



Fun With Effective Communication & Braincog's Game, Portrayal

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Organizations have discovered that playing the game Portrayal during team-building sessions has provided people with opportunities to discuss strategies for improving business communication.

PR9.NET August 22, 2007 - MATTHEWS, North Carolina – Braincog, Inc. recently released its newest game, Portrayal. Braincog CEO, Amanda Kohout, describes Portrayal "as the game where 1000 words are worth a picture."

Portrayal is a social interaction, family, and party game for three or more players. It's patented game play tests players' ability to describe, draw, and evaluate wacky illustrations and images.

The game is one you'd expect to find in any home's game closet. But the game has also been played during corporate training and team-building meetings. Portrayal has been used to demonstrate the importance of providing quality feedback, the impact of diversity on business communication, and the consequences of making assumptions. Playing Portrayal provides a non threatening segue to more serious discussions about issues like these that have become increasingly relevant to effective communication in our age of one-way voicemail/email messages and globalization.

In each round of Portrayal, one player (the portrayer) selects a game card with a (typically hilarious) image on it. Also on the card are a set of ten "criteria" that describe something about the image. For example, on a card titled "Eye-Scream Cone", there is a cartoon picture of a woman screaming in horror beside a large ice-cream cone. One of the scoops of "ice cream" is actually an eyeball. Criteria number eight on the card reads, "There are at least seven sprinkles on the topmost scoop of ice cream".

The portrayer places the card into a "concealment folder" so he or she cannot see any of the criteria on the card. An electronic timer is activated which counts down 90 seconds. The portrayer must describe the image on the card using any words he or she wishes. However, the portrayer cannot use gestures.

At the same time, the other players each have a special score sheet and pencil. As the portrayer describes the bizarre image, each of the "artists" attempts to draw the picture based solely on the description. They cannot ask questions or look at other artists' drawings.

"The player acting as portrayer for a given round is in the spotlight," says Kohout. "The words he or she chooses to use, the precision of his or her instructions, and what is left unsaid and thus up to the artist's to fill in based on assumptions, is very revealing. Analogies and generalizations about how people play Portrayal and how people interact with customers and colleagues in the work environment really do get people thinking about how to communicate better."

Once the time has expired, the artists trade drawings. This is typically where laughter ensues.

Now the portrayer proceeds to read off, one by one, the criteria written on the card. For each criterion, the artists must judge the drawing created by another player to decide if the criteria has been met or not. Once all of the criteria have been read, points are awarded to the artists and the portrayer based on how many of the criteria were satisfied. Finally, everyone gets to see how their drawing compared to the actual image on the card.

An informative PowerPoint presentation, titled "Playing with Communication", is available for free download on Braincog's website at <http://braincog.com/games.html>. The presentation covers the "communication loop", provides tips for offering and receiving constructive feedback, and other topics.

"A local medical center held a team building exercise playing Portrayal and it provided opportunities for nurses and administrative staff to talk about how to better communicate with their diverse customer base," explains Kohout.

In each game of Portrayal, everyone has at least one chance to be the portrayer and several opportunities to be an artist and judge. Everyone plays during every round.

Portrayal retails for \$29.95 and can be purchased from Braincog's website at <http://www.braincog.com>. It is also becoming available in game, book, and specialty gift stores.

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About Braincog Inc

Braincog Inc creates games and puzzles that are fun for your brain.

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