



Labels

A simple yet powerful exercise to illustrate how beliefs affect behaviours, which affect relationships, which affect feelings and outcomes, which affect beliefs.... And so on.

Create a set of labels to put on hats/headbands as follows:

- Leader: Seek my approval
- Novice: Dismiss my ideas
- Joker: Don't take me seriously
- Popular: Agree with me
- Expert: Ask me questions
- Insignificant: Don't listen to me
- Bully: Defer to me
- Etc

DON'T allow people to see their label, but ask them to choose one and stick it on their hat/headband.

Now ask them to discuss a fairly simple topic to reach a decision e.g. Where shall we have our Christmas Lunch? BUT they MUST respond to people as described on their label.

Allow the discussion to go on for 10-15 minutes and then ask for observations. Maybe ask specific individuals how they are feeling and why. How is this affecting THEIR behaviour?

Then, move onto something more important e.g. how can we encourage flexible working?

After this, you can allow people to see their labels and discuss:

- How this made them feel
- How it affected the behaviour of those around them (and so altered their own behaviour – perhaps to start 'living up to' their label)
- What impact that had on the quality of the discussion and so the outcome.

Some very powerful insights about bias, attitude and behaviour.