

The Chair Project – Educator-Style

The Student of Life sits in a chair, positioned for success in all arenas. Four legs hold up this chair. Remove one and...you guessed it.

Introduction – Frontloading

Welcome group and introduce the goals and expectations for the workshop

- To provide the group with a metaphor as a tool to discuss important themes
- To translate that discussion into a project that tests our ability to think critically about the topic and to work together

1) The Chair

Each leg is as important as the other. They overlap each other, just as all of life's arenas do. The standard you hold yourself to in the classroom effects and interacts with the standard you hold yourself to at work / life. The way you carry yourself informs and dictates your effectiveness in groups.

- The Work – The Task at Hand
- The Initiative – Above and Beyond
- Attitude – Eye-contact and Enthusiasm
- Accountability – Emotional Availability, Responsible to and for Others

We explain our metaphor, with a brief disclaimer that it is but one metaphor. Our Chair is particularly geared towards students who are trying to advance their academic and professional selves. Our Chair is a great discussion point to get students ready to create and sustain relationships with peers, teachers, potential employers etc.

There are other foundational “legs” that everyone needs in his or her life. Educators, for example, need a certain set of foundational concepts to reach their goals. We will get to that later.

2) Scenarios:

Group discusses which leg or legs are missing. There is no “right” answer. As long as answers are thoughtful, they are helpful.

3) Project:

**You can get an actual wooden chair to work with. Or a handout of a blank chair that the group can work with.

Educators: In groups, spend 15-20 minutes discussing the foundational elements of effective teaching. Decide, as a group, what your 4 legs will be. Decorate your chair and its legs to represent these ideas and then present your chair, your ideas and your process to the other groups.

Students: In groups, spend 15-20 minutes discussing the foundational elements of being a successful student of life. Decide, as a group, what your 4 legs will be. Decorate your

chair and its legs to represent these ideas and then present your chair, your ideas and your process to the other groups.

4) Debrief:

- What was the value of this project?
- Why are metaphors effective ways of addressing certain topics?
- What accounts for the difference in people's perspectives regarding their Chairs?
- What are some other possible metaphors that can be effective in addressing important topics?
- What are the overlaps between the foundational concepts of being a teacher and being a student? Why? What are the differences? Why?