



Picture Perfect

Type of activity: Team exercise

Participants: 6-50

Timing: 30 minutes – up to 2hrs

Key themes: Teamwork Communication Motivation Common objectives

Overview

A creative and involving exercise that will highlight the need for communication, collaboration and organisation across the group. Suitable for many different groups and group sizes.

Pre-Work

Find a copy of a well known image, logo, painting, etc and cut this into as many pieces (equal sizes & shapes if possible) as there will be teams/participants on the day.

Equipment and Layout

Picture cut into pieces as above.

Larger pieces of paper, pens, pencils, paints and other decorating/drawing materials.

Rulers/tape measures.

Running the Activity

This activity can be run in teams, or with individual participants.

1. Give each team or individual a piece of the picture along with pens/pencils/drawing and colouring equipment and sheets of paper large enough for them to make larger copies.
2. Instruct participants to create a copy of their piece of the picture exactly (for example) ten times bigger, according to length and width dimension. Size increase (x10, x25 or x20, etc) is up to you - the greater the increase in size, the longer the activity takes, and the bigger the final result.
3. Give a drawing time limit of 5-30 minutes depending on the complexity of the image and the magnification level you have requested.
4. When each team or participant has completed the enlargement of their piece, ask them to assemble the individual pieces into a finished picture - on the table, wall or floor.
5. At this point you can produce the original (complete) picture to aid the final assembly or withhold it until the last minute for comparison.

Additional notes

- Choose a picture (or diagram or map, etc) that appeals to your group, and which, when cut into pieces, gives sufficient detail to work on. Here are some suggestions of well-known pictures to use for this exercise:
 - Your company or other famous logo or emblem
 - The Mona Lisa (Leonardo da Vinci)
 - Marilyn (Andy Warhol)
 - Sunflowers (Van Gogh)
 - Nighthawks (Edward Hopper)
 - The Birth of Venus (Botticelli)
 - The London Underground Tube Map
- This exercise is more challenging and fascinating if the group does not see the whole original picture until the end of the activity, although this is entirely up to the facilitator.
- Be specific about what you mean by x10 when you ask for an enlargement – multiplying length and width by 10 will give you an area that is 100 times the size of the original.

Review and Conclusions

- If the completed, enlarged version is not right in any area, where did the task fail and for what reasons?
- If a team or individual has embellished their piece (which almost certainly will happen) how does this contribute to or threaten the final result, and how does this demonstrate individual interpretation and freedom?
- This activity represents 'departmental' working, each team working on their own part (representing a divisional or departmental specialism), all of which should contribute to a successful result. What are the main factors determining success when working like this?
- To what extent does each team need to know what other teams are doing in order for the overall task to be achieved?
- Does each team need to know what the end aim is in order to achieve the overall task? (The review of this point can incorporate discussion on when the original whole picture was shown - at the start of the activity or towards or at the end? – and how helpful it was to have seen it at either stage)
- It often is difficult to communicate an overall aim or vision in work situations, especially in large complex projects - so how should we approach this challenge and what are its implications, especially if a vision or aim changes half-way through a project?

Follow-up

This exercise works well to lead into facilitated discussions focused on teamwork and communication. Alternatively see the Fresh Tracks programme “Paint your Perfect Picture” for a longer, themed challenge.

For further suggestions on follow-up and other team activities, go to www.freshtracks.co.uk or email mail@freshtracks.co.uk