

# Guessing game



## TIME

10 Minutes



## MATERIALS

- Participants to have pen and paper (or a good memory!)

Assumptions can be stubborn roadblocks on our journey towards inclusion. This initial activity challenges those, and helps set the framework for the rest of the day's discussions.

Without exception, this session has proved to be an effective icebreaker – something tangible that people remember long after the training has happened. It gives a quick insight into a core issue and helps to quickly settle down participants into the topic and what the rest of the day might bring.

## METHOD

- 1 **Ask participants to get into pairs, preferably with someone they don't know well.** Without talking, pairs have up to five minutes to look at their partner and guess at least three things about them. Examples are listed below. Others could be used, depending on the training context:
  - favourite food;
  - favourite colour;
  - favourite hobby;
  - favourite book/film/story;
  - best place/country ever visited;
  - one unfulfilled ambition.
- 2 **Pairs share their answers with each other first and check how accurate they were** (probably not very accurate!).
- 3 **Gather back as a group.** If you have time, people can share answers in the bigger group – especially the unusual and entertaining ones.
- 4 **Ask for general feedback.** How accurate were they? What makes it hard/easy to guess? How did people feel when their partner revealed their answers? Why?

Generally, people will make guesses based on clues such as gender, age, physical appearance and nationality/ethnic group.



Once you feel you've covered all the ideas, start to talk about disability. The problem disabled people face is that non-disabled people will often make assumptions about what they can and can't do – before they even start to get to know them.

Perhaps a non-disabled person encounters a wheelchair user and decides they can't be invited to a meeting because they don't know how they'd get to it. Or they may assume because someone is deaf, they won't be able to understand the discussions.

Both assumptions are likely to turn out to be false. But without taking time to engage with disabled people, it will be difficult to know. There's a danger you'll continue to exclude them because of what you think they cannot do.

## **MOTIVE**

This activity should lead into discussions on the assumptions people make without knowing each other. It's based on non-verbal communication. This is our way of coping with life in a complex social environment. It can be very useful. However, it can also be a huge barrier when assumptions prevent others from succeeding.

Many non-disabled people in the world have negative assumptions about disabled people. These are based on appearance – or on a surface understanding of their situation. No real progress will be made if these assumptions aren't raised and challenged.

This activity can help open up discussions for later activities. It's important for people to start this discussion and consider how they regard disabled people.