



Communication is the Key!

This dynamic exercise sets the scene for bringing out a huge number of points about teamwork and communication.

It stresses the point that people need to be much more proactive in their communications with other colleagues and departments. They need to think hard about written messages, especially email and they need to plan thoroughly if they want meetings to be productive.

Participants work in two separate teams. Each has a special map, showing a number of Pubs, and a six-page briefing folder, describing all the aspects of the task. Broadly speaking - this revolves around the collection of bottles and water from the pubs.



The teams' combined objective is simply to plan routes as effectively as possible to achieve the best outcome. Sounds straightforward but whilst both teams have similar aims they have slightly different instructions. Successful completion of the task involves co-operation and effective communication between the teams!

To add to the confusion each team has the other team's flag so an additional task is to exchange full design details so they can each draw accurate replicas.

A simple exercise riddled with unexpected problems that bring key lessons about communication out in the open. To gain top scores, one point is never in doubt, Communication is the Key!

How It works

- 1 The teams are kept in isolation with their only means of communication being emails which they send to each other via the computer and meetings every half hour.
- 2 Teams can send any number of (simulated) emails. They simply type their message into the computer, placed between the two teams, for the other team to access.
- 3 The message is then displayed on the screen for just 15 seconds, then it disappears forever (but 15 seconds is a long time!). Teams should realise that it is better to use email for certain aspects of the task - such as sending messages about the flag or for planning the route.
- 4 Meetings can last only five minutes and only one person from each team can be speaker. The rest of the team can attend but not speak (which some team members find difficult to do!)
- 5 Good teams will set agendas via email prior to the meetings and hold constructive well-planned meetings. Poorer teams will arrive not knowing what they are going to discuss and it may be that one team arrives with their head full of, say, flag details and the other with information about routes. These meetings tend to be short and unproductive!

Hilarious misconceptions abound, as do lots of false assumptions and problems caused by teams refusing to GIVE information but anxious to TAKE what they can.

Users' Comments

"This was fun and action packed! It helped to increase the understanding of the differing needs and objectives within the company and departments. Even though we are working for one goal."

C. Murphy - Valpak

"I thought Communication is the Key was very good. I liked the hustle and bustle of it. Energetic and problematic."

K. Cox - Veterinary Business Development

Key Features

Most teams make assumptions about the task of the other team. Often at the end of the exercise teams still do not realise that while their task was to collect water, the other team was tasked with collecting empty bottles. This is often the reason for low scores - one team pouring water away (to take the empties) but unwittingly leaving the other team without the water to collect!

Further confusions arises from failing to realise teams have different start points, different start times and different travel speeds! ...all of which are avoidable by clear, open communication!



All too often competition takes over and teams attempt to do the best for themselves without taking others into consideration.

Powerful lessons are brought out, which at the debrief often relate to real examples from the workplace. We can all improve our communication skills and this dynamic exercise illustrates just how much confusion is created and time lost by the way we fail to communicate effectively.

The game focuses on:

- how to build business relationships through experience
- seeing the benefits of working together to solve the problem that faces them
- appreciating the skills of listening and questioning
- understanding the need for clarity in written and verbal communication
- solving problems
- applying strategic planning
- the benefits of delegation
- effective decision making
- the art of motivation
- leadership skills
- the importance of teamwork

Duration: 3 - 4 hours plus debrief.

Numbers: Up to 2 teams with 3 to 8 delegates in a team (for each business game).

Contents: Trainer's notes, CD-ROM, OHP slides (and PowerPoint file), briefing folders, decision forms.

Cost to Buy: £495 + VAT and delivery. We will also run this game for you, please contact us for details.

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