



WELCOMING THE STRANGER **A Membership Exercise for TYG Boards**

Goals:

- Participants will learn the art of welcoming new members and new potential members
- Participants will learn that every aspect of how they communicate—tone, body language, language choice—affects their “approachability quotient”
- Participants will explore their own experiences with “fitting in,” and apply their experience to the welcoming of the stranger

Materials:

- Two (2) copies of “Listening for Tone”
- Copies of “Words that Encourage” (enough for each participant)
- Poster board
- Marker

Timetable:

- 0:00 – 0:05 Introduction
- 0:05 – 0:10 “Listening for Tone” skits 1 and 2
- 0:10 – 0:20 Discussion on “Listening for Tone”
- 0:20 – 0:35 Discussion on personal experiences
- 0:35 – 0:40 Words that Encourage
- 0:40 – 0:50 Practice conversations

0:00 – 0:05 Introduction

Leader explains: “A participant and I are going to read a skit to you, talking about a man named Smith. I want you to listen carefully and when we’re all done, I want you to write your impressions of Smith.”

0:05 – 0:10 “Listening for Tone” skits 1 and 2

- Read Skit 1.
- Group leader says: “Forget about this skit for a minute. Now we will read a second skit, and again, concentrate on Smith.”
- Read Skit 2.

0:10 – 0:20 Discussion Questions

- What was Smith like in Skit 1? How could you tell? What about Skit 2?
- How were the two skits similar? How were they different?
(The TONE was different...the sarcastic attitude led to a very negative feeling)
- Were there aspects besides vocal intonation that contributed?
(Facial gestures, hand motions, etc.)
- Both skits used exactly the same text...notice how the TONE changes the entire meaning!!
- In what way does body language affect how we communicate, especially with people we do not know very well?



0:20 – 0:35 Personal Experiences

- Picture in your head a time when you felt that you did not “fit in.” Maybe you were new in town, or had just arrived at a party, or were picked last for a team... o How did it feel? o What would have made you more comfortable?
 - o Did that happen? Why or why not?
- As Jews, we are commanded to remember that we were “Strangers in the land of Egypt.” Why do you think that is so?
- How can we make this commandment a part of our lives?
- Think about our first TYG event. What kept you coming back?
 - o something said by a TYG advisor or board member? o the type of activity?
 - o cool rabbi or educator?
- How can we make our TYG a more welcoming place for new people? (have participants write their ideas on poster board)
- How can we as individuals make ourselves more approachable?
- What should our membership goals be for the coming year?

0:35 – 0:40 Pass out “Words that Encourage”

- have participants choose one phrase from each list to say sarcastically.
- each person chooses one phrase. Go around the room and say it meaningfully to the person next to them. Be conscious of body language.
- How does this make you feel?
- Why is it so difficult to say something nice to someone? Are we afraid to seem “corny?”
- The biggest fear in approaching someone is the fear of rejection. How do we overcome this fear?

0:40 – 0:50 Practice Conversations

Have one participant pretend to be a new, shy member. Have another participant act as a welcoming board member. Try different scenarios.

Remember: A TYG leader that is shy can be perceived as snobbish. If you are very shy, use your leadership position as an excuse to go talk to new members; once you have made the initial contact, it gets much easier!

Listening for tone - Part 1

Jones: (Fearful).
“You sent for me, sir?”

Brown: (Seated behind desk. Sneeringly. Make last sentence a question, emphasizing word “report”).
“YES, MAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT THIS PROJECT THAT YOUR MAN SMITH COMPLETED. THAT’S A REPORT?”

Jones: (Apologetic. A “what can you expect” tone).



“WELL, BOSS, YOU KNOW THE KIND OF PEOPLE I HAVE IN MY DEPARTMENT. THAT’S THE KIND OF WORK THEY TURN OUT.”

Brown: (Sarcastically. Not going to let Jones get away blameless). “don’t be so modest. surely you had a SHARE IN this.”

Jones: (Dodge. If someone is to be blamed, let it be Smith).
“WELL, I REVIEWED IT, OF COURSE. BUT WITH THE PRESSURE OF WORK, I HAD TO RELY ON SMITH. BASICALLY, IT’S SMITH’S PRODUCT.”

Brown: (Still sarcastic. Refusing to let Jones weasel out of this one).
“NOW, NOW. YOU’RE RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT GOES ON IN YOUR DEPARTMENT.”

Jones: (Reluctantly. Better yield or you’ll be the target instead of Smith).
“WELL, IF YOU SAY SO, J.B., I SUPPOSE I MUST ADMIT TO SOME SHARE IN THE PROJECT.”

Brown: (Disgustedly. Point to report with expression of distaste).
“THE QUESTION IS, ‘WHAT ABOUT SMITH?’ CAN WE CONTINUE TO EXPECT WORK LIKE THIS?”

Jones: (First sentence is regretful; second sentence is happy).
“YES, SIR, WE CAN.” (Recalls something). “BUT SMITH IS LEAVING TO TRANSFER TO ANOTHER PART OF THE COUNTRY”.

Brown: (Sarcastically).
“WILL I BE SORRY TO SEE HIM GO!”

Jones: (with glee)
Now you don’t have to go through the mess of firing him.

Brown: “YES, WE’RE GOING TO MISS HIM AROUND HERE.”

Brown:

LISTENING FOR TONE - Part 2



Jones:

Brown:

(Confident).
"YOU SENT FOR ME, SIR?"

Jones: (Enthusiastically. In last sentence emphasize "That's").
"YES, TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT THIS PROJECT THAT YOUR MAN SMITH COMPLETED. THAT'S A REPORT."

Brown: (Also enthusiastically).
"WELL, BOSS, YOU KNOW THE KIND OF PEOPLE I HAVE IN MY DEPARTMENT. THAT'S THE KIND OF WORK THEY TURN OUT."

Jones: (Warmly – Wants to give Jones some credit, too).
"DON'T BE SO MODEST. SURELY YOU HAD A SHARE IN THIS."

Brown: (Modestly. Doesn't want to take away the glory from Smith).
"WELL, I REVIEWED IT, OF COURSE. BUT WITH THE PRESSURE OF WORK, I HAD TO RELY ON SMITH. BASICALLY, IT'S SMITH' PRODUCT."

Jones: (Jokingly. He knows Jones has done a lot to develop Smith).
"NOW, NOW. YOU'RE RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT GOES ON IN YOUR DEPARTMENT."

Brown: (Still modest, but proud of your department).
"well, if you say so, j.b., i suppose i must admit to some shAre in the project."
(Hopefully).
"THE QUESTION IS, 'WHAT AOUT SMITH?' CAN WE CONTINUE TO EXPECT WORK LIKE THIS."

Jones: (First sentence is happy; second is regretful).
"YES SIR, WE CAN." (Recalls something). "BUT SMITH IS LEAVING TO TRANSFER TO ANOTHER PART OF THE COUNTRY."

Brown: (With disappointment. Make question a statement). "WILL I BE SORRY TO SEE HIM GO."

Jones: (Regretfully).
"YES WE'RE GOING TO MISS HIM AROUND HERE."

Words that Encourage

Everyone makes mistakes.



You're just the person who can do it.

Failure is no crime.

Stuff happens.

This is very nice

work. Thank you

very much.

That is really great.

I appreciate your considerate behavior.

Keep up the good work.

What a neat idea.

Your help is really appreciated.

Please share you ideas with everyone.

You make that look really easy.

That was a really kind word/deed/etc.

Nice going.

Your kindness is refreshing.

I'm glad you decided to try.

You've got just what it takes.