

The R Rules

Facilitator's Guide

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	iii
Preface	v
A Note to Facilitators	vi
Days 1–4: Introduction and Chapter 1, Roadwork	1
Day 1	1
Days 2–3	8
Day 4	10
Days 5–7: Chapter 2, Relevance	10
Day 5	11
Day 6	15
Day 7	17
Days 8–24: Chapter 3, Realities	20
Day 8	20
Days 9–10	24
Day 11	26
Day 12	27
Day 13	27
Days 14–15	28
Days 16–17	28
Day 18	29
Day 19	29
Day 20	30
Day 21	30
Day 22	32
Day 23	33
Day 24	39
Day 25: Chapter 4, Reasons	40
Day 25	40

Days 26–28: Chapter 5, Rules	44
Day 26	44
Days 27–28	47
Days 29–32: Chapter 6, Resources	48
Day 29	48
Days 30–32	51
Days 33–34: Chapter 7, Review	54
Days 33–34	54
Days 35–36: Chapter 8, Relationships	58
Days 35–36	58
Days 37–38: Chapter 9, Response	62
Days 37–38	63
Days 39–42: Chapter 10, Register	67
Day 39	67
Days 40–41	69
Day 42	72
Days 43–44: Chapter 11, Reframe	72
Days 43–44	72
Day 45: Chapter 12, Roadwork	78
Day 45	79
Appendix	83
Chapter Outlines	85
Pacing Guides	106
Sample Letter for Families	109
Stories from <i>Think Rather of Zebra</i>	110
Reality Game Labels	124
Bibliography	126

Preface

Several years ago my son and his new wife came home to spend their first Christmas with us as a family. My daughter-in-law, a teacher in Texas, brought me a little book that she “thought would be of interest to me.” As a manager of GEARUP and Comprehensive School Reform grants, I was always looking for new information and best practices. While reading a book at Christmas when my kids are home is not a priority for me, the relationship with my daughter-in-law is, so I read the book. Then I read it again. After I read *A Framework for Understanding Poverty* for the third time, my youngest son suggested I purchase another book: specifically, one with information about obsessive-compulsive disorder!

A Framework for Understanding Poverty and the insights it provided literally changed the way I viewed myself and the world. In a series of what are referred to as “aha! moments,” I gained new respect and understanding of resources and how they impact the way we think, learn, and act. Those insights were further expanded by *Bridges Out of Poverty* and the work aha! Process does with businesses, organizations, and entire communities.

Becoming an aha! Process Certified Trainer for my school district in New Mexico allowed me to present the information to adults, and over time a pattern emerged. While a profound shift in individual perceptions and development of resources with adults was occurring, the information was not being taught to students. Having worked for several years presenting leadership and management skills to young people, I began to consider how aha! Process concepts could be presented to kids in a meaningful and engaging way. *The R Rules* was created in order to meet that goal.

I titled this book *The R Rules* based on two formulas that became mental models referred to by students as “R rules.” The first formula, Rules – Relationships = Resentment and Rebellion ($R - R = R + R$) was developed from a statement made by Grant East. Basically it states that when there are rules or regulations without relationships, resentment, rebellion, or refusal will occur. The second formula is based on the work of Dr. Ruby Payne. This asset-based model serves as the foundation of the work and is stated: Rules + Rigor + Relationships = Resources + Results + Respect ($R + R + R = R + R + R$). When individuals know the rules or the rigor and how they relate to the people, goals, or things that are important to them, they can and will develop resources to get the desired results, and mutual respect can exist.

Two things that help individuals advance are relationships and education. While the traditional three R’s of education (reading, writing, and arithmetic) are very important and supported in *The R Rules*, other R’s are just as essential for learning and earning. *The R Rules* provides information, tools, and learning processes to explore and develop additional R’s that are vital for success and living well in the 21st century – R’s like resources, re-views, realities, rules, reframes, responses, and most important, relationships of mutual respect – all in a context that supports young leaders. Welcome to *The R Rules*.

$R + R + R = R + R + R^{YOU}$

Days 1-4: Introduction and Roadwork

Each day has a corresponding slide presentation. Slide numbers given in the instructions for each day refer to the slide presentation for the relevant day.

Learning Objectives:

- Increased awareness of self, others, school, and community.
- Participants will develop a vision, mission, goals, and rules:
 - Personal
 - Classroom/school
 - Academic and career
- Clearly communicate purpose and learning objectives.
- Create a future picture, communicate high expectations, and develop rules for self-governance in order to align choices and resources.
- View and discuss videos and other media to develop mental models for reaching a goal, meeting high expectations, resiliency, and teamwork.
- Develop and use personal planning notebooks, tools, and information to increase resources.

Day 1

Introduction and Roadwork

1. Slide 1, workbook page iii: Students read “Welcome to *The R Rules*.” Facilitator states course title and shows the order of the chapters using slide 1.

Slides 1-8 and workbook pages iii-viii are used to present an overview or one-day kickoff workshop to introduce *The R Rules*. These slides and pages are also used to review or to start the course following a kickoff workshop.

Use the card game analogy to:

- Develop a current and future picture.
- Recognize resources and patterns.
- Understand resources are interrelated.
- Show resources can be increased and “cards” can be discarded as needed relative to current events and future pictures.

Slide 2, workbook page v: Present “Life is Like a Card Game.” Explain this statement using the analogy of a card game. While individuals cannot control the cards they are dealt, they can decide how they play them, make choices to draw or discard cards that will improve their hands, and combine the cards they have for greater value. Use an example such as two of a kind, full house, etc. Knowing what is required to win a game is similar to knowing the desired outcome or goal. Each game has a set of rules, and in order to be successful, the players need to know those rules, both written and unwritten. Players also need to see patterns and relationships and use them to win, be in control, and keep from being cheated.

Read and review the items listed in the square below the cards on page iv one item at a time, pointing out resources and commonalities shared by all people. “Financial resources” is a joker or wild card because of the influence it has when combined with any of the other cards. After reading the list, participants reflect, clarify meaning, and review the items, then label each card in their “hands.” Cards can be given a numerical rating or value if desired.

Review and repeat this activity throughout the course as students identify, increase, and use resources. A more extensive review should occur during the Resources chapter, and individual “hands” should be used as assessment tools to establish a current picture and build resources for a future picture.

Discuss and give examples of how different resources can be combined and used to reach a goal. An example: Items on the list include formal or informal education, intelligence, gender, race, and economic class. Show how those cards can be combined for Mary, an intelligent, Hispanic girl with a 4.5 grade point average who comes from a tightly knit family with an income of \$18,000 per year. Mary would like to go to college, but her family cannot afford to pay tuition. The Daniels Fund awards scholarships to Hispanic students with high academic achievements. By combining the cards in her hand, Mary can increase the value of her hand and play the cards to reach her goal of adding a “formal education card.” Like any card game, in order to win, individuals must understand the rules, see patterns, and use strategies to maximize the cards in their hands.

Slide 3, page iv: Briefly present *The R Rules* formulas ($R + R + R$, etc.), and have students write their names in superscript, as though they were mathematical exponents, to represent *The R Rules* formulas to the power of the student’s name. Explain that the benefit or value of *The R Rules*, as with all information, will be determined by how and if the individual chooses to use it. Discuss the benefit of having a future picture to work toward and how actions, resources, and strategies can be used to reach a goal or future picture. Have students fill in the blanks on page vi and explain: *The R Rules* is based on the premise that if individuals know the rules and the rigor, develop relationships of mutual respect, and can see the relationship and relevance to what they want to do, be, and have, then they can develop the resources to get the desired results, and mutual respect will exist. *Rigor*, for the purpose of this work, is defined as the unwavering standards, structure, or expectations. An example: the number of credits and specific classes required for graduation from high school.

At this point you may want to explain that *The R Rules* is a curriculum developed for young people to teach information and processes that can be used to identify, increase, and manage resources and develop future pictures and goals and achieve them. *The R Rules* is based on key concepts from works published by aha! Process, Inc., with modules on subjects including working as a learning community, goal setting, finances and management, hidden rules of economic class, resources, registers of language, relationships, etc. Facilitators may want to review page iii or slide 1. *The R Rules* does not tell participants which resources they should focus on or what choices they should make, but rather provides information in a culture of high expectations and support as they identify, increase, and use resources. The more resources available to an individual, the more choices the individual will have.

As a facilitator, clarify: “My role is to work with you as you build and use resources so you will have choices. During *The R Rules* I will not tell you which choices; I do not know your personal situation, dreams, or hopes. I do have information that has been beneficial to me and can be beneficial to you. Seeing patterns and relationships can be used to predict; when individuals can predict, they can plan; when individuals can plan, they have more options to choose from and are better able to be in control, keep from being cheated, and win more often.”

Slide 4, page v: Briefly discuss relationships and their influence on reaching a goal or future