

BUT vs. AND

Source: Kat Koppett (2001) *Training to Imagine*, pp 107

Overview

Two groups set about the task of planning a company party. The first must start each sentence with the words, "Yes, but..." The second must start their sentences with the words, "Yes, and..." The first group will struggle to achieve anything. The second will create much more easily.

Improv Topics

- Accepting offers
- Listening and Awareness

Purpose

- Team building
- Creativity
- Communication

Time

- 4 – 8 minutes

Number of players

- Various

Game Flow

Round 1

- Ask for 3 – 5 volunteers
- Tell the group that they are in charge of planning the company holiday party
- Each person must contribute an idea. There is no specific order, but no-one may contribute more than one idea in a row.
- Anyone may start, and each successive idea must begin with the words "Yes, but ..."
- Allow the exercise to continue for 2 – 3 minutes, or until it degenerates beyond repair.

Round 2

- Ask for 3 – 5 new volunteers
- Set up the same activity with the following adjustment.
- This time each new sentence must start with the words, "Yes, and ..."
- Allow the activity to continue for 2 – 3 minutes or until the group seems satisfied and delighted.

NB: Can also be done in pairs

Suggested Debrief Questions

- How does it feel to have your ideas rejected? Accepted?
- How did this experience compare to real life?
- Why do we block other people's ideas?
- How can we increase our willingness and ability to accept ideas?