



STEM Committee
Michigan Crossroads Council

Name:

Supernova Activity Topic: Technology
Communication Technology

Troop:

Date:

Supernova Activity Topic: Technology

From the energy that keeps our homes comfortable and our lights on, to the communication that lets us talk to people around the world, to the special effects used in the movies, we depend on technology. Choose any one of the following projects and you will have fun while learning about today's technology.

Communication Technology

This activity can be done individually or in a group. It requires the participation of 20 to 30 people.

The scenario: You are the communication chair for a science fair being organized by your unit. Your responsibility is to gather contact information from all participants (contestants, judges, staff, and so on) and formulate a communication plan that will be effective for anticipated communications and necessary-but-unexpected communications as well. You will need to be able to communicate some information to everyone, other information to subgroups, and additional information to another group of individuals.

Part 1: Communication Plan

Before you get started, share your plan with your mentor. Then do the following:

1. Solicit volunteers to serve as participants. Give each participant a mock role in your mock science fair. You will need 20 to 30 such individuals.

2. From each participant, gather at least two ways to contact him or her, as well as an emergency contact. Participants should list their contact modes in order, from the most-likely-to-be-received to the least-likely-to-be-received.

3. Set up plans for how you will broadcast messages to various subgroups, how you will get emergency messages to groups or individuals who will have access to the contact information, how access will be maintained, and back-up plans in case you are suddenly unavailable.

Think about the kinds of information you will need to communicate. This sometimes influences the mode of communication and should also be a part of your communication plans.



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4. Test your plan by playing a few Mad Libs via your communication plan. To test your communication plan, choose a particular Mad Lib and send out requests for various types of words (verbs, adjectives, nouns, and so on) to a group of individuals and subgroups. Make sure you cover your entire set of recipients or recipient groups, and be sure to give everyone a deadline for a response.

If you don't get responses, follow up with additional messages, perhaps via different communication modes. When you have what you need, make sure you communicate the finished Mad Lib back to the relevant individuals.

A Mad Lib is an unfinished story that is complete except for missing words, indicated by blanks. The words for each blank are in categories such as verbs, nouns, and adjectives. Missing words are supplied by folks who don't know the story, thus creating a funny, crazy, mad story.

Part 2: Analysis and Report

Gather some statistics relevant to your communication plan and your participants. Then do the following:

1. Discuss with your counselor:

A. The many distinct modes of communication your participants used

B. Any modes of communication used but with which you were unfamiliar

C. The technology used for your broadcast communication messages and whether that technology was the most effective mode of communication for one-on-one messages

2. Create a report that outlines your communication plan, how you implemented it, and how effective it was. Include information about the biggest hurdle, anything unexpected that happened, and what you would do differently if this had been a real assignment for you.

Resources

Roger Price. *Best of Mad Libs*. Price Stern Sloan, 2008.

Roger Price and Leonard Stern. *More Best of Mad Libs*. Price Stern Sloan, 2009.

For information about Mad Libs, go to www.madlibs.com. Click on the "Mad Libs Online Widget" to try it out.