

CREATIVE LEADERSHIP

Leadership Briefs and Reflections

Arts as a Lever for Creative Decision-Making

By engaging the right and left hemispheres of our brains simultaneously, we loosen the creative muscles that enhance engagement, out of the box thinking, and collaboration in problem-solving. Bringing our best creative thinking forward sets the stage for innovation and new thinking around existing problems of practice. Engaging teams in arts-based activities encourages relationship-building, cooperation, and creative thinking.

Inviting teams to spend even a few minutes engaged in an arts-based activity can infuse creativity and innovation into the subsequent work of the team. Finding ways to incorporate arts learning in teamwork and problem-solving helps to broaden thinking and deepen connections with team members. This creative synergy can deepen innovative problem-solving in schools, districts, county offices of education, and other organizations.

Reflection Questions:

- What brief arts-based activities can you introduce to teams to get their creative juices flowing?
- How can arts educators partner with colleagues to collaboratively plan arts-based activities and processes in team meetings?

How might facilitators guide teams in debriefing arts activities to make meaning and translate the learning to further group goals? How can leaders guide others into shared creative spaces?

Try These to get Started!

- Engage in partner drawing in which one partner describes an image to their partner who is not able to see the drawing. Extend the activity by reflecting on the importance of communication in the work of the team.
- Invite team members to engage in an art activity to contribute a puzzle piece or quilt square on an engaging topic for the team. Bring the works together and invite the team to reflect on the shared work. Is the whole greater than the sum of the parts? Extend the activity by applying the observations to the ways in which teams contribute to larger work.
- When small groups are presenting their thinking or work, invite them to present them in a creative format (artistic presentation, skit, poem, or other artistic way to share their work).
- Conduct a retreat or meeting in a museum (or create your own "museum" by posting works of art). Provide groups time to reflect on the works of art. Possible prompts: What do you notice? Close your eyes and reflect on what stood out to you in the piece. What is happening? What else does it bring to mind for you? These reflections are a great way to connect a team and get reflective and problem-solving skills flowing!