

Wrapping Presents: A Team Exercise

The origin of this exercise is unknown. A group of students in an organizational behaviour class at Simon Fraser University presented it in a tutorial assignment. Special thanks to Eleanor MacDonald for describing this exercise.

This exercise may be used by current adopters of:

S. L. McShane *Canadian Organizational Behaviour*, 5th ed. (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 2004); S. L. McShane & M. A. von Glinow, *Organizational Behavior*, 3rd ed. (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2005); S. L. McShane & T. Travaglione, *Organisational Behaviour on the Pacific Rim*, 1st ed. (Sydney: McGraw-Hill Australia, 2003)

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Purpose

This exercise is designed to help students understand the importance of team development and to experience team development stages.

Instructions

Form teams with four students on each team. Several students should be assigned as judges to evaluate the results produced by each team. Observers time the performance of each team and record the team's results for each of the three tasks activities described below.

Each team should receive one pair of scissors, one roll or dispenser of tape, one bow (optional), and wrapping paper. (Newspaper or plain paper may substitute, but they aren't as pretty.) Each team also receives a mid-sized box, such as the boxes department stores provide when giving clothing as a gift.

Each team's objective is to wrap the box as quickly and professionally as possible. However, all team members will have their hands tied behind their backs throughout this exercise. The box will be wrapped three times with the following conditions:

First Task

With hands tied behind their backs, team members wrap the present using only the materials provided. They are allowed to talk throughout this task. Judges record the completion time when they (the judges) are satisfied with the wrapping quality. The team then removes and discards the wrapping paper and other materials from the box.

Second Task

With hands tied behind their backs *and no talking allowed*, team members wrap the present using only the materials provided. Team members must use new materials (i.e., can't reuse wrapping paper from the first task.) Judges record the completion time when they (the judges) are satisfied with the wrapping quality. The team then removes and discards the wrapping paper and other materials from the box.

Third Task

This is identical to the second task -- team members have hands tied and are not allowed to talk. Judges record the completion time when they (the judges) are satisfied with the wrapping quality.