

Exploring Leadership

COMMUNICATION: HOW TO INTRODUCE YOURSELF

While these steps may sound simple to adults, sometimes we forget to actually explain the process of introducing ourselves and others to our kids. Like most skills, with a bit of gentle coaching, our kids can improve tremendously in these areas!

CONVERSATION STARTER:

You're at a party and only know the person you came with. That person has disappeared into another room. What do you do?

You're in a formal situation (like a job interview or a church meeting) where you don't know anyone. What do you do?

Introducing ourselves is an important social skill that we often overlook because we assume there will always be someone around to introduce us. If you've ever been left standing alone in a group of people you don't know, then you probably remember how awkward it can be. But you have the power to change that simply by taking the initiative to introduce yourself. The reason more people don't do that is because they don't know how. But we're about to change that.

KEY OBJECTIVES:

- Review the steps in a proper introduction.
- Practice introducing themselves.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- Poster or Display: How to Introduce Yourself (Appendix)
- Strips of paper with different social situations on each: school classroom, summer party, job interview, crowded theater, church, family reunion, lunchroom, neighborhood barbecue, dinner with the queen, elevator ride with the CEO, etc.

EXPLORATION ACTIVITY:

Display the poster that has the steps of a self-introduction and discuss briefly.

- Pair up and draw a strip of paper with a situation on it
- Role play the situation, switching roles as necessary, but make sure that you are introducing yourself as you would if you found yourself in that situation.

FACILITATOR TIP:

- Modeling the steps in various situations will help young people see how an introduction should look.

Part 2

- Now mingle and introduce yourselves to each other. If there are people here you don't know, you should start with them.
- Practice introducing yourself.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- Has anyone ever taught you to introduce yourself before? If so, how?
- How naturally can you complete the steps on the poster? Did you have to keep looking at it for guidance? Why?
- Who here has a very good self-introduction style? Why was it effective?

APPLICATION DISCUSSION:

- When in your life will this skill come in handy?
- Besides learning someone's name, how else is a good introduction beneficial?
- How would an introduction be different in an e-mail or a zoom call?



CONCLUSION:

Although it is something we often take for granted, knowing how to introduce oneself is an important skill that many young people have never thought about. The way you introduce yourself can have an impact on the entire relationship with another person, so it pays to know how to do it and to practice it whenever you can.

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REFERENCES

- [tps://sunshine-parenting.com/7-simple-steps-teach-kids-introduce/](https://sunshine-parenting.com/7-simple-steps-teach-kids-introduce/)
- <https://techjobsfair.com/ways-introduce-yourself-professionally-casually/>
- https://youtu.be/84OPIPIDK_Y
- <https://youtu.be/h3eXAD88SVo>



APPENDIX A: HOW TO INTRODUCE YOURSELF

CONTEXT (FORMAL OR INFORMAL?)

Where are you? A business meeting? An informal party? The information in your introduction should be appropriate for the environment, although the basic steps are always the same. You would not share the same information about yourself at an informal pool party as you would in a formal job interview. Regardless of context, these steps almost always apply.

Body Language: Stand up. Maintain an open posture. Face the person to whom you are introducing yourself. Make eye contact. Smile.

Voice: Speak loudly enough to be heard. Be confident. Project your voice. Begin with a simple greeting: “Hi” or “Hello!” as you offer a handshake or other appropriate physical greeting.

Handshake: A warm, firm handshake is best, but in the event of a pandemic that sort of physical contact may not be appropriate. Some friendly non-touch alternatives include a thumbs up, nod, elbow bump, or a wave.

Say Your “Opener”: Say your name and something that will help them remember you. This could include your title, affiliation, or where you are from or something that explains how you came to be in this place at this time.

- I’m Sarah, and I am applying for the administrative position.
- I’m Carlos. I’m from out of town, but Megan is my cousin, and she invited me....
- I’m Pat. I’m Vice-President of Student Affairs. Welcome to our school!
- My name is Angela. This is my first day at this school. What’s your name?

Acknowledge & Ask: Usually, the other person will respond in kind. If not, you can politely ask: “What’s your name?” Then, call them by name when you ask an appropriate follow-up question.

- Nice to meet you, Steven. How long have you worked at this company?
- It’s a pleasure to meet you, Eileen. Are you a student officer at your school, too?
- Hello, Thomas! Will you join us for lunch?

Where the conversation goes from here depends on the circumstances, but with this basic introduction, you have made a good first impression, learned a little about the other person, and invited them to continue the conversation.

NOW LET’S PRACTICE!