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TRIADS

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Ask participants to complete this sentence:

I am a(n) _____ .

After they have done this, ask them to complete the same sentence 10 different ways.

Finally, have them pin their lists to their clothing, like a jumbo nametag.

Round 1. Participants wander around and form themselves into triads with as much similarity among them as possible. They have 3 minutes to do this.

Debrief to emphasize that there is more similarity among people than it meets the eye.

Round 2. Participants have 3 minutes to re-assemble themselves into triads with maximum diversity.

Debrief to emphasize that there are similarities among even the most diverse group. If there is any triad without a single element of similarity in their lists (which is very unlikely), ask everyone to brainstorm and generate 10 items of similarity.

Complementary diversity. Randomly assign participants to triads. Within each triad, ask participants to come up with an entrepreneurial venture which would exploit the unique combination of the three members. The venture should put to use the cultural and individual diversity among the members. If one member of the triad drops out, it should be impossible to provide the selected product or service.

Example: My triad decides to come up with a videotape training program to teach English as a second language to Indians. This requires my knowledge of India and of instructional design, Howard's skills in video production and his bland Midwest accent, and Aida's experience in teaching English as a second language and her understanding of the woman's point of view.

After 5 minutes ask different triads to report their business plan. Jointly decide which plan makes the best use of the unique combination of the triad's diversity.

Debrief to highlight how cultural diversity can provide the US with a leading edge in global competitiveness.

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