Activity Description:

**Purpose of activity:**
- This game encourages problem solving and helps groups learn to communicate effectively.
- To illustrate the importance of clear communication, and allow the group to explore their communication style and make improvements as necessary.
- Provide students an opportunity to develop helping skills and brainstorm ideas about how they are used in various careers (Encouragement, Questioning, Silence, Reframing, Attending, Reflecting, and Listening).

**Activity:**
Students are placed into teams of 3 (students will be referred to as clients). Client A is the communicator or director. Client B is the builder or constructor. And Client C is the observer and note taker. Clients A and B are given an identical set of building blocks or lego's or other manipulatives. Clients can also be given cut out shapes on construction paper or card stock if cost is an issue. Clients are instructed to listen and communicate effectively. Clients will also need to be reminded to be respectful of each other and others in the classroom. Blinds are placed between clients, to keep them honest and focused during this activity.

**Steps:**
1. Have students place blinds between each other. Both partners are given an identical set of construction materials.
2. Client A is instructed to build a structure from the materials given without telling Client B (encourage client to build a simple structure to start). Remind Clients that this is not a competitive activity but rather an activity to determine their effectiveness at listening and communicating and reflecting on what they have learned. This should take 1 to 2 minutes.
3. Client B sits quietly and waits.
4. When Client A is finished he or she will give instructions to student B to replicate (build) their structure. Client B is allowed to ask “closed-ended” questions that require a “yes or no” response. They may also be allowed to ask “open-ended” questions for clarification and deepen understanding of what is being communicated. Client C will observe and take notes, their role is strictly observational. Client C DOES NOT interact with the activity taking place.
5. After Client A and B are done they switch roles. Following the flow chart below.
Flow looks like this: Client A → Client B → Client C; Client A is B → Client B is Client C → Client C is Client A; continue until all clients have rotated through all roles once.
6. Clean up.
7. Clients will sit down in collaborative groups and reflect on what they observed, felt, and why is this important to me. This will allow clients to communicate effectively and illustrate the importance of clear communication, and allow clients to communication improvements.
8. Client groups will address the following in their reflection;
   a. How does this activity demonstrate the importance of solving a problem in a group rather than as an individual? Where might you see this approach outside the school setting?
   b. What did the group learn about communication with others. Why is this important to you?
   c. Which helping skills proved to be the most useful in this activity?
   d. Given this same activity at some later date, how would you improve the skills you learned today?
9. All participating groups will create a presentation of their observations to share with the rest of the class groups.

Duration/Length:

1-2 class session (45-50 minutes each). Note: this can be adjusted depending on the clientele being addressed.

Tools/Materials Needed:

1 set of identical Wood blocks or Legos.
2 fold out blinds.
Reflection Work sheet for after main activity.
Clip Board or notebook or legal pad.
Pen or Pencil.
Butcher Paper or Poster Board or Computer Available Technology
Markers, Crayons, or Color Pencils.

Partnerships Recommended:

CDF
Classroom Teacher, Counselor, or other educational professional
Special Ed paras

Developmental Level (e.g. Preschool, Elementary, Middle, College, etc.):

Adaptable for Preschool, Elementary, Middle School, High School, and College.

Suggestions for Scaling (ideas for use with students of other ages):
Number and color of blocks used.
Number of and type of questions asked.
Length of time.
When done within semester of school year.
Advancing skill over time (activity that transcend entire school year allowing for increased complexity).

Standards Covered (NCDA Guidelines, WY C/VE Standards, ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors):

K-5:
CV5.1.3: Students identify and demonstrate behaviors contributing to the successful completion of workplace tasks
CV5.1.4: Students complete task within an allotted time by acquiring, storing, organizing, and using materials and space efficiently.
CV5.2.3: Students identify and actively participate in group roles and responsibilities while demonstrating respect and awareness of diversity.
CV5.3.1: Students identify and define real world problems and meaningful questions for investigation.
CV5.3.2: Students plan and manage activities to develop a solution or complete a project.
CV5.3.3: Students collect and analyze data to identify solutions and make informed decisions.
CV5.3.4: Students seek help from appropriate people (staff, students, parents, etc.) and appropriate resources.
CV5.4.1: Students use a variety of methods including oral, written, multimedia, pictorial, and/or multimedia in order to create and share a product.

6-8:
CV8.2.1: Career-aware students effectively communicate using a variety of appropriate methods.
CV8.2.3: Career-aware students actively participate as a team member to accomplish group goals while effectively working with diverse individuals/groups.
CV8.3.4: Career-aware students plan, manage, and complete projects in a timely and effective manner.

9-12:
CV12.2.1: College and career-ready students communicate clearly, effectively, and with reason.
CV12.3.1: College and career-ready students identify and define authentic problems and significant questions for investigation.
CV12.3.3: College and career-ready students identify trends, forecast possibilities, and explore complex systems and issues.

References/Developed By:
| James J. Williams  
| Nichole W. Farrar  
| Jasmine J. Varos  

**Based On:**  
WYOMING STARBASE Academy Curriculum  
Building Communication Skills Game [mftrou.com](http://www.mftrou.com/communication-skills-game.html)  
Leadership-Team-Building-Blocks [hthu.net](http://hthu.net/site/wp-content/.../01/Leadership-Team-Building-Blocks)  
Communication Building Blocks [https://successforkidswithhearingloss.com](https://successforkidswithhearingloss.com)  
“Can You Hear Me Now?”

Client C Observations/Notes:

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Drawing Space Observations:

Client A

Client B
“Can You Hear Me Now?”

Reflections:

a. How does this activity demonstrate the importance of solving a problem in a group rather than as an individual? Where might you see this approach outside the school setting?

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b. What did the group learn about communication with others. Why is this important to you?

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 c. Which helping skills proved to be the most useful in this activity?

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d. Given this same activity at some later date, how would you improve the skills you learned today?

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