RESULT 5 · ACTIVITIES FOR SENIOR & INTERGENERATIONAL GROUPS

Scam Call Theatre

Improvised phone-call theatre where the "caller" plays a smooth scammer and the audience shouts "Freeze!" to rewind, rehearse and win with three magic moves - stop, hang up, call back.



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ACTIVITY 10 · IMPROV · ROLE PLAY

10

Scam Call Theatre



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FORMAT	TIME	GROUP
Improv · role play	50–60 min	6–24 · pairs on stage, everyone else as audience and coaches
LETTERS	**YOU NEED**	
P · O	Scam call scripts and safe-word cards (Printable I), two old or toy phones (or bananas), two chairs, a bell, a whiteboard or flipchart	

THE ACTIVITY IN PLAIN WORDS

Two chairs, back to back, become a telephone line. One volunteer plays a caller with a script: a "bank security officer", a "grandchild in trouble", a "police inspector" or a "courier". The other volunteer answers the phone and improvises. At any moment, the audience can shout "Freeze!" and coach the person answering, then the scene rewinds and plays again. Scammers work by creating panic and hurry, so the game practises the opposite: slowing down, refusing to share codes, hanging up and calling back on a number you know. One script in the pile is a real, harmless call, so players must listen, not just say no to everything. The session ends with every participant making a family safe-word card to take home.

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You will need

- Scam call scripts (Printable I), cut into cards and shuffled, including the one genuine call
- Safe-word cards (Printable I), one per participant
- Two old phones, toy phones, or two bananas for comedy
- Two chairs placed back to back, a bell or a "Freeze!" sign
- A flipchart with three headings: STOP · HANG UP · CALL BACK
- A home-made "Coolest Head" certificate

Before the session

- Print and cut Printable I. Read every script yourself and pick the ones that match your country and group.
- Prepare a short card with the official phone numbers participants might need: their bank's number is on the back of their bank card; the emergency number is 112 across the EU.
- Decide on a group signal for "Freeze!" (a bell, a raised hand or a word).
- If someone in the group has been a victim of fraud, talk to them privately beforehand. Offer them the role of coach rather than actor, or a seat out.

OPENING LINES · READ ALOUD

"Welcome to Scam Call Theatre. Today we are actors, and the stage is a telephone line. Scam callers are very good actors too. They are polite, they sound official, and they make you feel that you must act right now. We are going to beat them at their own game. You only need three magic moves: stop, hang up, and call back on a number you already know. Anyone in the audience can shout 'Freeze!' at any moment to help. Nobody here gets it wrong. We are rehearsing, so that if it ever happens for real, you have already practised."

How to run it

1 **Warm up the voices** 5 min

Everyone stands or sits in a circle. Pass around one phrase, "Hello, this is your bank calling," and each person says it in a different style: worried, bored, very posh, very fast. Point out that voices can be faked: AI can now copy a real person's voice from a short recording.

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2 The three magic moves 5 min

Write STOP · HANG UP · CALL BACK on the flipchart. Explain: Stop means slow down, because urgency is the scammer's main tool. Hang up means you are allowed to end any call, even with someone who sounds official. Call back means you find the number yourself (the back of your bank card, an official letter, your family phone book), not the number the caller gives you. Add the golden rule: your bank will never ask for your PIN, your password or a one-time code sent to your phone.

3 Scene one, played straight 8 min

Two volunteers take the chairs. The caller reads from a script card and improvises around it. The person answering does their best. After about two minutes, ring the bell. Ask the audience: "What did the caller do to make it feel urgent? What did they ask for?"

4 Freeze and rewind 12 min

Play the same scene again. This time anyone can shout "Freeze!". The actors freeze, the audience coaches ("Ask for the safe word!", "Say you will call back!"), and the scene continues. Swap the person answering after each freeze. Score: one point to the team of coaches for every red flag spotted, three points when the call ends safely.

5 Spot the real one 8 min

Shuffle the scripts, including the genuine call (a pharmacy reminding you that your prescription is ready, asking for nothing). Run two or three quick scenes. After each one, the audience votes with thumbs up (real) or thumbs down (scam). Discuss: the real call asked for nothing, did not rush you, and was easy to check.

6 The safe-word workshop 10 min

Hand out the safe-word cards. In pairs, participants think of a safe word or question for their family: something nobody could find online or on social media, such as a shared joke or the name of a childhood dog you never posted about. They do not write the word on the card. Instead, they write who they will agree it with, and when. They also write their bank's official number from the back of their card, at home, not in the session.

7 Coolest Head award 2 min

The room votes for the calmest, cleverest phone answer of the day.

EXAMPLE

In a parish hall in Setúbal, Fernanda (68) answers the "grandchild" script. The caller, played by her friend Rui, cries: "Avó, it's me, I've had an accident, I need 2,000 euros for the lawyer, please don't tell Mum." Fernanda starts asking which hospital. "Freeze!" shouts Ana (17), a volunteer from the local school. "Ask him what the safe word is!" The scene rewinds. Fernanda asks for the safe word. Rui stammers. Fernanda says, "I will call you back on your own number," and hangs up. The room cheers. In the next scene, the "bank" asks for the code that has just arrived by SMS. Three people shout "Freeze!" at once.

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KEY IDEA

Phone scams work by creating urgency and borrowing trust: a bank, the police, a relative. A real bank will never ask you for your PIN, your online banking password or a one-time code, and will never ask you to move money to a "safe account". When in doubt, hang up and call back on a number you find yourself. A voice can be copied by AI, so a family safe word or question is a simple check. Source: Europol and Eurojust vishing prevention advice; Banco de Portugal warnings on fraudulent calls and SMS codes; Hellenic Police warning on AI voice-cloning scams (September 2026); G-PRO Handbook, Staying safe.

Debrief

1

What happened?

What did the callers say or do that made people want to act quickly? Which line worked best to end the call safely?

2

So what?

Why do intelligent, experienced people still fall for these calls? (Answer: because the calls are designed to create fear or kindness, and those feelings are strong.) How does AI voice copying change what we can trust?

3

Now what?

Who will you agree a safe word with, and when? Where will you write your bank's official number?

Make it work for your group

- **Limited mobility, sight or hearing:** Actors stay seated. Use large-print scripts (at least 14 pt). For hearing loss, face the chairs to the audience and speak slowly. A hearing-aid user can play the "answerer" with a real phone on speaker, which is realistic.
- **Mixed-age (intergenerational) version:** Young people play the scammers. They are often brilliant at it, and it teaches them how manipulation works too. Then swap: the seniors call the young people with a fake "you have won a phone" message or a fake parcel delivery text. Both generations learn that anyone can be targeted.
- **No-device version:** No device needed. Bananas make perfect phones.
- **Online or hybrid version:** Two actors keep their cameras on; everyone else turns theirs off and uses the chat to type "FREEZE" and coaching tips. The facilitator reads the coaching aloud.
- **Short (20-min) version:** Do steps 2, 4 (one scene only) and 6. Hand out the safe-word card to finish at home.

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WATCH OUT

Keep it playful but never mocking. Many people know someone who lost money; some may have lost money themselves. Make it clear that falling for a scam is about the criminal's skill, not the victim's intelligence. Never use real bank names, real phone numbers or real personal details in the scripts. Remind people that caller ID can be faked, and that after hanging up it is wise to wait a few minutes or use a different phone before calling back, because some scammers keep the line open. If anyone has shared a code or money recently, they should contact their bank straight away using the number on their card, and report it to the police.

OWN IT

Agree a family safe word in person (not by text or social media) with the people most likely to call you for help. Write your bank's official phone number on a card next to your phone. For example: "On Sunday at lunch I will agree a safe word with my daughter and grandson, and I will write the number from the back of my bank card on the card by my telephone."

Related: Staying safe · G-PRO cards: AI-08 The Voice Scam

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