



A Northgate Training Game

This lively exercise demonstrates the importance of finding the right balance between taking too much on and playing it too safe.

Will teams risk all and lose all, will fear of failure make them too cautious – or will they get the balance just right? Find out with this short, fast-paced, strategic challenge!

Participants must balance point-scoring opportunities with damage limitation. The 'opportunities' come in the form of challenges which can be accepted or rejected - but with the proviso that failure to complete correctly will incur more damage than not accepting them in the first place!

Balancing Risk! It is suitable for any team development programme to bring out a host of key learning points about teamwork and team roles, approaches to problems and time management.

It also provides a great opportunity to look at the workload balance. It's about the balance between taking on too much work and thereby putting oneself under pressure – which in due course adversely affects performance – and being too cautious, and not taking on enough to achieve one's full potential and job satisfaction.

It also can be used very effectively as an assessment tool in recruitment where individual skills, behaviours and attitudes can easily be observed.

Because it is a short and lively teamwork activity it also makes an ideal icebreaker and energiser. See how risk averse your organisation's culture is and find out who can keep the coolest heads. High points seem attractive but getting them is a risky business! Teams begin with a simple task of matching up a series of 20 advertising slogans to the relevant company. Getting the right match scores points.

After 10 minutes teams can ask for additional challenges that also score points. Available for them are:

- 10 Brainstretchers
- 10 Numlets (e.g. 14 D in a F)
- 10 Matchstick Problems and
- 1 Mega Mindbender.

Teams can ask for as many or as few of the above as they want and can have more at each 10 minute period. The catch is that if they ask for any item and they cannot do it or if they get it wrong they lose penalty points. It's a risky business!

Just how far will they go? The team with the highest number of points wins!

Learning Benefits

- highlights just how risk averse the team is, or isn't
- encourages group discussion on risk assessment
- challenges problem-solving and lateral-thinking abilities
- ideal for team bonding sessions
- fun, light-hearted activity with underlying team lessons.

How it Works

- 1 After a brief introduction (guidelines in the Trainer's Notes) issue each team with a Team Brief. Allow 10 minutes for reading, discussing and making some initial plans (team roles, objectives etc).
- 2 Issue a set of 40 Ancient Ads Cards to each group. The task is to pair up 20 advertising slogans to 20 companies. The Ads are all from the 1930s and 1940s!
- 3 After 10 minutes allow teams to take on further challenges – while continuing with the Ancient Ads. They score points for each successfully completed challenge but will have points deducted for any challenge selected but not achieved!
- 4 Teams can select as many or as few as they wish from four different categories of challenge:

Matchstick Challenges

10 cards that each pose a problem that needs to be solved with a set of coloured matchsticks. Correct answer gains 100 points. Penalty: *minus* 50 points.

Brainstretcher Challenges

10 brainteaser puzzles each requiring lateral thinking. Correct answer gains 300 points. Penalty: *minus* 100 points.

Numlet Challenges

10 cards contain phrases encoded in numbers and letters such as 60 M in an H which is decoded as “60 minutes in an hour”. Correct answer gains 50 points. Penalty: *minus* 50 points.

Mega Mindbender

Just one difficult challenge (but there is an elegant solution) that earns 500 points for a correct answer but the penalty is 500 points *deducted* from their point tally!

Teams may for example take two cards from one category, six from another, or, if confident, they may take *all* the cards. A very risky strategy!

- 5 Teams continue to select cards at 10 minute intervals until the 50 minute deadline. They get four opportunities to take more cards. (The intervals allow teams to develop their risk strategy as they learn more about the nature and severity of the tasks.) They note all their answers on an Answer Form.
- 6 The Trainer then leads a Debrief using the *guidelines, answers and explanations in the Trainer's Notes*. How did each team manage the task? How could they have improved? What was their attitude to risk? What did they do well?
- 7 Before revealing the correct solutions, teams exchange Answer Forms for scoring. *The team that most successfully capitalises on the opportunities, while at the same time keeping risks to a minimum, is the risk? What did they do well?*

Timing: 50 minutes + Debrief.

Numbers: Up to 4 teams with 3 to 6 delegates in a team (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 (including a trainer's manual and use it yourself for £295 + VAT (if applicable) and delivery.

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

Contact Us: Email: games@elitetraining.co.uk Telephone: +44 (0)1473 610320