Learning Activity: Murder Mystery

Leadership Skill: Working with Groups – decisions

What To Do: Solve the mystery as a group.

Focus: Group

Instructions for group leader:

The following exercise is a mystery that can be used to study the way information is communicated in problem-solving groups. Write each clue on a separate card and pass them out randomly to group members. Groups of any size can be used.

The task of the group is to solve a murder mystery by finding the murderer, the weapon, the time of the murder, the place of the murder, and the motive. Each member has some clues that will help solve the mystery. The clues may be communicated verbally, but the cards may not be shown to other group members.

Clues

- When he was discovered dead, Mr. Thompson had a bullet wound in his calf and a knife wound in his back.
- Mr. Barton shot at an intruder in his apartment building at midnight.
- Mr. Thompson had virtually wiped out Mr. Barton’s business by stealing his customers.
- The elevator operator reported to police that he saw Mr. Thompson at 12:15 a.m.
- The bullet taken from Mr. Thompson’s calf matched the gun owned by Mr. Barton.
- Only one bullet had been fired from Mr. Barton’s gun.
- The elevator man said Mr. Thompson did not seem too badly hurt.
- The knife found in the parking garage had been wiped clean of fingerprints.
- Mrs. Scott had been waiting in the lobby for her husband to get off work.
- The elevator man went off duty at 12:30 a.m.
- Mr. Thompson’s body was found in the park.
- Mr. Thompson’s body was found at 1:20 a.m.
- Mr. Thompson had been dead for about an hour when his body was found, according to the medical examiner.
- Mrs. Scott did not see Mr. Thompson leave through the lobby while she was waiting.
- Bloodstains corresponding to Mr. Thompson’s blood type were found in the basement parking garage.
- Police were unable to locate Mr. Barton after the murder.
- Mr. Thompson’s blood type was found on the carpet outside Mr. Barton’s apartment.
- There were bloodstains in the elevator.
- Mrs. Scott has been a good friend of Mr. Thompson and had often visited his apartment.
- Mrs. Scott’s husband had been jealous of the friendship.
- Mrs. Scott’s husband did not appear in the lobby at 12:20 a.m., the end of his normal working hours. She had to return home alone and he arrived later.
- At 12:45 a.m. Mrs. Scott could not find her husband or the family car in the basement parking lot of the apartment building where he worked.

Reference: Leadership Skills You Never Outgrow