

STARTLING STATEMENTS EXERCISE

Purpose:

To introduce workforce statistics regarding women and men's participation in nontraditional occupations in a group interactive process. Explore participant's biases regarding these statistics.

Instructions:

Print enough copies of the statement page and the answer page for workshop participants. Copy single sided on two pages so they can be handed out at separate times.

Assignment of statements:

There are a variety of ways to assign statements to workshop participants

1. If the group is not too large have them count out 1-20 indicating their assigned statement
2. Copy individual statements onto slips of paper and hand them out when workshop participants enter the room
3. Number the top of each statement page with 1-20 repeated until you have enough sheets numbered for the participants in the workshop. Inform the participants that this number represents their assigned statement as part of the introduction to the exercise.

Introduce the exercise:

Statistics can be presented to groups in many ways. For instance, today I would like to share with you a variety of statistics regarding the participation of men and women in the workforce and their representation and earning power in various nontraditional career fields. Rather than my standing here and presenting the facts to you I would like for you to explore your own perceptions about these statements.

Give the instructions:

Each of you have been assigned a statement. Please interview three other people (not including yourself) in the room and ask them to guess what they think the number is that belongs in the blank in your statement. Do not interview these people as a group – interview them each individually so they will not influence each others answers. Once you have your three answers be prepared to report out the average of your three responses (add the three and divide by three) as well as the range (the high and low response).

Give the group about 5-7 minutes to complete the exercise. Encourage their discussion of the statements as part of the process.

Have participants report out their responses:

Depending on the time available for the exercise you can process all 20 statements or only a selected few. Have all workshop participants stand who have the first statement. Read the statement to the group and have each of them report out their average and their range. You can then give them the actual answer and comment on how far or how close the responses were. You might ask the group to speculate on why this might be. You can give prizes to those who have the average closest to the actual answer.