

“OH NO YOU DIDN’T!”

Agility Shift Practice/Warm-Up Activity
Compliments of
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This game is especially good for practicing making the mindset shift necessary to respond to the unexpected and unplanned.

Ask for a volunteer to help you demonstrate the game. When the volunteer steps up. Let them know you are going to play a game called “Oh No You Didn’t” (Note: say the title with as much attitude as you can muster). The way it works is you are going to start telling you a fairly mundane story, like what you did on your last vacation. Once you (facilitator) get a little bit into the story, you will be asking your volunteer to interrupt with their best “On no you didn’t!”, to which, the facilitator must respond, “You’re right, I didn’t!” and then must drop the “script” and take it in an entirely new direction.

EXAMPLE:

Facilitator: I’ve been working so much the last few months that I decided to treat myself to a spa in the desert for a week.

Volunteer: Oh no you didn’t!

Facilitator: You’re right, I didn’t!” I really signed up for space camp at NASA. It was so great. I got to go in the zero gravity chamber and eat astronaut food, and learn all about life on Mars . . .

Volunteer: Oh no you didn’t!

Facilitator: You’re right, I didn’t! I ate deep dish pizza and learned about alien life forms that look eerily like my uncle Fred’s family. Which reminded me I still owe him a birthday card.

Volunteer: Oh no you didn’t!

Facilitator: You’re right, I didn’t! I remembered it was MY birthday and I’m not getting any younger so . . .

After the demonstration, thank your volunteer and ask your participants/colleagues to pair up. Remind them that all they have to do is start telling some mundane story about a recent

experience and when their partner interrupts, with “Oh no you didn’t!”, say “You’re right, I didn’t! I . . . “ and take the story in a completely different wild direction. Be sure to give both people in the pairs a chance to play both roles.

Once both people have had a chance to play, ask everyone “How was that for you?” and “What did you notice?”

Be sure to follow up on responses, for example, if someone responds “It was fun.” ASK, “Great! What was fun about it?” Or “it was hard for me.” You might respond, “Interesting. What was hard about it?”

Another questions could be “Did it get easier as you went a long?” You might also ask participants to think about how this game was similar to some of the things they are asked to do in their work/on the team. In what ways do they have to let go of their pre-conceptions and adopt new stories?