

# Taking Stock

A business process mirror that simulates project management where the objective is to keep projects in profit by effective utilisation of limited resources.

## Main Concept

Taking Stock is a tabletop board game involving simulation of project management, with two main themes.

Firstly, as individuals, participants must comprehend that utilising resources to their full potential and maximising returns is essential to project management.

Secondly, whilst not contradicting the first theme, awareness of the 'bigger picture' is developed, particularly understanding in interdependence and the contribution they could make to the organisation as a whole.

Taking Stock, through the aid of metaphorical learning and 'learning by experience', develops dialogue between individual managers and a wider organisation, underlining the reciprocal nature of a working environment.



## Suitable Applications:

- Project management
- Working as a team
- Interpersonal skills
- Persuasiveness
- Personal style/impact
- Strategic thinking
- Commercial judgement
- Big picture versus project objectives

Taking Stock also explores the need for strategic thinking and commercial judgement by promoting interaction between an organisation's constituent parts. Additionally, Taking Stock:

- Enables participants to improve negotiation skills, key to project management
- Is applicable to differing management styles
- Leads to a development of skills in versatile environments

Individual Project Managers have responsibility for the success of their own project but must also be aware of the contribution it makes to the larger organisation. In particular, negotiations between departments and the ability to assess aspects of a business that are no longer viable are key parts of the game.

## **Exercise description**

This Game is for up to 8 participants (project managers) who are each responsible for a business project these can be specific to your own organisation or can be generic. There are twelve squares around the perimeter of the board, each of which equates to the operating conditions for that particular project (-15, -10, 0, +10, +20 etc).

There are 8 projects represented by eight tokens around the board. There are also additional hands of fate squares which require participants to pick up and play change of card which will describe a set of unpredictable operation conditions, which will have an economic impact on some or all of the projects.

The Game is played over 12 rounds.

After each round, participants move their token one square in a clockwise direction resulting in each manager experiencing predictable and different operating conditions which will impact on their cumulative score after each round. Each move will also signify that a change card is played.

It should be noted that the Game is played by making the participants aware that all projects exist in the same organisation, therefore, they are all part of the same team but their objective is the profitable running of their project. They must, therefore, keep their project in credit. If the credit rating of any project falls below zero, then it should be closed down but it is for the Group to decide how to accomplish this.

Resources are in the form of coloured rods, which are allocated at the start of each round by the Facilitator. These rods equate to a numerical value.

Each round takes approximately 10 minutes, rich with observable interpersonal behaviours making it an ideal tool for use in Assessment/Development Centres.

The Facilitator allocates resources at the start of each round and the Participants decide the allocation of finite resources.

The economic success of each participant's project will be determined by the resources secured during each round, each of which has a numerical value.

**Timing:** This training activity runs for 90 minutes + debrief.

**Numbers:** Up to 8 participants (for each business game).

**Who:** Staff at any level.

**PC required:** None.

**Licence Free:** When you buy this training material, there are no restrictions on the number of times you can use it.

**Cost to buy:** You can buy this business game (which includes a trainer's manual) and use it yourself for £449 + delivery and VAT (if applicable).

We will also run this game for you, please contact us for details.

### **For further information please contact:**

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