

Arm Fold Exercise...

Purpose: Learn why we are good at our leveraging our own style but find it so difficult to modify that style. Even with a simple task, such as crossing arms, it takes practice and concentration to do so differently than normal. When people cross their arms, they do so naturally, without even thinking about it. When asked to fold them another way they often stop, refold their arms again, and try to figure out which arm was on top, which arm moves first, and so on. Encourage participants to consider and share their own personal emotions related to flexing.

Duration: 5 minutes

Number of Participants: Unlimited

Materials Required: None

Description/Process:

Introduce the concept of flexing (to be able to modify behavior from your norm)

Ask the group to cross their arms, as if bored or waiting for something

Once completed, ask them to fold their arms in another way, reversed of what they just performed

Watch how the majority of the group will struggle to flex their style of crossing arms

Discussion Questions:

How did it feel when you were asked to cross your arms the other way?

Did it come naturally or did you have to stop and think about it?

Were you comfortable with doing this differently from your normal process?

What are some things that make people resistant to change or flexing their style?

How is flexing communication styles is important to establishing credibility, building relationships, and getting a point across?

What kind of support is necessary to maintain the changes associated with flexing your style?