



Mementos

Overview

A memento is a physical object of any kind that holds personal significance for the owner. For example, it may be an award, a picture, an article of clothing, a knick-knack, or a found object, such as a sea shell.

When to Use

Mementos often provide insight into the owner's values - or what they consider to be important. As such, the use of mementos is an excellent way for team members to introduce themselves to one another.

Steps

1. Create memento instructions that are relevant to your meeting agenda. Here are examples:
 - Bring a memento - a physical object that holds personal significance for you - that illustrates one of your beliefs about leadership.
 - Or one that illustrates one of your most powerful learning experiences.
 - Or one that illustrates one of your most powerful team experiences.
2. Send the memento instructions to the team before its meeting so members will know to bring the object to the session.

Options:

1. **Short version.** The short version requires each member to state their name, affiliation, hold up their memento, briefly describe the memento (“this is the shirt I wore during a relay race in high school”), and then describe how it illustrates the phenomenon in question (“it represents the first time I really understood the importance of every team member’s contribution, from our slowest runner to our fastest sprinter”). This process is then repeated by all remaining team members.
2. **Long version.** For the longer version, after the speaker describes how the memento illustrates the phenomenon in question, other members are invited to ask clarifying questions and reflect on a personal experience that the memento has triggered for them. The process is then repeated by all remaining team members.