

EXERCISE:

Archetypes: Who did I Bring into this Room?

FORMAT:

GROUP
EXERCISE

TIME: 30 MIN

REQUIRED MATERIALS: BLANK CARDS, COLOURED CRAYONS OR MARKER PENS (OPTIONAL)

SUMMARY:

This is an unusual exercise that helps participants introduce themselves to each other and to build trust and group cohesion.

KEY EXPLANATION POINTS:

- Hand out blank paper in the shape of cards or blank index cards.
- Explain that, in almost every situation, we enter a space with one of our 'archetypes' by default – the persona that we use to be in that space and with others. This persona is like a shield – it protects us. It can be anything – the mother, the joker, the trickster, the leader, the maverick, the scholar, the bitch, the martyr...
- Ask participants to think about 'who I am in this space?'; 'which personality have I brought in?'
- Try to give it a name if you can. On one side, write down that name and, if inspired to do so, draw some simple representations of that archetype.
- When everyone is finished, ask them to lay out their cards and to describe who they chose and why.

FACILITATION NOTES:

- Explain that our 'archetypes' or 'public identities' are our shields – how we want others to see us – but that they also put distance between us. Sometimes, especially in a safe place, we need to lay down those shields and to be the person who is underneath. That makes us vulnerable, and it is scary, but it is one of the ways in which we establish safety and trust with each other – by taking that risk, and speaking from that place.

Alternative option:

- For a more detailed discussion – and one that mirrors the 'pros' and 'cons' of all our integrated security strategies – have participants turn the card over. On the reverse, at one end of the card, have them write down the positive aspects of their chosen archetype. Then turn it around and, at the other end, write down the negative aspects. Have them incorporate their observations into their description of the card that they chose.