Later, the teams present their action plans. Two other teams decide which plan is more useful.

Purpose

To identify action steps involved in implementing a piece of practical advice.

Participants

Minimum: 8

Maximum: Any number

Best: 20 to 28

Time

30 minutes to an hour

Supplies

- ❖ Practical advice cards
- ❖ Sheets of flipchart paper
- ❖ Felt-tipped pens
- ❖ Post-It® notes
- ❖ Timer
- ❖ Whistle



Flow

Divide the participants into four teams. Each team should have at least two members and not more than seven members. The teams should be of approximately equal size.

Brief the participants. Explain that before implementing any piece of practical advice, we need to conduct a task analysis and come up with an action plan. In this activity, two teams will analyze the same piece of practical advice and come up with an action plan. The other two teams will decide which action plan is more useful.

Distribute practical advice cards and other supplies. Give the same practical advice card to the first two teams and another card to the remaining two teams. Also give each team a sheet of flipchart paper, a felt-tipped marker, and a pad of Post-It® notes.

Ask the teams to identify the main tasks. Point out that a piece of practical advice may involve one or more main tasks that are fairly independent of each other. Ask the members of each team to identify these main tasks and write them on the sheet of flipchart paper. Suggest that they should identify at least one and not more than three main tasks. Suggest a suitable time limit for this activity.

Ask the teams to identify subtasks. At the end of the time limit, blow the whistle and suggest that the teams move to the next phase of the activity. Point out that each main task that they identified has a set of subtasks associated with it. Ask the members of each team to brainstorm these subtasks and write each of them on a Post-It® note. Ask the teams to stick these notes around each main task. Suggest a suitable time limit for this activity.

Ask the teams to prepare for a presentation. At the end of the time limit, blow the whistle and announce that it is time for show and tell. Ask each team to look at their flipchart-Post-It® -notes sheet and clean it up for a presentation in the form of an action plan. Announce a 2-limit time limit.

Ask the teams to present their action plans. Ask the first two teams to stay where they are and ask the other two teams to stand around the first team. Tell the first team to present its action plan within a 2-minute time limit. At the end of the presentation, ask all teams to move over to the second team. Tell this team to make its presentation. At the end of the second presentation, ask everyone to return to their team's location.



Award score points to the first two teams. Ask the members of the third and fourth teams to discuss the two presentations and to distribute 100 points between the two teams to reflect the relative usefulness of their action plans. Also ask each team to identify one effective element of each action plan and make one constructive suggestion on how to improve the action plan. After a suitable pause, ask Team 3 to present its feedback and to announce its score distribution. Repeat the same process with Team 4's feedback and score distribution

Repeat the procedure with the other teams. Ask Teams 3 and 4 to make their presentations to the first two teams who act as the audience members. Use the same feedback and scoring procedure to follow up these presentations.

Conclude the activity. Thank the teams for their task analysis and presentation of action plans. Point out that the participants can use the same type of analysis and action planning for implementing any practical advice that they have selected.

Play Sample

In a recent game, one of the cards selected from the Leading Innovation deck had this practical advice:

Establish graffiti walls for innovative ideas and invite all employees to contribute. Photograph and discuss these ideas every week. Then clean the wall and restart.

Here's what one of the two teams that worked on this piece of practical advice came up with:

Main Tasks:

- ❖ Establish a graffiti wall.
- ❖ Encourage employees to contribute ideas.
- ❖ Conduct weekly discussion of the ideas.

Subtasks:

Establish a graffiti wall

- ❖ Choose a suitable wall in a convenient and conspicuous location.
- ❖ Select a suitable innovation challenge.
- ❖ Write the challenge on top of the wall.



- ❖ Add suitable graphics.
- ❖ Write simple instructions on how to use the wall.
- ❖ Seed the wall with a few sample ideas.

Encourage employees to contribute their ideas

- ❖ Send out a job aid on how to come up with ideas and add them to the wall.
- ❖ Encourage employees to work with a partner or in a team.
- ❖ Ask participants to include their name with their idea.
- ❖ Keep a scorecard of number of ideas generated.
- ❖ Give a prize for the employee who contributed the most ideas.
- ❖ Give a prize for the employee who contributed the best idea.
- ❖ Give a prize to the employee who contributed the most out-of-the-box idea.

Conduct a weekly discussion of the ideas

- ❖ Take a digital photo of the wall.
- ❖ Prepare a printed list of ideas.
- ❖ Prepare a Powerpoint slide presenting each idea
- ❖ Conduct a meeting to discuss the ideas generated during the week.
- ❖ Select the best idea.
- ❖ Combine complementary ideas.
- ❖ Discuss how to implement the selected ideas.
- ❖ Decide whether we should continue with the same challenge or start a new challenge the next week.



CHAT

Reading and understanding a piece of advice is the first step in applying it. Discussing the piece of advice with your colleagues and evaluating it is the next step. This activity requires you to chat with your friends and rewards you for making valuable contributions.

Synopsis

Take turns to read a piece of practical advice from a card. Discuss it from different perspectives. Rank the contribution of each participant.

Purpose

To critically evaluate different pieces of practical advice.

Participants

Minimum: 3

Maximum: 52, divided into groups of three to six

Best: 10 to 30

Time

12 to 30 minutes, depending on the number of participants in each playgroup

Supplies

- ❖ A deck of *Practical Advice Cards*
- ❖ Copies of the handout, *Questions for Discussion*
- ❖ Small pieces of paper for ranking the players
- ❖ Pencils or pens



Flow

Brief the participants. Tell the participants that they are going to explore few pieces of practical advice. Rather than merely reading each piece of advice, the participants are going to discuss it in depth.

Distribute the practical advice cards. Explain that each card contains a piece of practical advice. Ask the participants to silently read the advice on the card and reflect on it.

Organize playgroups. Divide the participants into groups of three to six people.

Distribute the list of questions. Explain that these questions are designed to stimulate a conversation about the piece of advice on each card. Invite the participants to review these questions.

Start the first round. At each playgroup, ask the participants to identify one person to be the first *Listener*. Instruct this player to get the conversation started by reading the practical advice on his or her card. Announce a time limit and monitor the discussion.

Conclude the first round. At the end of the time limit, blow the whistle to conclude the first conversation. Ask the *Listener* to think back on the value of the contributions from the other players. On different slips of paper, ask the *Listener* to secretly write the numbers 1, 2, 3, ... to rank each participant according to the value of his or her contribution. Give an example: If there are four other players, the person who made the most valuable contribution is ranked 1 and the person who made the least valuable contribution is ranked 4. Ask the listener to fold these slips of paper and place them in front of the appropriate players.

Continue the conversations. In each playgroup, ask the player seated to the right of the previous *Listener* to assume the role of the new *Listener*. Continue the discussion and scoring procedures. Repeat the procedure to give all players an opportunity to be the *Listener*.

Conclude the last round. After everyone in each playgroup has had a chance to be the *Listener*, announce the end of the activity.

Identify the winner. Ask the participants to open the slips of paper and add the numbers. In each playgroup, the player with the *smallest* total is the winner. Identify these winners and congratulate them.



Questions for Discussion

1. How would you explain this piece of advice in your own words?
2. How would you explain this piece of advice to a 7-year old?
3. How would you motivate someone to use this piece of advice?
4. What personal examples do you have of the piece of advice in action?
5. Among your colleagues, who is already using this piece of advice?
6. What are the advantages of using this piece of advice?
7. How can this piece of advice be overused or abused?
8. What could be some dangers in applying this piece of advice?
9. How would you convert this piece of advice into an easy-to-recall slogan?



CLUSTERING

This activity involves classifying the practical advice cards in logical categories. In the process, participants become more familiar with the similarities and differences among different pieces of advice.

Synopsis

Two teams are given the same set of cards and asked to classify them in suitable clusters. Later, the participants from each team review how the other team classified the same set of cards.

Purpose

To arrange a set of practical advice cards into logical categories.

Participants

Minimum: 6

Maximum: 30

Best: 10 to 30

Time

20-40 minutes

Supplies

- ❖ Two decks of *Practical Advice Cards*
- ❖ Handout, *CLUSTERING Instructions*, one copy for each participant
- ❖ Blank index cards
- ❖ Countdown timer
- ❖ Whistle



Flow

Organize teams. Divide the participants into two or four teams, each with at least three members.

Brief participants. Distribute copies of instruction sheet to all participants. Ask them to read the instructions individually. After a suitable pause, clarify the instructions as needed.

Distribute the cards. If you have two teams, give one complete set of black cards (spades and clubs) to each team taken from the two different decks. If you have four teams, give black cards to two teams and red cards (hearts and diamonds) to the other two teams.

Coordinate the activity. Ask teams to begin organizing the 26 practical advice cards they received. Announce a suitable time limit. Move among the team observing the activities. Keep track of the time.

Conclude the activity. Blow the whistle at the end of the time limit. Ask teams to arrange their item cards and headings on the table and invite the participants to review other teams' clusters.

Debrief the activity. Discuss the similarities and differences among different teams' arrangement of the same content items. Also ask participants to reflect back on the activity and share their insights about the topic.



CLUSTERING Instructions

What To Do With the Practical Advice Cards

- ❖ Spread the cards on the table, printed side up.
- ❖ Stand around the table and silently read the pieces of advice on the cards.
- ❖ Sort the cards silently and independently. Place cards that have similar pieces of advice near each other. If a card contains a piece of advice that is different from the previous ones, place it away from the other cards.
- ❖ Review other participants' actions. Move cards from one location to another to improve the arrangement. However, do not talk to the other team members.
- ❖ Repeat the same sorting procedure with all cards.

What To Do After All Cards Have Been Sorted Out

- ❖ You may now talk to each other. Briefly discuss the arrangement with the other team members. Make suitable changes and improvements.
- ❖ Review the cards in each cluster. Come up with a suitable heading for the cluster. Write this heading on a blank index card and place it on top of the cluster.
- ❖ Count the total number of clusters.
- ❖ If you have fewer than five clusters, perhaps this is too few. Review the cluster with the most cards and split them into two different clusters. Write new heading cards for these clusters.
- ❖ If you have more than nine clusters, you have too many. Review the clusters with the fewest cards and combine them into a single cluster.
- ❖ Review the cards in each cluster and arrange them in some logical order.



COLLABORATIVE CLASSIFICATION

This activity requires a team to rate the usefulness of different pieces of practical advice. It also serves another purpose: Based on their experience in the activity, the participants learn how to communicate effectively and to provide equal opportunity to all team members.

Synopsis

Teams of participants classify 16 practical advice cards into seven categories related to the usefulness of the advice. Later, they reflect on the effectiveness of their joint decisionmaking and plan for better communication. They implement this plan by sorting another set of 16 cards.

Purpose

To sort a set of practical advice cards into seven categories related to the usefulness of each piece of advice.

To communicate more effectively, ensuring that all participants get equal opportunity.

Participants

Minimum: 3

Maximum: Any number, divided into teams of 3 to 7

Best: 10 to 30

Time

40 – 60 minutes

Supplies

- ❖ One deck of *Practical Advice Cards* for three teams
- ❖ Countdown timer
- ❖ Whistle



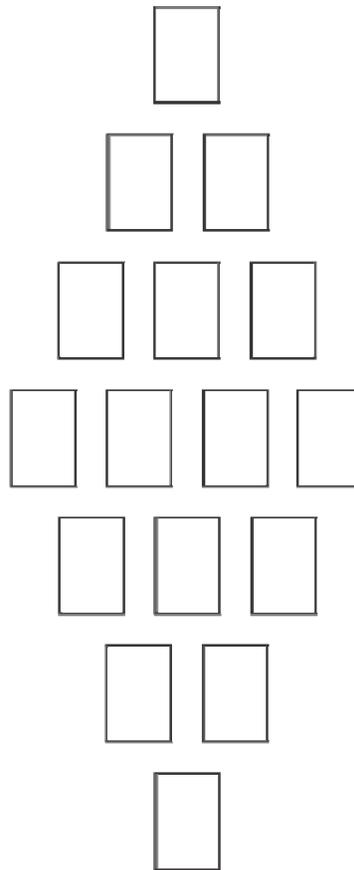
Flow

1. Get Ready

Organize teams. Divide the participants into two or more teams of three to seven members each.

Distribute practical advice cards. Deal 16 practical advice cards, one card at a time to each team member. Some participants may receive one more card than the others.

Explain the task to the participants. Working as a team, they should sort the 16 cards into seven categories related to their usefulness. The cards must be organized to form a diamond as shown in this figure:



Specify the details of each category:

- ❖ **Extremely useless.** Participants must choose the single card that is the *most useless*.
- ❖ **Useless.** Participants must choose two cards that are *useless*.
- ❖ **Somewhat useless.** Participants must choose three cards that are *slightly useless*.
- ❖ **Neutral.** Participants must choose four cards that are *neither useless nor useful*.
- ❖ **Somewhat useful.** Participants must choose three cards that are *slightly useful*.
- ❖ **Useful.** Participants must choose two cards that are *useful*.
- ❖ **Most useful.** Participants must choose the single card that is *most useful*.

2. Classify the cards

Sort the cards. Ask the participants to set up space for the seven categories. Tell them to take turns to read one card at a time, discuss it, and place it on the appropriate category. Encourage the participants to rearrange the cards as more items are added. Announce a 15-minute time limit for completing the task.

Conclude the task. At the end of 15 minutes, ask the teams to stop classifying the cards. Reassure them that it does not matter if the task is not completed.

3. Conduct the First Debrief

Ask and discuss the following types of questions:

- ❖ Are you happy with the way the cards have been classified into the seven categories? How satisfied are you with the final results?
- ❖ Do you think the team's collaborative decisions are superior to decisions that you could have made alone? Why do you think so?
- ❖ During the card classification activity, did your teammates listen to your ideas? Did you have sufficient opportunity to share your ideas?
- ❖ Do you feel that everyone was given equal opportunity to participate in the classification process?
- ❖ Do you think that some people have more expertise about the topic? Should they have been given more time than the others?



- ❖ Do you feel that some people have more expertise in facilitating group activities? Should they have been given a leadership role?
- ❖ Do you feel that some people have communication difficulties? How could we support these people?
- ❖ Could you have performed the card-sorting task more effectively if you used a systematic procedure? What steps should this procedure contain?
- ❖ People differ in their thinking styles and communication styles. How did these differences manifest themselves in your teamwork?

4. Plan for the next round.

Brief the teams. Inform the teams that you are going to give them another set of 16 cards. They have to repeat the process of classifying this new set of cards into same seven categories reflecting their usefulness.

Ask the teams to plan. Based on their previous experience and on the debriefing discussion, ask the team members to come up with a suitable procedure. Explain that their goal is to complete the classification task efficiently and to give all participants equal opportunity to share their ideas. Announce a time limit of 5 minutes to plan an appropriate procedure.

5. Classify another set of cards

Begin the second round. Distribute 16 cards, one card at a time to each participant as before. Announce a time limit of 15 minutes and ask the teams to get started.

6. Conduct the second debrief.

Conclude the session and discuss the procedure. At the end of 15 minutes, announce the end of the task. As before, reassure the teams that it does not matter if they have not completed the classification task. Ask and discuss the following types of questions:

- ❖ How satisfied are you with the results of this round? Are you more satisfied with the second round than with the first one? Why do you feel that way?
- ❖ Are you happier this time about the opportunities for equal participation?
- ❖ Did the planning before the activity help you become more effective?



- ❖ What were the major differences between the procedures used during this round and the earlier round?
- ❖ Could we make the procedure better? Is there a limit to how many times we can improve the procedure? Could we ever achieve an ideal procedure that will satisfy everyone's needs?



DRAMA

Asking the participants to roleplay a piece of practical advice cards is good way to understand the advice and to apply it. Instead of conducting the usual type of roleplay, this activity requires the participants to stage dramatic segments. DRAMA is highly motivating--probably because everybody loves to put on a play.

Synopsis

Different teams create and stage a dramatic segment incorporating key ideas from a piece of practical advice. One team does not produce a play but evaluates other teams' plays.

Purpose

To effectively apply a piece of practical advice.

Participants

Minimum: 6

Maximum: 42

Best: 16 to 30

Time Requirement

30 to 60 minutes, depending on the number of teams.

Supplies

- ❖ A deck of Practical Advice Cards
- ❖ Timer
- ❖ Whistle



Flow

Form teams. Divide participants into 3 to 6 teams, each with 2 to 7 members. Seat each team around a convenient table.

Explain the play-production task. Announce that the teams are competing to produce a 3-minute videotape for training people to apply a piece of practical advice. The immediate task for the audition today is for each team is to prepare a dramatic segment and to act it out. Announce a 5-minute preparation time.

Distribute practical advice cards. Give five random cards to each to each team. Explain that these are the concepts submitted by different scriptwriters. Invite each team to select one of the cards for producing the video.

Explain the evaluation task. The dramatic segment staged by each team will be evaluated along three dimensions:

- ❖ **Authenticity:** Is the segment realistic and believable?
- ❖ **Focus:** Does the segment emphasize key elements of the piece of practical advice?
- ❖ **Interest:** Does the segment attract and maintain audience attention?

Randomly select one of the teams. Explain that instead of playing the role of a production company, this team will play the role of a panel of drama critics. Ask the team to come up with a rating scale for comparing and evaluating different dramatic segments along the three dimensions that you identified.

Choose a card. Explain that the five cards given to each team are the concepts submitted by different scriptwriters. Invite each team to select one of these cards for producing the video.

Coordinate preparation activities. Start the timer. Let teams work on their own. Give a 2-minute warning at the end of 3 minutes. Blow a whistle at the end of 5 minutes to signal the end of the preparation time.

Stage the plays. Randomly select one of the teams. Ask this team to give its practical advice card to the panel of judges. Invite the team members to stage their dramatic segment. Announce a 3-minute time limit and strictly enforce this limit. Make sure that the members of the judging team are carefully watching the play and taking notes.



Continue the activity. At the end of 3 minutes, invite the next team to stage its drama. Repeat this process until all the teams have presented their dramatic segments.

Ask judges to announce their ratings. After the final segment, ask the judging team to finalize their evaluation. Invite the judges to briefly give their feedback for each dramatic segment. After this, ask the judging team to identify the best dramatic segment.

Congratulate the winning team. Give your comments about the pieces of practical advice. Encourage the participants to visualize a similar dramatic segment before they apply a piece of practical advice.



EXPLAIN AND APPLY

Real understanding of a piece of advice requires you to be able to explain it to someone else and to come up with an example of its application. EXPLAIN AND APPLY requires the participants to perform both of these tasks.

Synopsis

Each participant reads the piece of advice from a card. The first participant gives his or her card to the second participant and explains the advice to the third participant. Later, the first participant gives an example of how the advice can be applied to a real life situation. After this interaction, the second participant rates the first participant's accuracy of recall and the third participant rates the usefulness of the application.

Purpose

To recall, explain, and apply a piece of practical advice.

Participants

Minimum: 3

Maximum: 51, organized into groups of three

Best: 12 to 30

Time

15-30 minutes.

Supplies

❖ A deck of *Practical Advice Cards*



Flow

Organize triads. Divide the participants into playgroups of three members each. Give a practical advice card to each participant.

Specify the tasks. Ask the participants to carefully read the piece of advice printed on his or her card. Tell them that they have to get ready for two tasks: explain the piece of advice in their own words and come up with an application of the advice to a workplace situation. Announce an appropriate time limit.

Conduct the first round. Ask each triad to select one participant to go first. Ask this person to give his practical advice card to person on his right and explain the piece of advice to the person on the left. While this is happening, ask the person who now has the card to compare the explanation with the advice printed on the card. After this is done, ask the same person to share the application with the other two.

Give feedback. Ask the participant with the card to comment on how well the first player recalled the information printed on the card. Then ask the other person to comment on how realistic the application sounded. Encourage these participants to provide both positive and constructive feedback.

Repeat the procedure. Ask the other two participants to take turns to recall and explain the advice on the card and to provide an application. Encourage the listeners to provide positive and constructive feedback.



EXPLAIN AND DECIDE

In this activity, two people explain their pieces of practical advice. The third person listens quietly and selects the better advice.

Synopsis

Work in triads, discuss pieces of practical advice, and select the most useful ones.

Purpose

To compare pieces of practical advice two at a time and to select the most useful pieces of advice.

Participants

Minimum: 3

Maximum: Any number, divided into groups of three.

Best: 20 to 51

Time

20 - 40 minutes

Supplies

❖ A deck of *Practical Advice Cards*



Flow

Organize triads. Divide the players into groups of three. If you have an extra player ask him or her to pair up one of the three players as a consultant. If you end up with two extra players, join them as another player to form one more triad.

Set up the stockpile. Deal nine cards face down in the middle of the table where each triad is seated.

Take a card. Ask each player to take a card from the set of nine cards.

Select the first listeners. The person with the highest-ranking card is appointed as the first *Decider*. Here is the ranking of cards: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, J, Q, K, A. If there is a tie for the top card, check the suit of the card. They are ranked in this order: clubs, hearts, spades, and diamonds.

Listen to explanations. Ask the *Decider* to listen to the other two players who take turns to read the piece of advice on their cards and explain why it will produce effective results.

Select the better card. After listening to the explanations from the other two people, ask the *Decider* to select the card that contains the more effective piece of advice. (The *Decider* does not have to justify his or her choice.)

Replace the cards. All three players leave their cards in a discard pile and take the top card of the stockpile for use in the next round.

Continue explaining and deciding. The player seated to the left of the previous *Decider* becomes the new *Decider* for the next round. This round is played as before and ends with one of the two cards being selected.

Conclude the game. When the last card in the stockpile is picked up, the game comes to an end.



HEADLINES

An appropriate headline for a piece of practical advice attracts the readers' attention and highlights the key elements. It also makes it easier to recall the piece of advice later. This game rewards players who have a talent for writing effective headlines.

Synopsis

Players independently write a headline for a piece of advice. A non-playing judge selects the best headline.

Purpose

To create a meaningful and memorable headline for a piece of advice.

Participants

Minimum: 3

Maximum: 28 (subdivided into groups of 3 to 7)

Best: 5

Time

4 minutes for the each round.

Supplies

- ❖ A deck of *Practical Advice Cards*
- ❖ Pencils or pens
- ❖ Pieces of blank paper



Flow

Appoint a TKJ. Select one of the players at each table to take on the role of the *Timekeeper-Judge (TKJ)*. Reassure the other participants by explaining that everyone will have a turn being the *TKJ* during the subsequent rounds.

Display a card. Ask the *TKJ* to pull out a random card and read the piece of practical advice printed on it. Instruct the *TKJ* to place the card in the middle of the table, printed side up.

Think for 30 seconds. Ask the *TKJ* to keep track of time for 30 seconds. Ask the participants to think about suitable headlines for the selected piece of advice for 30 seconds.

Write the headline. After 30 seconds, ask the players to write a meaningful and memorable headline for the piece of advice.

Select the best headline. Ask the players to take turns to read the headline they have written. After all players have done so, ask the *TKJ* to select the best headline and give its author the practical advice card. Remind everyone that the judge's decision is final and he or she does not have to explain the logic.

Continue the game. Ask the next player to take on the role of the *TKJ* and repeat the same procedure. Continue the game until every player has had a turn to be the *TKJ*.

Identify the winner. At the end of the game, ask the participants to count the number of practical advice cards they have won. At each table, the player with the most cards is the winner. Identify these winners and congratulate them.



MINGLE

This game gets everybody buzzing at the same time. The participants are divided into four teams and each team is given one piece of practical advice. Members of different teams pair up and try to persuade each other.

Synopsis

Join a team and review a piece of advice assigned to your team. Pair up with members of the other teams and explain the value of your piece of advice (and listen to the explanations from the other person). Participate in a poll to select the better piece of advice between different pairs.

Purpose

To review, compare, and evaluate pieces of practical advice.

Participants

Minimum: 12

Maximum: Any number

Best: 16 to 40

Time

20 to 30 minutes

Supplies

❖ One card of each suit from a deck of *Practical Advice Cards*.



Flow

Organize teams. Divide the participants into four teams of three to 10 members each. Name the teams *Clubs*, *Hearts*, *Spades*, and *Diamonds*.

Give an advice card to each team. Make sure that the team gets a card with the suit that corresponds to the name of the team. Ask the team members to read and discuss the piece of advice printed on the card.

Ask teams to plan to persuade others. Tell the members of each team to figure out how its advice will produce positive results when implemented. Encourage them to come up suitable marketing messages for pitching the usefulness of this piece of advice.

Ask the participants to pair up and make their pitches. Tell them to meet someone from one of the other teams. Ask the two participants to explain their piece of advice and its potential positive impact. Suggest that each participant takes 30 seconds to present his or her marketing message.

Ask the participants to change partners. Once each pair of participants has shared the value of the piece of advice, they should pair up with someone else from a different team. Each member of the new pairs should repeat the process of explaining the piece of advice and its potential impact, and listening to the other person.

Conclude the conversations. Announce the end of the marketing period. Ask the participants to return to their original teams.

Conduct a poll to compare a pair of advice. Read the pieces of advice from the *Clubs* and the *Hearts* teams. Ask the members of the two other teams (*Spades* and *Diamonds*) to select the more useful of these two pieces of advice and indicate their choice by raising their hands. Estimate the numbers of hands raised and identify the winning piece of advice.



Continue polling. Conduct a total of six polls so that each piece of advice is compared with every other piece of advice. Here's a convenient table for sequencing the polls:

Poll	Pair of Advice	Teams that Select the Better Advice
1	<i>Clubs and Hearts</i>	<i>Spades and Diamonds</i>
2	<i>Clubs and Spades</i>	<i>Hearts and Diamonds</i>
3	<i>Clubs and Diamonds</i>	<i>Hearts and Spades</i>
4	<i>Hearts and Spades</i>	<i>Clubs and Diamonds</i>
5	<i>Hearts and Diamonds</i>	<i>Clubs and Spades</i>
6	<i>Spades and Diamonds</i>	<i>Clubs and Hearts</i>

Conclude the activity. Thank everyone for participating in the mass persuasion exercise. Ask each participant to select one of the four pieces of advice and begin implementing it as soon as possible.



ONE A WEEK

This unusual activity lasts for a year! It is not a game but an action-learning exercise that takes place in the real world. Here's what you do: Implement one piece of practical advice each week — and learn from your experience.

Synopsis

Choose a piece of practical advice. During each day of the week, plan and implement this piece of advice. Debrief your experience and give yourself a score. Repeat the process with another new piece of advice each week.

Purpose

To apply and enhance one practical advice each week.

Participants

Minimum: 1

Maximum: Any number, working independently and sharing the same deck of cards.

Best: 2 (in partnership)

Time

15 to 20 minutes each day of the week. Repeated for 52 weeks of the year.

Supplies

- ❖ A deck of *Practical Advice Cards*
- ❖ A journal (either a paper-and-pencil notebook or a document in your computer)



Flow

Begin the week by selecting a piece of practical advice. You may select a random piece of advice.

Review the piece of advice. Translate it into a specific technique you want to try out during the week. Start an application journal and write down the technique in your own words.

Plan every morning. Reflect on these questions:

- ❖ How many different ways can I apply this technique?
- ❖ How can I apply it differently from the previous days?
- ❖ How will I measure the success of my application?

Jot down your responses to these questions in your journal.

Implement the technique throughout the day. Try to follow your plan. Be flexible and be on the lookout for additional application opportunities.

Debrief yourself every evening. Reflect on the process and outcomes by asking and answering these types of questions:

- ❖ How did the technique work?
- ❖ What were some unexpected results?
- ❖ What did I learn about the technique?
- ❖ How can I change and improve the technique to produce better results?
- ❖ What should I do differently tomorrow?

Jot down your responses and insights in your journal.



Score your performance every day. Based on your reflections during the debrief, give yourself a score, using the following guidelines:

- ❖ 0 – Ignored the technique.
- ❖ 1 – Applied the technique a little and reflected a little on the process and the outcomes. Learned one or two new things about the technique.
- ❖ 2 – Applied the technique somewhat and reflected on the process and outcomes for some time. Learned some new things about the technique.
- ❖ 3 – Applied the technique extensively and reflected a lot about the process and outcomes. Learned several new things about the technique.

At the end of the week, consolidate the technique. Incorporate it as a part of your regular tool kit. Resolve to continue applying it frequently and flexibly.

Repeat the procedure every week. Start with a new piece of practical advice. Apply and enhance this technique through your daily planning, implementing, debriefing, and scoring activities.

At the end of the year, write a book. Capture the lessons learned and insights gained from your journal. Who knows, your book may turn out to be a best seller.



ORIGINAL OR NEW?

Here's a game that gives an opportunity to the participants to show off their expertise on the topic of the practical advice cards.

Synopsis

Each participant studies three pieces of practical advice and write a fourth one. This participant reads the new piece of advice and one of the originals, a random order. The other participants guess which is which.

Purpose

To write a piece of practical advice that is related to the selected topic.

Participants

Minimum: 2

Maximum: Any number

Best: 10 to 20

Time

20 to 45 minutes

Supplies

- ❖ Practical advice cards
- ❖ Blank pieces of paper
- ❖ Pens
- ❖ Countdown timer
- ❖ Whistle



Flow

Organize the participants. If there are more than five, organize the participants into playgroups of three to five each.

Distribute the cards. Shuffle the set of practical advice cards and give three cards to each participant. Ask the participants not to show their cards to anyone else.

Review the cards. Ask the participant to independently study the three pieces of advice from the cards. Point out that each participant has a different set of cards.

Present the background scenario. Explain that the author of the deck of cards wants the participants to generate additional pieces of practical advice on the same topic. He will select the best pieces of new advice and offer them as bonus cards to the players.

Write a piece of advice that imitates the style of the other cards. Give a piece of paper to each player and ask him or her to work secretly and write another piece of advice. Tell the participants that this advice should be different from the three others but should imitate the style of writing on the other cards. Announce a 5-minute time limit for this task.

Read an original card or the new card. At the end of 5 minutes, blow the whistle and ask one of the participants in each playgroup to turn his or her back to the others. Ask this person to read aloud the advice from *one* of the three cards and the new piece of advice that he or she wrote. Instruct the person to read these pieces of advice in any order and not to identify which one is the original and which is the newly created. If necessary, ask the selected participants to read the two pieces of advice again.

Decide if the card is real or bogus. Ask the other participants in the playgroup to decide which piece of advice was newly created.

Award score points. Ask the participant who read the pieces of advice to show the piece of paper with the new advice. Give one point to each participant who classified the advice correctly as “new”. If one or more participants were fooled, give the person who read the pieces of advice a point for each person who mistook the new idea for the original idea.



Repeat the process. Continue the activity with the participants in each playgroup taking turns to read a original piece of advice and the new piece of advice.

Conclude the activity. After an appropriate number of rounds, announce the end of the activity. Thank the participants for sharing their wisdom with the newly created pieces of practical advice.



PRECAUTIONS

There's always good news and bad news when you implement a piece of advice. In this three-person game, players identify the potential disadvantages of implementing a piece of advice. Later, they come up with a set of precautions to decrease these disadvantages.

Synopsis

Read the piece of advice from your card. Ask the other two participants to list the disadvantages of implementing this piece of advice. Afterwards, ask them to come up with suitable precautions for decreasing these disadvantages.

Purpose

To reduce the negative consequences of implementing a piece of advice.

Participants

Minimum: 3

Maximum: Any number, divided into groups of three

Best: 18 to 48

Time Requirement

15 to 30 minutes

Supplies

- ❖ A deck of *Practical Advice Cards*
- ❖ Timer
- ❖ Whistle

Flow

Brief the participants. Select a card randomly and read the practical piece of advice printed on it. Ask the participants to brainstorm possible dangers of mindlessly implementing this piece of advice. Encourage them to think of negative consequence that may arise from applying this advice. Invite the



participants to yell out their responses. At the end of this activity, point out that every piece of advice has potential disadvantages.

Distribute practical advice cards. Ask each person to take a random card and review the advice printed on it.

Organize participants into triads. If two participants are left over, join them to form a triad. If only one person is left over, make him or her a nomadic observer.

Read the piece of advice. Ask the tallest person in each triad to be the Reader. Ask this person to read aloud the piece of advice printed on his or her card. Ask all three participants (including the Reader) to think of the potential disadvantages of implementing this piece of advice.

Share the disadvantages. Ask the Reader to randomly point to one of the other two members of the triad and ask this person to specify the potential disadvantages. The selected participant should rapidly reel off a list of disadvantages. Ask the Reader to invite the other participant to add more possible disadvantages. Finally, ask the Reader to summarize these disadvantages, adding his or her own ideas.

Write precautions. Ask all three participants to work independently to write down a set of precautions to be observed when applying the piece of advice. Suggest a suitable time limit.

Share the precautions. After a suitable period of time, ask the participants to stop writing. Beginning with the Reader, ask all three people to read their precautions.

Identify the better precaution. Ask the Reader to ignore the precautions that he or she wrote and to select one of the other sets of precautions as the better one. The author of this precaution wins one point.

Continue the activity. Ask the participant to the right of the previous Reader to kick off the next round by reading the piece of advice on his or her card. Repeat the procedure of identifying the disadvantages, listing precautions, selecting the better set of precautions, and awarding the point.

Determining the winner. At the end of three rounds, whoever won two points wins the game. Otherwise, the game ends in a tie.



SIMILAR AND DIFFERENT

If you compare any two pieces of practical advice related to the same skill, you might notice some similarities and some differences between them. This activity requires you to identify and explain important similarities and differences.

Synopsis

Each participant compares two different pieces of practical advice and identifies the similarities between them. Later, the participants identify the differences between two other pieces of advice.

Purpose

To identify similarities and differences among different pieces of practical advice related to the same skill.

Participants

Minimum: 3

Maximum: Any number, organized into playgroups of 3 to 5

Best: 20 to 30

Time

20 to 30 minutes

Supplies

- ❖ Two practical advice cards for each participant
- ❖ Timer
- ❖ Whistle



Flow

Demonstrate the first task. Pick any two cards and read the pieces of practical advice presented in them. Ask the participants to identify the similarities between them. Encourage the participants to announce these similarities. Give some prompts if necessary.

Organize participants into playgroups. If you have more than five participants, divide them into groups of three. If necessary, one or two of the groups may have four members.

Distribute cards. Give two random practical advice cards from the same deck to each participant.

Pause for comparison of similarities. Ask the participants to read and review the pieces of advice on the two cards. Ask them to reflect on these pieces of advice and to identify the major similarities between them. Announce a 2-minute time limit for this task.

Describe the similarities. At the end of 2 minutes, blow the whistle. Ask the participants to take turns to read the two pieces of advice and to explain the similarities between them.

Identify the best statement. After all members have identified the similarities between the pieces of advice they received, ask them to think back on the statements made by the other participants. At a count of "Three," ask each participant to point one of the others who made the best similarity statement.

Demonstrate the second task. Explain to the participants that you are going to continue the comparison activity with a slight difference. Pick any two cards and read the pieces of practical advice. Ask the participants to identify the key differences between them. As before, give clues if necessary and encourage the participants to announce the differences.

Switch the cards. Ask the participants place their two cards on the table, printed side down. Ask them to mix the cards and pick up two. Explain that it does not matter if one or both of the cards picked up by a participant are the same as in the previous round.



Pause for comparison of differences. Ask the participants to read and review the pieces of advice on the two cards. Ask them to reflect on these pieces of advice and to identify the major differences between them. Announce a 2-minute time limit for this task.

Describe the differences. At the end of 2 minutes, blow the whistle. Ask the participants to take turns to read the two pieces of advice and to explain the differences between them.

Identify the best statement. After all members have identified the difference between the pieces of advice they received, ask them to think back on the statements made by the other participants in their playgroup. At a count of "Three," ask each participant to point one of the others who made the best statement of differences.

Conclude the session. Explain to the participants that they may receive different pieces of advice. By comparing the similarities and differences among them, they will understand these ideas better. This will help them better apply the suggestions to their workplace.

Play Sample

During the recent game involving practical advice cards related to feedback techniques, Rahul picked up two cards with these recommendations:

Attribute positive intentions to the feedback provider. Assume that he or she is helping, supporting, and guiding you.

Remember the purpose of giving feedback: It is to improve performance and to produce results.

Here are Rahul's statements about the similarities between these two cards:

Both pieces of advice focus on the positive intention of giving feedback. They require both the feedback provider and the receiver to create a helpful and supportive environment to help improve performance and results.

During the next round, Rahul picked up these two pieces of practical advice:

Just do it. Don't procrastinate giving feedback out of fear of upsetting the receiver.

People who overuse their talents and strengths can benefit from tactful feedback from you.



Here are the differences that Rahul saw between these two pieces of advice:

The first piece of advice suggests giving feedback without hesitation. The second piece suggest taking time to provide the feedback in a tactful fashion. Also, the first piece of advice implies that the feedback is related to an area of weakness. The second piece of advice deals with areas of strength.



SINGLE

The name of the game refers to the repeated reduction of a number of cards to a single card. The participants compare pairs of cards, select the better one, and repeat this procedure until only one card remains.

Synopsis

Pair up with another participants and compare the pieces of advice on the two cards you have. The participant with the better card continues to pair up with more participants. The other participant facilitates the pairing of cardholder and the selection of the better card. The game continues until only one cardholder remains with the best piece of advice.

Purpose

To comparatively review the pieces of advice on different cards and to identify the best piece of advice.

Participants

Minimum: 5

Maximum: Any number

Best: 20 to 50

Time

15 to 30 minutes, depending on the number of participants

Supplies

❖ One practical advice card for each participant



Flow

Brief the participants. Select any two cards and read the piece of advice on each of them. Ask the participants to compare these pieces of advice and to select the better one. Encourage the participants to talk to each other and to discuss the costs and benefits associated with implementing each piece of advice. After a suitable pause, select the card with the better piece of advice based on the inputs from the participants.

Distribute practical advice cards. Ask each person to take a random card and review the piece of advice printed on it.

Ask the participants to pair up and compare their cards. Tell each participant to pair up with another participant. Ask the members of each pair to review the pieces of advice on the two cards they have. Encourage the participants to discuss the relative merits of the two cards and to select the card with the better piece of advice.

Give instructions to the cardholders. Ask the participant with the better piece of advice (“the cardholder”) to hold on to the card and to pair up with another cardholder.

Give instructions to the facilitators. Ask the participant with the other card (“the facilitator”) to give back his card and help the cardholders to continue the activity. Ask these facilitators to spot cardholders in different parts of the room and to pair them up. Also ask the facilitators to help speed up the review process and to select the card with the better piece of advice.

Continue the activity. Ask the participants to continue reviewing pairs of cards and selecting the one with the better piece of advice. As the game proceeds, the number of facilitators will increase and the number of cardholders will decrease. Encourage the mobs of facilitators to actively help the cardholders to review the pieces of advice and to select the card with the better one.

Conclude the activity. The game will come to an automatic stop when only one cardholder remains, holding the card with the best piece of advice. Ask for a drum roll and ask the remaining cardholder to read the piece of advice. Extol the participants to reflect on this piece of advice and to implement it at the next available opportunity.



SUITS

In this activity, the participants select the two most useful pieces of advice among the cards of the same suit. Later, they select the three most useful pieces of advice among the four different suits.

Synopsis

Teams of participants select the two most useful pieces of advice from the 13 cards of the same suit. Later, the teams are reorganized into teams of four member, each person representing a different suit. These teams select three cards from the eight cards they had selected earlier.

Purpose

To compare different pieces of advice and select the most useful ones.

Participants

Minimum: 8

Maximum: Any number

Best: 10 to 30

Time

20 to 30 minutes

Supplies

- ❖ A deck of *Practical Advice Cards*
- ❖ Blank pieces of paper
- ❖ Pens



Flow

Organize four teams. The teams should be of approximately same size.

Distribute cards. Distribute all 13 cards of each suit to each of the four teams.

Select two most useful cards. Ask the teams to jointly review the 13 cards of the same suit. Instruct the players to select the two cards with the most useful pieces of advice. Ask each participant to jot down an outline of the two selected pieces of advice on a piece of paper so they could explain it to others without being able to look at the cards.

Create 4-person teams. Take all of the cards back from the participants. Reorganize the participants into missed teams of four people, one member from each of the earlier teams that worked with cards of the same suit.

Select the three most useful cards. Ask members of each group to present and discuss the two pieces of advice selected as the most useful from each suit. Ask the participants to compare these pieces of advice and to three most useful ones from among the previously selected cards from the four suits.

Compare the selections. Ask each team to briefly present the three pieces of advice they selected. Briefly discuss the similarities and differences among these selections.

Make a personal selection. Ask each participant to individually select one of the three pieces of idea for personal implementation in the near future.



SWEET SIXTEEN

By Gary Harper

This game is based on a tournament format in which participants evaluate pairs of practical advice cards. The card they deem more practical advances to square off against other winning cards until only one remains – the Champion practical advice card.

Synopsis

Four teams are each given four practical advice cards and asked to determine which is the most practical. The large entire group then determines which of the four winning cards is The Champion Practical Advice Card.

Purpose

To review and evaluate pieces of practical advice.

Participants

Minimum: 12

Maximum: Any number

Best: 16-24

Time

15-20 minutes

Supplies

❖ 16 cards from a deck of *Practical Advice Cards*



Flow

Divide the participants into four teams. Make sure that the teams are of approximately equal size.

Distribute practical advice cards. Give four cards to each team.

Select a more practical card. Ask team members to randomly choose two of the advice cards and read the card aloud. Ask them to discuss which piece of advice they think is more practical. After one or two minutes of discuss, announce that it is time to vote. Have the team put the winning card aside.

Select another card. Have each team repeat the process with the remaining two advice cards, setting the winning card aside.

Identify the team's winning card. Ask the team to repeat the process a third time using the two winning cards. At the end of this round, each team should have their winning card.

Present the winning card. Have each team select a spokesperson to read the advice from the winning card. Also ask this person to summarize the reasons the team voted for this winning card.

Conduct the semi final round. Randomly select two of the spokespeople and have each read the advice from their cards again. Then have all the participants vote as to which of the two pieces of advice is more practical. Set aside the winning card. Repeat the process with the other two spokespeople.

Conduct the final round. Repeat a final time with the two winning advice cards from the previous round. The winner is crowned the *Champion Practical Advice Card* from this tournament.

Follow up. Read the piece of advice from the *Champion Card*. Ask the participants to reflect on the advice and plan how to use it in the near future.



TEACHING AND LEARNING

I like activities that involve all participants in the entire group roaming around, mingling with each other, and working in pairs. In this card game, you create a teaching and learning frenzy among constantly regrouping pairs of participants.

Synopsis

The participants are divided into two equal groups of teachers and learners. Each teacher is given a practical advice card. During a 10-minute period, the teachers teach as many learners as possible and the learners master as many pieces of practical advice as possible.

Purpose

To share a piece of practical advice to as many others as possible.

To learn as many pieces of practical advice as possible.

Participants

Minimum: 4

Maximum: 100

Best: 20 to 30

Time

20 to 30 minutes

Supplies

- ❖ A deck of practical advice cards
- ❖ Timer



Flow

Assign roles to the participants. Divide the participants into groups of equal size. Tell the members of one group that they will play the role of teachers. Participants in the other group will play the role of learners.

Brief the participants. Explain what happens during the activity: Each teacher will receive a practical advice card and study the advice printed on the card. Later, this teacher will teach the advice to as many of learners as possible, one person at a time. The learners will attempt to learn as many different pieces of advice as possible. At the end of 10 minutes, the teacher who taught the most participants and the learner who learned the most pieces of practical advice will be declared winners.

Ask the learners to get ready. Tell them to talk among themselves and come up with strategies to learn rapidly.

Ask the teachers to get ready. Shuffle the deck of practical advice cards and give one card to each member of the teacher group. Warn the teachers that you would take the card back at the end of 3 minutes. Ask the teacher-participants to study the piece of advice on the card, take notes, and come up with a plan for explaining the advice to individual learners in such a way that they would be able to easily and accurately recall the details.

Start the frenzy. After 3 minutes, blow a whistle and collect all the practical advice cards from the teachers. Tell the participants that there will be frenzy for 10 minutes during which individual teachers and learners will pair up with each other. The teacher will explain the piece of practical advice. The learner will listen carefully, take notes, and ask questions, trying to understand the piece of advice so he or she can recall it later. Both the teacher and the learner will work efficiently. When the task is done, they will part company. The teacher will go in search of another learner and the learner will search for another teacher.

Keep track of the number of pieces of advice taught and learned. Ask the teachers to note how many different learners they have taught. Ask the learners to note how many different pieces of advice they have learned.

Conclude the session. At the end of 10 minutes, blow the whistle to stop the teaching and learning process. Ask the members of the learners group to count the number of pieces of advice each participant had learned. Identify the participant who has learned the most pieces of advice as the Champion Learner. Now ask the teachers to count the number of different people they had taught. Identify the winners who had taught the most number of people.



Debrief. At the end of the activity, conduct a debriefing discussion about the behaviors of effective teachers and learners. Also ask the learners to recall and explain the pieces of practical advice they had learned.



THIRTY-FIVE

Here's an activity in which the best pieces of advice wins. During the activity, the participants review — and comparatively evaluate — five pairs of practical advice cards.

Synopsis

Exchange your card with several other people. Pair up with another person and distribute 7 points between the cards to reflect the usefulness of the pieces of advice. Continue exchanging cards and scoring the pieces of advice. Identify the highest scoring cards with the most useful pieces of advice.

Purpose

To identify the most useful pieces of advice.

Participants

Minimum: 6

Maximum: Any number

Best: 12 to 40

Time

20 to 30 minutes

Supplies

- ❖ A deck of *Practical Advice Cards*
- ❖ Post-It note paper
- ❖ Pencils or pens
- ❖ Countdown timer
- ❖ Whistle



Preparation

Attach a Post-It note to each practical advice card.

Flow

Distribute cards. Give each participant a practical advice card with the Post-It note. Also ask them to write the name of the card (for example, 6C for *six of clubs*) on the Post-It note.

Exchange cards. Ask the participants to walk around and exchange the cards with the Post-It note with each other. Ask them not to read the cards at this time but keep exchanging the cards.

Find a partner. After about 30 seconds, blow the whistle to stop the exchange process. Ask the participants to pair up with any other nearby participant.

Score the pieces of advice. Ask each pair of participants to review the pieces of advice on the two cards they have. Instruct them to distribute seven points between these two pieces of advice to reflect their relative usefulness. Give examples of 7-point distributions: 4 and 3, 5 and 2, 6 and 1, or 7 and 0. Request the participants not to use fractions or negative numbers. When ready, ask the participants to write the score points on the Post-It note.

Repeat the process. Wait to make sure that everyone has written the score point. Then ask the participants to repeat the process of moving around and exchanging cards. Blow the whistle after 20 seconds or so, and ask the participants to find a new partner, compare the two pieces of advice on their cards, and distribute seven points. Instruct them to write the new points on the Post-It note, below the previous number.

Continue the process. Announce that you will be conducting three more rounds of the activity. Ask the participants to maintain high levels of objectivity by disregarding earlier score points and by keeping a poker face if they end up receiving a card they had seen before.

Conclude the evaluation process. At the end of the fifth round, ask the participants to return to their seats with the card they currently have. Ask them to add the five score points and write the total.

Conduct a countdown. After pausing for the totals to be computed, explain that you are going to count down from 35 (which is the maximum total score that any card could receive). When a participant hears the total on the card, he or she should stand up and read the piece of advice. Begin counting down to identify the card with the highest score. After the participant reads the advice



from the card, lead a round of applause. Repeat the countdown process until you have identified the top five to pieces of advice.

Conclude the session. Thank the participants for identifying the most useful pieces of advice. Ask them to select a piece of advice for immediate implementation.



TIME TRAVEL

This activity involves participants creating and sharing stories about a piece of practical advice. It encourages them to think about the positive results of consistently applying a piece of advice.

Synopsis

Each participant reads the piece of advice from the card given to her or him. Participants make up a story that involves their applying the piece of advice to a personal project. Later, they pair up and share their stories with each other.

Purpose

To imagine (and share) the long-term results of applying a piece of practical advice.

Participants

Minimum: 4

Maximum: 50

Best: 12 to 30

Time

30-45 minutes.

Supplies

- ❖ A deck of *Practical Advice Cards*
- ❖ Countdown timer
- ❖ Whistle



Flow

Distribute the cards. Give a practical advice card to each participant. Ask each participant to read the piece of advice printed on his or her card.

Ask the participants to apply the piece of practical advice to a personal project. Ask the participants to select some aspect of their current situation and decide how to apply the advice to this project. Announce a 5-minute time limit and blow the whistle at the end of 5 minutes.

Invite the participants to project themselves into the future. Ask the participants to imagine that 5 years have passed. They have successfully completed the personal project with significant positive results. Ask each participant to connect the practical advice from the card to his or her fame and fortune 5 years from now. Announce a time limit of 3 minutes and blow the whistle at the end of this time.

Invite the participants to create a short story. This story should incorporate the 5-year projection that they undertook in the previous activity. The theme of the story should be about how the practical advice from the card changed their life. Encourage the participants to come up with a plot that begins with an initial problem, proceeds through a project that incorporates the advice from the card, details the ups and downs of this project, and dramatically ends with the successful conclusion. Tell the participants to make sure that it is a positive story in which they live happily ever after. Announce a time limit of 5 minutes and blow the whistle at the end of 5 minutes.

Ask the participants to present their story to a partner. Ask each participant to find a partner. Tell everyone to imagine that they accidentally meet each other after 5 years. They are comparing notes about the consequences of reading the practical advice on their card and applying it. Instruct the participants to take turns telling the story that they created earlier. Encourage the storytellers to be enthusiastic and to embellish their success. Encourage the listeners to congratulate their partner. Suggest a 2-minute storytelling period for each partner. At the end of the first 2 minutes, blow the whistle and ask the partners to switch the roles of storyteller and listener. After another 2 minutes, blow the whistle again and announce the end of the storytelling period.

Ask the participants to find a new partner and repeat the process. Suggest that participants share their stories with new partners. Encourage the partners to embellish their stories with new and exciting details. Remind the listeners to exaggerate their pleasure at their partner's success. Impose a 2-minute time limit for each story.



Conclude the activity. Repeat the storytelling sessions to suit the available time. Ask the participants to nominate the best storytellers and have these storytellers present their latest versions the entire group. Remind the participants that they have an opportunity for making the story come true by applying the practical advice from their cards.



TRIPLE FILTER

This activity helps you select the best pieces of advice. You may conduct this activity with members of an intact team to select pieces of advice they should implement immediately.

Synopsis

Take five random pieces of advice. Repeatedly assess them according to their potential impact, frequency of use, and difficulty of implementation. Choose pieces of advice that are of high impact, high frequency, and easy to implement.

Purpose

To select cost-effective pieces of advice

Participants

Minimum: 1

Maximum: Any number, working independently or in teams

Best: 3 to 5

Time

10 to 15 minutes

Supplies

- ❖ A deck of *Practical Advice Cards*
- ❖ Copies of *Triple Filter Table*
- ❖ Pencils or pens



Flow

Take five practical advice cards. Shuffle the deck and deal the top five cards.

Distribute the *Triple Filter Table*. Explain that this table will be used to record the assessment information.

Identify the practical value cards. Ask the participants to write the names of the five cards on the first column. (Example: "QC" for the *Queen of Clubs*)

Assess the potential impact of the cards. Ask the participants to read the piece of advice on each card. Think of what would happen if this piece of advice were successfully implemented. Record one of these numbers on the *Potential Impact* column based on the estimate of this factor:

1. High impact
2. Medium impact
3. Low impact
4. No impact

Assess the frequency of usage of the cards. Ask the participants to review the piece of advice on each card and estimate how frequently they will be able to use it. Record one of these numbers on the *Frequency* column based on the estimate of this factor:

1. Frequently usable
2. Usable
3. Sometimes usable
4. Rarely usable

Assess the ease of implementation of the cards. Ask the participants to review the piece of advice on each card and estimate how easily it could be implemented. Record one of these numbers on the *Ease of Implementation* column based on the estimate of this factor:

1. Very easy to implement
2. Easy to implement
3. Difficult to implement
4. Very difficult to implement

Plan to implement cost-effective pieces of advice. Ask the participants to select two or three pieces of advice that have high potential impact, high frequency of use, and are easy to implement. Encourage them to implementing one of these selected pieces of advice immediately.



TRIPLE FILTER TABLE

Card	Potential Impact	Frequency	Ease of Implementation



Eight Ways You Can Help Us

We are extremely thankful for your support and we realize that without you we will be out of business. We would like to invite you to become co-creators and co-designers of card games for training. Here are different ways you can help us to help you and other creative trainers like you:

1. **Distributed copy-editing.** If you catch any typographical or conceptual errors in the practical advice cards or in the game manual, please let us know (thiagi@thiagi.com). We work with on-demand publishing technology, and this enables us to immediately incorporate your corrections and improvements.
2. **Contribute new pieces of advice.** Suggest additional pieces of advice based on your expertise and experience on different topics. We are not insistent about one particular way to achieve training goals in the interpersonal arena. So we welcome your unusual and innovative ideas as well as traditional and tried-and-true ones. We will use your contributions to replace existing cards — and to create supplementary decks.
3. **Tweak our games.** We do not expect an experienced facilitator like you to blindly follow our instructions. Please let us know if you have come up with variations or improvements of the current set of games. We will post your ideas on our website and incorporate them in the next version of the games manual.
4. **Create new games.** As we conduct workshops around the world, we are constantly designing and play-testing new games with practical advice cards. Try your hand at designing your own games. Share them with us and we will share them with other trainers through our website and our monthly electronic gameletter.
5. **Buy more decks.** Check out other practical advice card decks in our current collection of 20 different topics. Visit our online store for card decks on new topics. Let us know if you want to order more than 10 decks at any given time, and we will give you a discount.



6. **Suggest topics for additional decks.** We are continuously researching additional topics for practical advice cards. Let us know what topics you are interested in. Also remember that we can design and produce practical advice card on your own specialized topics. For example, we recently created a new employee orientation card deck for one of our clients. The cards contained practical advice on how to shine during the first 90 days on the new job.
7. **Visit our web site.** We will post our updates, new games, variations, and field notes on this site. Also contribute your ideas, comments, and suggestions to be displayed on this site.
8. **Purchase and use the other decks of cards.** We have created a companion card game called *Fluency Card* games that deal with a different set of training objectives. We plan to bring out the *Fluency Card* decks for each of the current 20 topics. These game cards present concepts and scenarios on selected topics and require players to list samples, compare concepts, create visuals, and roleplay appropriate behaviors in different situations.

Thank you for purchasing and use our card games. And thank you for your continuing support.



