



Polsky Diamond

This strategy was developed by Howard Polsky. The diamond is a valuable tool to assist teachers and para-professionals with conflict resolution, group dynamics, and guided group interaction (GGI).

Key Method

Understanding the eight components of the diamond helps the school employees to more deeply understand, communicate, and facilitate the ability to evaluate students and determine the dynamics of the peer group. It also is of great assistance in “reading” the class group with whom the teacher works.

Method Components

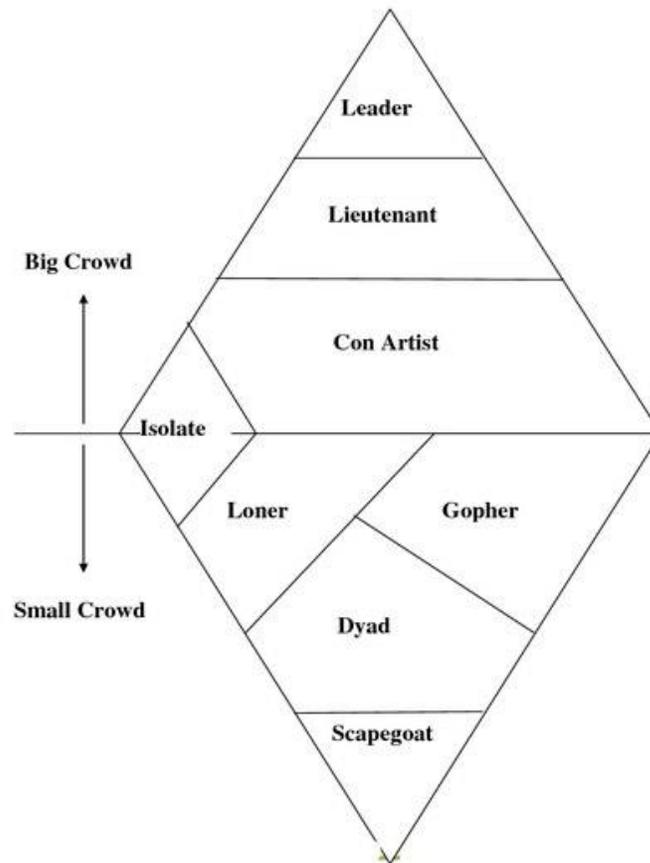
As students undertake an activity, the educator uses the diamond:

- as a diagnostic tool by which behavior can be analyzed and understood
- to develop behavioral management and education strategies for individuals and groups, and
- to organize and conduct classroom activities

POLSKY'S DIAMOND

POSITIVE

NEGATIVE



Eight Social Types

The diamond is split in half horizontally into the Big Crowd (leaders) and the Small Crowd (followers). The diamond is split vertically in half into Positive and Negative types of behaviors. Students are classified within the diamond as belonging to one of the following social types.

1. The leader carries himself/herself with an assertive confidence indicated through their physical and intellectual abilities. Sometimes she/he is a silent leader. When he/she talks, everyone listens. He/she models the normative behavior for the group and communicates in a sophisticated manner.
2. The Lieutenant is the leader's right hand person/persons usually verbal and very supportive of the leader often does the leader's "dirty work".
3. The con artist is usually a person who is the communication link between the staff and big crowd. Always "getting over" making deals. Has the protection of the power. Acts according to the group he/she interacts with. The con artist often establishes as strong interactive communication flow with the staff.
4. Isolate- Is the position that most new students take upon entering the group. For many this is temporary due to his/her physical strength, intelligence and maturity. Weak isolates will move into small crowd. Strong isolates will move into the big crowd
5. Loners will keep to himself/herself as a defense against attack by the group.
6. Gophers are the people who "go for" and will give up his/her seat, cigarettes, etc. in exchange for being left alone.

7. Dyad is a sub-group of (2) persons who support and protect each other. When not together, they are usually loners.
8. The scapegoat is the weakest member of the group. Most everyone picks on him/her. Group pushes most problems on the scapegoat.

Suggested Preparation

- Observe three GGI meetings OR three Restorative Justice Circles and identify the eight social types of the diamond.

Suggestive Review

- Discuss and compare your results from the GGI meetings/RJ Circles with other colleagues.

Supporting Research

<http://www.thetcj.org/child-care-history-policy/cottage-six-the-social-system-of-delinquent-boys-in-residential-treatment-by-howard-w-polsky>

<http://www.cebc4cw.org/program/positive-peer-culture/>

www.ReclaimingYouth.org

<https://www.jys.org/what-is-positive-peer-culture/>

<https://www.google.com/search?q=polsky+diamond+diagram&newwindow=1&sa=X&tbn=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&ved=0ahUKEwirsYvWrJPWAhWq34MKHUIDBNsQ7AkIWA&biw=1366&bih=643#imgrc=&spf=1504796788830>

Submission Guidelines and Evaluation Criteria

Part 1. Overview Questions (200 word limit for each response)

Activity Description: After reading Joseph Mullen’s article “Working in a Diamond Mind”: <http://stafftraining.dmschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Working-in-a-Diamond-Mind.pdf> describe and compare three similarities to the youth referred to in the article and the students you work with each day.

- **Activity Evaluation:** What three strategies did you learn from this article that you can apply to your own classroom and the students you work with each day.

Passing: Activity description is clear with sufficient detail to the ways the learner can apply the three strategies to their own classroom.

Part 2. Evidence / artifacts

- Please watch this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fjO6W9K-8Mw&feature=youtu.be>
- After finishing the video, complete the Eight Social Types Table below

YES	ALMOST	NOT YET
Student work clearly demonstrates learning from applying the effective reasoning strategies through:	Student work demonstrates learning from applying the reasoning strategies through:	Student work demonstrates learning from applying the reasoning strategies through:
1. Accurately identifying all 8 of students and their social types	1. Accurately identifying at least 6 of 8 of the students and their social types	1. Accurately identifying at least 5 of 8 of the students and their social types

Submission from Applicant

Eight Social Types	Name Associated
Leader	
Lieutenant	
Con Artist	
Gopher	
Dyad	
Scapegoat	
Loner	
Isolate	

Part 3. Teacher reflection

Provide a reflection on what you learned, using the following questions as a guide (200-word limit):

- How was your response to learners impacted because of using the diamond as a diagnostic tool? Please site two concrete examples. How will this diagnostic tool improve your teaching strategies in the future? Give at least two examples.

Passing: Teacher leader successfully reflects on how he/she responds differently to his/her students when using the diamond as a diagnostic tool with students. Activity description is clear with sufficient detail, including at least two examples, to how teaching strategies will improve using the diamond as a diagnostic tool.