Audience Reaction Team

■ CATEGORIES Large Group

■ **CLASSIFICATIONS** Discussion Technique; Oral

Communication

DIVISIONS Minor

DEFINITION

The **AUDIENCE REACTION TEAM** involves a group of three to five persons, representative of a larger audience, who "react" with the speaker(s) on behalf of the total audience. Such interaction occurs simultaneously with the use of other major methodologies (lecture, symposium, panel, etc.) in which those members of the team seek definition, clarification, etc., from those actively engaged in the information presentation. These audience representatives normally are seated near the speaker(s) or at the front of the audience and are permitted even to interrupt a speaker if necessary, in order to make the presentation of greatest import to the hearers.

■ INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE

- 1. As early as possible the speaker(s) should be informed that this technique will be employed and his/her permission should at least be secured, if not enthusiastically granted.
- Audience representatives are chosen who are neither timid nor theatrical, as either of these extremes will invalidate the effects of the method.
- 3. Members of the team should be representative of the larger group intellectually, in order that they might think and act on the level of, and for the benefit of, all.
- When necessary, individuals on this team react with the speaker(s) seeking definition, clarification, etc., even when this occasionally means interrupting a speaker

BEST AGES FOR USE

Generally the **AUDIENCE REACTION TEAM** is most beneficial for those of the adult age group.

■ TIME REQUIREMENTS

Time requirements are determined in direct relation to the length of the major methodology employed.

20 EDUCATIONAL SPICE

PERSONNEL REQUIRED

Three to five representatives from the audience are needed who meet the requirements and who are willing to serve in this capacity.

■ NECESSARY MATERIALS, EQUIPMENT & FACILITIES

Adequate seating is required, as is the use of appropriate voice amplification when necessary.

ADVANTAGES

- It permits especially those of the adult population who have not benefited from higher education or other specialized training incorporating practice in perceptual listening, and those who are new to the materials being presented, to see clarification of specific subjects, terminology, statements, views, and opinions.
- 2. Timid individuals, normally too backward to speak up and seek help on their own, are provided this benefit by proxy, through a representative substitute on their behalf.
- 3. Questions can be asked and issues clarified immediately before being forgotten (while the lecture, etc., is being presented).
- 4. Speakers are often motivated to prepare more carefully and completely, and to be cognizant of the audience and their needs.
- 5. This method can be instrumental in changing such passive methodologies as the lecture, into more stimulating and productive encounters.

■ DISADVANTAGES & LIMITATIONS

- 1. When the technique is practiced, some information presentations, (major techniques) become so bogged down with questions and clarifications that very little new information is transmitted.
- 2. This technique can be easily abused.
- 3. Too many interruptions can cause the major method to lose its effectiveness and continuity.
- 4. The audience is still passive, even though team members participate actively.
- Overuse of this method tends to deteriorate the listening skills of the audience.

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■ DIAGRAM

