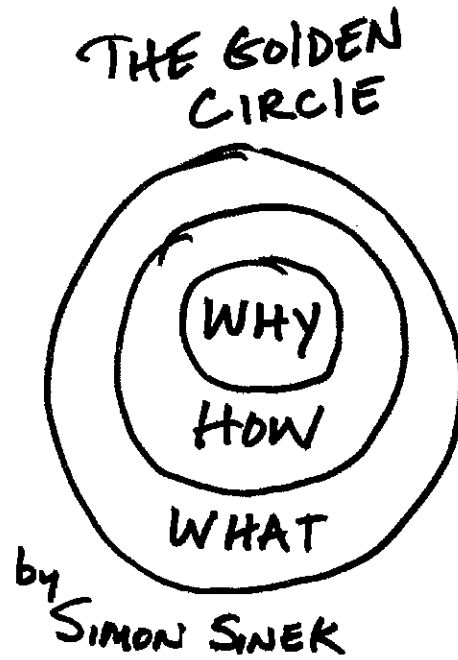


# Active Learning with a Purpose



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## Debriefing/Processing for Experiential Reflection

**\*\*Based on Open to Outcome by Micah Jacobson and Mari Ruddy**

### Background/Reasoning/Tips:

- "asking the right questions and guiding reflective conversation before, during, and after an experience, can help open a gateway to powerful new thinking and learning"
- Challenges: imposing a desire/particular outcome and not losing focus of the experience
- Switching mindset from one of teaching to one of coaching
- "objectives should focus on the process rather than the content...*how* the group learns and the quality of the learning environment...not deciding exactly *what* the group will learn"
- Circle seating is the best for processing and the facilitator at the same level as the participants
- Tips for drawing out conversation: "yes/and" instead of "yes/but" or "no/but"
- Affirm and honor all contributions, but don't allow one person to dominate
- Not a set cycle. You might have to push and revisit/rephrase/restate a question before moving to the next.

### The 5 Questions:

#### 1. *Did you notice...?*

- "an attempt to get participants to look at a specific observation"
- "giving them permission to tell their story"
- closed question requiring a yes/no answer—so takes pressure off
- makes the experience concrete and gives focus to the conversation
- as a facilitator, one must genuinely observe the experience
- before moving on, "make sure the group is really on the same page with the observation"

#### 2. *Why did that happen? Why did you not notice? Why did that really happen?*

- moves to interpretation
- listen closely "for an answer that is accurate and connected" not a right or wrong one

#### 3. *Does that happen in life?*

- "invites the participant to generalize the experience"
- not your job to process for the group, but guide to connections

#### 4. *Why does that happen?*

- "Participants will acknowledge that they either do or do not see a connection between the specific experience and their everyday lives"

#### 5. *How can you use that? How will you be different in the future as a result of this experience? Where specifically will this be useful?*

- "the experience/question is useless unless it creates some impetus to modify behavior in the future."
- declare the change
- empowers participants with their new knowledge

## Learning Through Active Participation

Ideas taken from *No Props* by Mark Collard

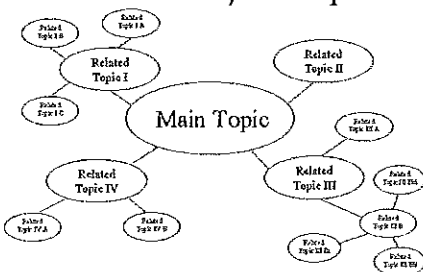
The success of your program relies greatly on your preparation.

- Sequencing
  - “Sequencing involves making the order of your activities appropriate to the needs of your group. That mean preparing your group, physically and emotionally for what’s coming up. “This may involving adjusting as you go based on your group’s actions/reactions.
  - Consider this sequence: Ice-breakers, de-inhibitizers, skill development. “Trust is gradually developed as your sequence of activities progress.”
- Picking the right activity. Try “GRABBSS:
  - Goals: Why are you doing the activity?
  - Readiness: Is the group ready?
  - Affect: What is the feeling of the group?
  - Behavior: How are they acting, interacting, cooperating?
  - Body: What are the physical abilities of the group?
  - Stage: Are they forming, storming, norming, or performing? Do they need additional skills to proceed?
  - Setting: What is the physical setting and the cultural background?”
- Choice
  - Give participants a realm of choice to determine their level of involvement.
  - Create a safe learning environment.
  - Encourage them to give it a go.
- Learning by doing
- Processing matters
  - What?
  - So What?
  - Now What?
- Full Value Contract
  - Play fair, play safe, play hard
  - Be here, be safe, be honest, commit to goals, let go & move on, care for self & others.
  - Do it yourself.

## Closing Sentiments

Take from *101 Ways to Make Training Active* by Mel Silberman.

- Use “spider web” yard activity or a ball to toss. When an individual gets the yarn or ball, he/she express a final sentiment.



- Let each individual take a group photo. When he/she does, express a final sentiment.
- Have groups of four create a webbing activity on paper showing what they have learned. Then one person draws a large web on the board, larger paper and the group compiles it, or one person from each group can walk around and look at other webs to see what can be added.
- One person begins by saying what he/she has learned; the next person who can piggy back on that, grabs the speakers hand, etc.
- Use Now What Prompts or Elevator Speeches

## **“Now What”**

### **Remembering Today, Planning for Tomorrow**

Name/School Name \_\_\_\_\_ Today's date \_\_\_\_\_

Conference/workshop/meeting just attended \_\_\_\_\_

**What happened?** What did you see/learn/hear/experience at this event?

**So what?** What does this have to do with you or with student council? What was most important? What is most applicable to your situation?

**Now what?** What are you going to do with what you learned? (The only way we really know that learning occurred is for there to be a change of behavior.)

- Summarize your plan to pursue the idea/project/activity/improvement.
- Name of project/activity/plan selected: \_\_\_\_\_
- Description of the project/activity/improvement:
- Goals: List one or two goals that you have for the plan. (Use SMART goals...to do something by a particular date or within a time frame)
- Action items: What action steps do you need to take to make this happen?

**Say What!** Be sure to thank your principal for allowing you to attend, tell him/her what you learned and what you will do as a result, and use the conference press release template.

**"It's not what you know; it's what you do with what you know."—unknown**

### **Deliver Your Best Elevator Pitch**

An elevator pitch is a prepared speech that takes no more than 60 seconds (about the time you have to talk with someone on an elevator. Students can use this to explain what they learned at a conference or a workshop, thank administrators/teachers for letting them attend, selling an idea, or promoting their organization.



1. Know your purpose: For this conference, students should be able to give the highlights of what they learned and explain how they plan to use what they learned to make their organization/school better.
2. Begin the composing process by clearly explaining what was gained/learned from attendance.
3. Plan a clear introduction. This could be as simple as, "I am so happy I was allowed to attend the TASC Middle Level Annual Conference. I learned....." or "Attending the TASC ML Conference was a great opportunity. Because of ..."
4. Tell a story. Discuss a challenge you were facing before the conference or a lack of understanding you had.
5. So what...Explain the difference attendance meant to you. (And be sure you are saying this in a way that relates to the listener. Mom and Dad may want to hear how you have more confidence or you learned a better way to treat people. A principal may want to hear what you can now do for your council, chapter, or school.) Because of \_\_\_\_, I will/can/believe\_\_\_\_.
6. Think about a hook that will capture your listener's attention or that will leave them something to think about. If that person allowed you to attend, be sure to say thank you.

Now, it's time to plan....

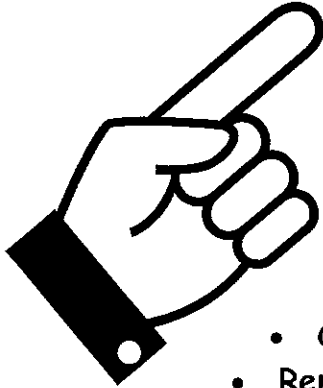
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## Gotchya! Icebreaker

Group activity to get people together, focused, challenged, having fun, and ready for action.

Works with any size group indoors or outdoors

Directions:



- Participants stand in a circle, arms out to the side, left hand palm up, right index finger pointing down and touching on neighbor's outstretched palm
- When I say the word "go," do two things:  
Grab the finger in your left hand and prevent your right finger from being grabbed:
  - One, two, three, GO!
  - Repeat several times

The trick is dramatizing the "Go!" The build up of suspense will cause some people to jump the gun and add to the fun.

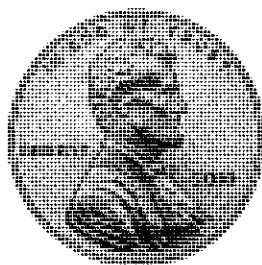
Can transition to talking about assumptions, temptation, trying to do too many things at once, etc.

There is much to learn today, etc.

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## What's In (on) a Penny?

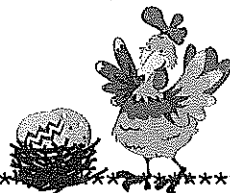
- Objective:** To highlight value of group (team) efforts; to demonstrate the importance of details and to illustrate that no matter how familiar we are with a topic, there is almost always more to learn.
- Time:** 15 minutes
- Directions:** Ask participants, working individually, to list all the distinguishable characteristics of a common penny. Better still, have them draw the front and back of a penny, adding as many details as they can. When they are through, allow them to work with a partner, then with another pair to fill in the drawing.
- Process Questions:** What does this tell you about the value of team (at least of pooled individuals) efforts?
- What methods could be used to increase trainers' attention to important details for better recall of items?
- How can individuals see almost daily something as common as a penny yet not "see" its characteristics?
- To what degree is it true in your jobs that "it's the little things (like forgotten characteristics of a penny) that will get you"?
- Talk about the upcoming event, training, etc. No matter how much training and experience you have had, there is almost always more to learn.
- Materials:** None, other than a list of characteristics and/or visual diagram of a penny to provide a visual standard to compare results against.



## Believe and Achieve

Let's do a quick activity to measure your visualization and recall.

Without talking to anyone or looking at anyone else's paper, quickly list the names of every bird you would know if you saw it. Try to list at least fifteen. NO PEEKING!



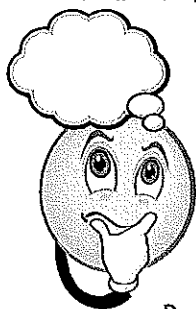
Did you list at least fifteen? Good job if you did. Some people run out of names quickly and then just give up. Did you do that?

Listen to this list of birds. I'll bet that there are more than fourteen that you would recognize on sight:

Ostrich, chicken, penguin, flamingo, pigeon, vulture, crow, pelican, vulture, peacock, gull, owl, pheasant, eagle, robin, swan, parrot, turkey, stork, goose, duck, blue jay, cardinal, parrot, parakeet

See, you could have done it. Remember that, and next time believe in yourself. With thought and effort, you can achieve a lot more than you think you can.

- You can follow this with a discussion of why you quit if you did....what kind of technique could you have used to recall more birds...could you have thought about your yard, the park, a swamp, the jungle, the ocean, ....different places birds live....could you have gone down the alphabet and tried to think of birds for different letters?



Brene Brown talks about the power of vulnerability. Her newest book is *Rising Strong* in which she talks about coming back from failure. Tim Elmore writes about the epidemic of college students who have difficulties in college because they have never been allowed to fail. How does coming back from failure help develop confidence?

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## Asking for Help



Purpose: Learn that it is OK to ask for help

Time: 10 minutes

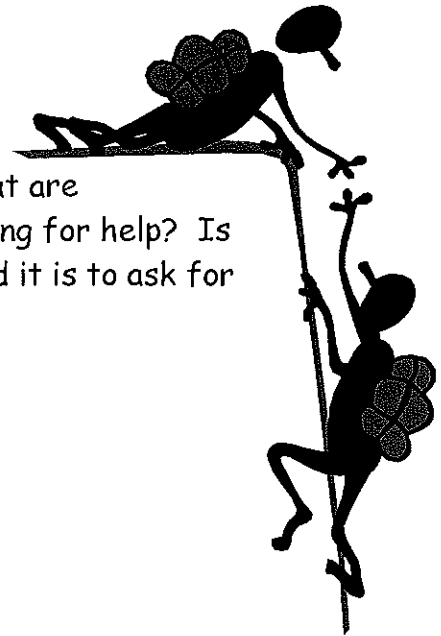
Materials: Several balls (soft ones are good)

How:

- Put several balls into play. As long as one is holding a ball, he is safe.
- No one can throw you a ball unless you say, "Help me."
- Have people walk without bending their knees or picking their feet off of the floor.
- Whoever is "it" is trying to tag people. As "it" gets closer, you need to ask for help.

### Processing

What gets in the way of asking for help. What are things you have heard that might stop you from asking for help? Is this working in your life? Have you noticed how hard it is to ask for help. How might you use what you learned?



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## Yes, and

Have participants get into groups of 5-6. Give them a topic that they will have strong feelings on. Each person, one at a time, must state his/her opinion. The next person must say "Yes, and....."

The purpose is to get rid of our "Yeah, but's). Those are killers to communication. The "Yes, and" creates an atmosphere in which people listen more readily.

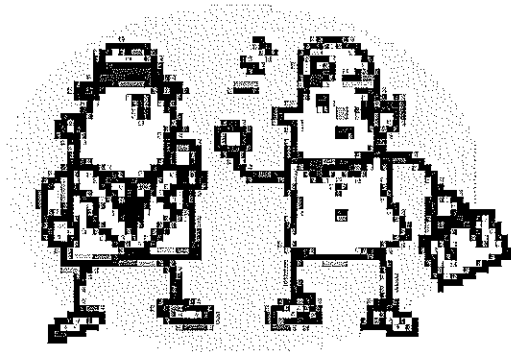
Processing:

Did you find this difficult?

What happened?

So what?

Now what?



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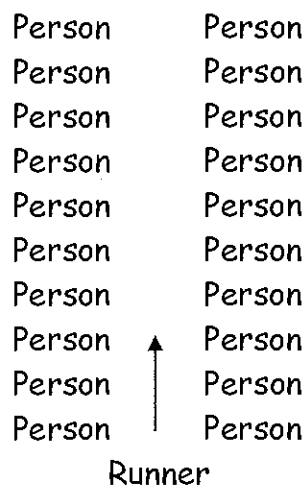
## Gauntlet

This is an exercise in team building, especially regarding working together and trust.

- 1) Pair up members of council
- 2) Have them make two lines (kind of like the "bridge" people in London Bridge. They should stand facing each other far enough apart that their fingertips just touch.
- 3) One person stands at the end of the line and calls out "Ready?"
- 4) All in line should answer, "Ready."
- 5) This person runs between the two lines.
- 6) The people in the lines should raise their arms just before the runner passes between them.
- 7) If the runner ducks or closes his/her eyes, he/she must repeat the process.
- 8) The runner joins the end of the line and another person peels out from the front of the line and repeats the process until all have "run the gauntlet."

Process:

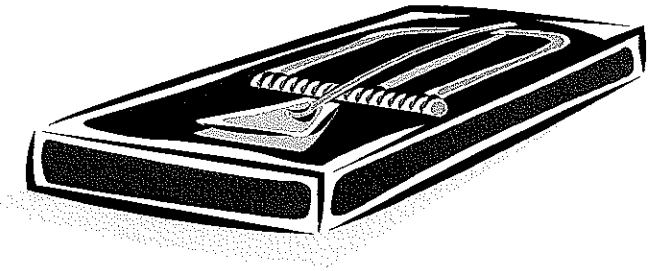
What happened?  
So what?  
Now what?



# Don't Get Caught

## Communication

- Put students in three's.
- Give each pair a mousetrap.
- Teach them how to set the mousetrap.
- Show them that if they hold the mousetrap in an open hand and put the other hand down (flat) on top of the trap, it will go off, but no one gets hurt.



### Directions:

In your group of three, one person will give the directions. One person will set the mousetrap, and the third person will put his/her hands over the eyes of the person setting the mousetrap. Once the mousetrap is set, the person who set it will put it in the hand of the person who gave directions. Then the person who cannot see will put his/her hand on top of the trap and set it off.

Trade roles.

Then TAKE UP THE MOUSETRAPS.

### Process:

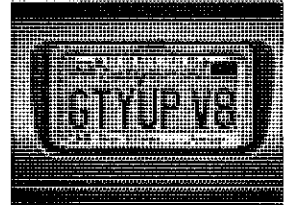
- What happened?
- So what?
- Now what?

What does this teach us?

- You must communicate clearly.
- You must be trustworthy in communication.
- Does anyone ever get hurt in student activities?

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## Vanity License Plate Challenge



**Purpose:** to teach an attribute of effective teams

**Materials needed:** handouts

**Number:** You need at least 30 or so. Beyond that it can be done with any large number.

- Divide your participants into groups of six or eight. All of your teams need to be the same size. Make them at least teams of six. . (This is a good activity to involve advisors also. They can have their own "big kid" teams.)
- Tell participants before they begin that they need to use good teamwork to solve this. (You should have taught skills of working in a committee or as a team previously: dividing up tasks, delegating, forming subcommittees, etc.)
- Note how this is put together. The two sets of ten "vanity license plates" are separated by a space. This is intentional, but do not point it out. Give this handout to a group of six or eight.
- You can choose a format. You could tell them you are looking for the first team to finish or you are setting a time limit, and you want to find the team with the most correct answers in a set time limit.

**Processing:** What happened? So what? Now what?

- After you find the "winner," discuss the methods they used to get the job done.
- Really effective teams probably divided up the task. They could have torn the paper in half and given half to one part of the team and half to the other. They used techniques such as brainstorming...verbalizing possible answers and piggybacking on them to come up with the right answer. If they got stuck, they traded tasks and let someone else look at the sheet, etc.
- The least effective teams had all six or eight huddled around the one sheet. Probably not everyone could even see the paper, much less easily participate and contribute.

Use this as a review of skills needed when working in a team or on a committee. No one of us can get it all done. It is not effective when one or two people get the paper and the rest just stand around. The more people who are actively involved the better. How do you make that happen? What project is coming soon? How can you apply what was just learned?



### Vanity License Plate Challenge

1. DR IIII \_\_\_\_\_
2. 2-3PAIR \_\_\_\_\_
3. B9S2US \_\_\_\_\_
4. YY4U \_\_\_\_\_
5. RUBZ2NT \_\_\_\_\_
6. YELEKYOT \_\_\_\_\_
7. IYQYQR \_\_\_\_\_
8. IX FE \_\_\_\_\_
9. JK MNO \_\_\_\_\_
10. DZBLD \_\_\_\_\_
  
11. H2OLDG \_\_\_\_\_
12. I SD8EM \_\_\_\_\_
13. IRIGHTI \_\_\_\_\_
14. YX RN \_\_\_\_\_
15. AWRIZE \_\_\_\_\_
16. SIQTDE \_\_\_\_\_
17. HIHO AG \_\_\_\_\_
18. ULIV1S \_\_\_\_\_
19. H2OUUP2 \_\_\_\_\_
20. 8ISEXC \_\_\_\_\_

## Vanity License Plate Challenge

1. DR IIII \_\_\_\_\_ Doctor for eyes \_\_\_\_\_
2. 2-3 PAIR \_\_\_\_\_ Tooth repair \_\_\_\_\_
3. B9S2US \_\_\_\_\_ Be nice to us \_\_\_\_\_
4. YY4U \_\_\_\_\_ Too wise for you \_\_\_\_\_
5. RUBZ2NT \_\_\_\_\_ Are you busy tonight? \_\_\_\_\_
6. YELEKYOT \_\_\_\_\_ Wiley Coyote \_\_\_\_\_
7. IYQYQR \_\_\_\_\_ I like you like you are \_\_\_\_\_
8. IX FE \_\_\_\_\_ Nine iron \_\_\_\_\_
9. JK MNO \_\_\_\_\_ Noel \_\_\_\_\_
10. DZBLD \_\_\_\_\_ Dizzy Blonde \_\_\_\_\_
  
11. H2OLDG \_\_\_\_\_ Water logged \_\_\_\_\_
12. I SD8EM \_\_\_\_\_ I sedate them \_\_\_\_\_
13. IRIGHTI \_\_\_\_\_ Right between the eyes \_\_\_\_\_
14. YX RN \_\_\_\_\_ Male nurse \_\_\_\_\_
15. AWRIZE \_\_\_\_\_ All rise \_\_\_\_\_
16. SIQTDE \_\_\_\_\_ Cutie Inside \_\_\_\_\_
17. HIHO AG \_\_\_\_\_ Hi Ho Silver \_\_\_\_\_
18. ULIV1S \_\_\_\_\_ You live once \_\_\_\_\_
19. H2OUUP2 \_\_\_\_\_ What are you up to? \_\_\_\_\_
20. 8ISEXC \_\_\_\_\_ Ain't I sexy? \_\_\_\_\_

## The Impact of One

In this activity tell your group that you are going to tell them make some choices, but they are not to reveal by word, look, or gesture what their choices are. Be sure they understand this.

Then

- Tell them to pick two other people in the council without letting anyone know whom they have chosen.
- Without talking at all they are to move until they are equidistance between the two people. (It will take quite bit of moving, but eventually the group will reach a stage of homeostasis.) Remind them not to talk or to let anyone know who they have chosen.
- You are observing during this time. Odds are you can pick out someone who definitely has been chosen.
- When the group is still, pull out one person and have him/her stand in a particular spot.
- Then tell everyone they must again move until they are equidistance between the two people they have chosen. (Again, they will move, not as much as before, but they will reach a state of homeostasis.)
- Pull out one more person and repeat the process.
- You can do this again if you have time.

Process

- What happened?
- So what?
- Now what?

Focus on what happens if one person doesn't do his/her job. How does this affect the others? Sometimes it affects more, sometimes less.

What does this tell you about each person doing his/her job? About our need to adjust? About our need to support one another?

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## You Must Get on the Horse if You Plan to Win the Race.

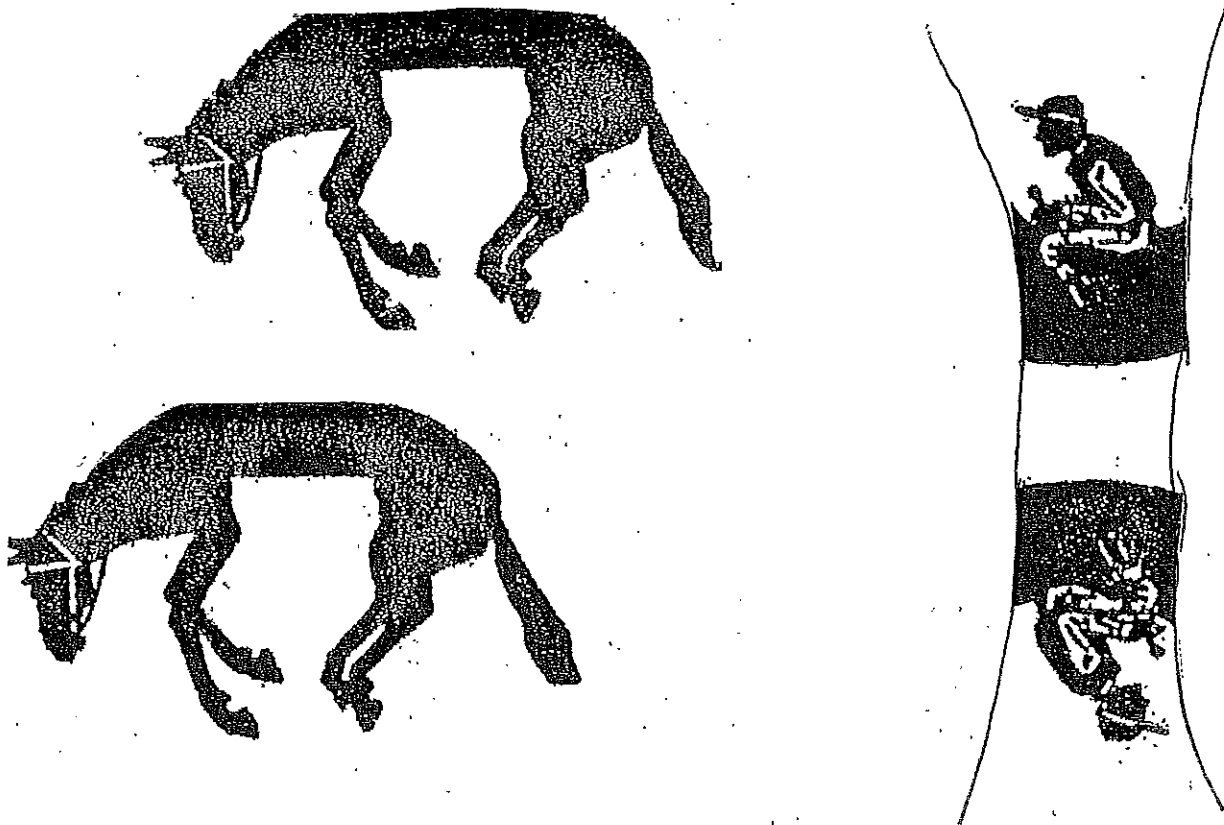
Each person needs two horses. They are cut out separately.

Each person needs one set of jockeys. They are not cut apart.

The goal is, without tearing or folding, to get both jockeys on both horses so that they are "riding" appropriately.

Many will say, "This cannot be done."

Sometimes as leaders we face what appears to be an impossible task. How can we reframe? How can we see it differently? How can we use others to help us?



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## Let's Problem Solve

Earlier in the day, teach students how to meet new people, how to introduce themselves, and how to look for something they have in common with the people they meet. Also, teach problem solving/conflict resolution, and talk about win/win and coming to consensus. Talk about the need to see the issue from the other person's point of view. Later, divide your group into pairs. One person is J; the other is P. Give the J's the J. Brown paper. Give the P's the P. Smith paper. (Run these on different colors of paper.) They are not to share. They are to read their sheet silently, and they are not to let their partner see the sheet. After participants have read their information, set this up. Tell them they are well paid, high powered executives, and they have an important mission. In fact, not only the success of their company but much more may rest on their accomplishing their task. Tell them they are on a plane sitting in first class. Have them close their eyes for a minute. They have been served a snack and a beverage. The plane is cruising smoothly, and they finally have a chance to meet the person in the seat beside them.

Let them talk for just a minute and ask if they have discovered something in conflict and perhaps a problem or conflict. Tell them to address the issue.

Give them time to talk. You may spot a few who have worked out the solution. Ask them to sit silently for a minute.

Stop the group and tell them it is time for the inflight movie. The movie is about a mother and her two children. She walks in, and the children are in a big argument over an orange. Each of them wants the entire orange. Well, the mom knows how to solve this. She tells one to cut the orange in half and the other to select which half he/she wants. Now both are upset. It seems the boy is hungry and thirsty. He wants to eat the entire orange. The girl wants to bake an orange cake, and she needs the entire peel.

Then tell them to go back and solve their problem.

### J. Brown

You are the Chief Pharmacologist for the ABC Drug Company, an international firm that specializes in drugs to cure diseases. Recently there has been a worldwide outbreak of X-Fluoxide. This disease is a communicable illness that carries a high risk of causing fetal abnormalities, both physical and mental.

A worldwide emergency exists. Unless X-Fluoxide is brought under control quickly, the chances are great that an unacceptable high percentage of an entire generation will be dependent upon their families and society for decades. Economists are predicting that costs would wipe out millions of families and trigger widespread business collapse and unemployment in thousands of consumer industries. Psychologists anticipate that the emotional impact will touch almost every family, with terrible consequences.

Your company has been conducting research on X-Fluoxide and has identified a serum Agent UO that will prevent the disease. The serum is produced from the yolk of the eggs of the rare spotted ostrich. This bird is found in small numbers in Africa. They lay their eggs once each year, and their laying period is this month. The eggs for each year are stored and then sold to gourmet restaurants as thickeners for special soups. Last year's egg supply was sold at the average price of \$30.00 per egg.

The only owner of domesticated spotted ostriches, and consequently the major supplier, lives in a remote part of Africa. There are rumors that he is a member of the international underworld involved in narcotics, assassination, and terrorism. You do not think that he knows about this new use for his product.

The ABC Drug Company will need all 10,000 of this year's production of the spotted ostrich eggs in order to meet the projected serum needs, worldwide. Half of the serum will be needed in the western hemisphere; one-fifth will be needed for the United States. Your assignment: get as many spotted ostrich eggs as you can. Your company has authorized you to spend as much as \$100,000 to get this year's crop.

There appear to be competitors for use of the spotted ostrich eggs—a chemical manufacturer called the XYZ Company. (Your company has a law pending against them for patent violations.) You have been authorized to compete with the SYZ Company for the product and can match their budding dollar for dollar up to your limit so that you can get 100% of the product.

You are flying out to try to buy the eggs. It makes you angry that one of the real beneficiaries of this conflict will be the underworld...possibly even terrorists. Now, you have discovered that the person in the seat next to you is the agent from the XYZ Company.

You will try to convince this person that your need for the product is so great that your company should get this year's crop. If you can protect your interests of the ABC Company, you will certainly be named the next president of your company—a job that will pay you five times your present salary.

#### **P. Smith**

You are Chief Chemist for XYZ Chemical Company, an international firm that specializes in making pesticides that eliminate insects dangerous to agricultural crops. Recently, your representatives from around the world have reported a new outbreak of the Cottermus Moth. This moth can be extremely destructive to all kinds of trees; and if left unchecked, can defoliate and kill whole forests in a matter of days. Once thought to be nearing extinction, the Cottermus Moth has suddenly reappeared in large numbers on all forested continents. In two months the larvae will hatch, and massive forest destruction will result.

If forests are defoliated, secondary impacts will be unprecedented soil erosion and the destabilization and loss of water resources. Moths could also move into agricultural lands and cause serious destruction. Corn appears especially vulnerable to attacks by the moth.

The only way to stop the moth is to spray infected forests with a special pesticide, Compound UO, which has not been manufactured for several years. Unlike most other pesticides which are synthetic compounds, the Compound UO is made from the eggshell of the rare spotted ostrich. This bird is found in small numbers in Africa. They lay their eggs once each year, and their laying period is this month. The eggs for each year are stored and then sold to gourmet restaurants as thickeners for special soups. Last year's egg supply was sold at the average price of \$30.00 per egg.

The only owner of domesticated spotted ostriches, and consequently the major supplier, lives in a remote part of Africa. There are rumors that he is a member of the international underworld involved in narcotics, assassination, and terrorism. You do not think that he knows about this new use for his product.

As thousands of eggs will be needed to manufacture pesticide, your company has determined that you will need all 10,000 of this year's production of the spotted ostrich eggs in order to meet the projected serum needs, worldwide. Half of the serum will be needed in the western hemisphere; one-fifth will be needed for the United States. Your assignment: get as many spotted ostrich eggs as you can. Your company has authorized you to spend as much as \$100,000 to get this year's crop.

Along with the gourmet restaurants, there appear to be other competitors for the eggs. There is a rumor that the ABC Drug Company also wants them. (Your company has a law pending against them for patent violations.) You have been authorized to compete with the ABC Drug Company for the product and can match their budding dollar for dollar up to your limit so that you can get 100% of the product.

You are flying out to buy the eggs. It makes you angry that one of the real beneficiaries of this conflict will be the underworld...possibly even terrorists. Now, you have discovered that the person in the seat next to you is the agent from the XYZ Company.

You will try to convince this person that your need for the product is so great that your company should get this year's crop. If you can protect your interests of the XYZ Company, you will certainly be named the next president of your company—a job that will pay you five times your present salary.

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## Heads or Tails?

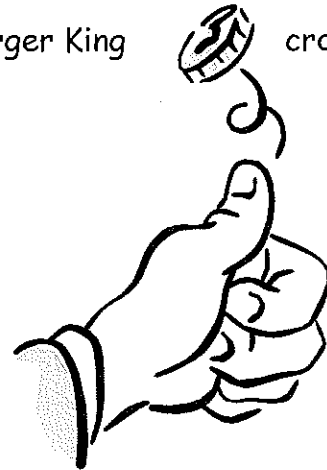
What: A filler or an energizer

Supplies: Absolutely none

Explain that this is an elimination game. You are going to ask students to declare heads or tails. To do this they put their hands on their head or their hands on their "tail."

How: You ask students to declare. Then you flip a coin and call either heads or tails. Those who picked correctly remain standing. Those who chose incorrectly sit down. Play until you have a winner.

It is fun if you have some kind of prize...even a Burger King crown.



Now what: There are multiple ways to process this depending on your needs.

- Do you need to teach that groups require movement every once in a while?
- Do you need to teach that sometimes we have to "go with our best guess" and just make a decision?
- Do you need to teach that whether we say so or not, our actions teach that "we are declaring where we stand" all the time?

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