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icebreaker-judgebot-s-big-mistake

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Unplugged AI Activity: JudgeBot's Big Mistake

Type: Icebreaker (15-20 mins)

Activity Overview:
Creators experience firsthand how **bias** can unfairly influence AI decision-making by playing a game judged by "JudgeBot" (the club Mentor). Initially, JudgeBot will deliberately (but subtly) introduce bias into decisions, prompting Creators to identify, debate, and correct unfair biases through teamwork and persuasion.

Setup

Materials:

- Paper and pens (optional)

Gameplay Structure:

Step 1: Setting the Scene (1 min)

- Introduce yourself as "JudgeBot," an AI programmed to award points or prizes based on certain rules. The players need to guess what those rules are and whether they are fair.
- Don't reveal your rules to the players yet.

Step 2: Gameplay (Round 1 – Biased Judging) (2-5min)

- Ask simple, neutral questions or challenges to all Creators (e.g., "Tell me your favourite colour," "Draw a quick picture of an animal," or "Do your best robot dance move").
- Secretly apply a clearly unfair criterion as you award points (e.g., awarding points only to those wearing glasses, those whose names start with certain letters, or only those who chose a specific colour - more examples are included at the end of these instructions).
- Do this subtly but consistently, keeping the criteria simple enough for players to spot quickly.

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Step 3: Participant Discovery & Discussion (5min)

- Soon, Creators will notice unfair patterns emerging.
- Encourage Creators to discuss why they think JudgeBot's decisions seem unfair.
- Facilitate discussion, guiding them towards identifying bias clearly (e.g., favouring one group for irrelevant reasons).

Step 4: Gameplay (Round 2 – Bias Correction) (5 min)

- Ask Creators to suggest new, fairer rules for JudgeBot to follow.
- Agree on a simple set of fair rules as a group (e.g., rewards based on creativity, clarity, enthusiasm).
- Restart gameplay, this time applying the fairer rules transparently.

Step 5: Reflection & Wrap-Up (5 min)

- Discuss how bias can unintentionally enter AI decision-making if rules aren't carefully chosen.
- Celebrate Creators' successful collaboration to identify and correct bias.

Example Biased Criteria for Leaders (Round 1):

- **Clothing-based bias:** Only reward Creators wearing specific colours or patterns.
- **Name-based bias:** Reward only Creators whose names start with vowels.
- **Random bias:** Give rewards only to Creators standing on your left.
- **Preference bias:** Award points only to Creators who pick your secret "favourite" animal or colour.

Example Fair Criteria for Leaders (Round 2):

- **Creativity:** Points given for unique or imaginative answers.
- **Veracity:** Points given for the most correct answer.
- **Effort:** Recognise enthusiasm, regardless of the actual answer.
- **Inclusivity:** Ensure all Creators have a chance to earn points equally.

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Leader Tips:

- Keep initial bias simple and exaggerated enough for Creators to notice.
- Remain humorous and playful, emphasising that JudgeBot (you) makes mistakes and needs their help. You're not mean, you're just only able to follow the rules you are given.
- Encourage open, inclusive discussions. Praise Creators for insightful observations.

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