



Team² Instructions



Team² is an exercise in communication, cooperation, and team interaction. It demonstrates how prioritizing individual performance can limit our success as a whole, and teaches participants how they benefit when they break out of their silos and see the bigger picture. You can also use it to address visual imagination and problem solving.

How does it work?

The group sits around a table with defined individual work areas and a shared space in the center. Colorful plastic pieces in different shapes are clustered in the center, and each person must use three shapes to make a square. They are not allowed to speak or reach into another person's work area -- only the center of the table can be used to take or return pieces, or to push pieces toward another person.

Some people will form a square very quickly, but they will not realize they are using pieces that others need. While there are many different ways to put a square together, there is only one way for everyone to put a square together at the same time. This means some participants will have to break up their already completed squares and share their pieces with others. The message is clear: if the group is to succeed, all members must prioritize the group's goal over their own.

What do you need?

People (min / optimal / max): 5 / 10 / 10

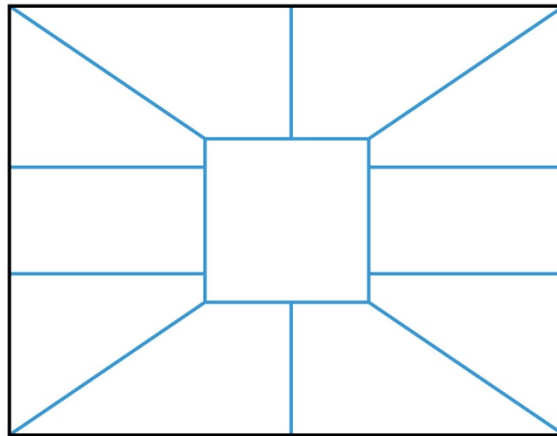
Time for Activity: 15-30 minutes

Materials: 30 plexiglass puzzle pieces for 10 squares, 1 set of instructions

Workspace: Tabletop at least 3 x 4 ft and chairs for participants

Instructions

1. Find a table big enough for 10 people. Use masking tape to define 10 individual work areas and one central area. If you have fewer than 10 people, define the work areas according to your group size. The table should look roughly like this:



2. Assign each work area to one person, then give each person a random number of the plastic puzzle pieces. (Just remember to remove one entire square (three pieces) per person from the wooden box before passing them out.) The central area of the table will remain empty.
3. Explain the goal of the activity in general terms. Say something like, *“The goal is for each of you to form one square out of the puzzle pieces, and all of your squares must be the same size.”*
4. Outline the rules:
 - No talking is allowed.
 - You can work only with the puzzle pieces in your own workspace.
 - You can give pieces to other people, but you can’t take pieces from others.
 - You can put pieces in the center workspace and take pieces from the center.
 - The activity is complete when all squares are complete.

5. Step back and observe the activity silently. If the group gets stuck for what seems like too long, you can interrupt the activity and help the participants arrive at their own solution.
6. Lead the debrief, basing the conversation on your original intent for the activity. Here are sample questions to ask the group:
 - What was the key to finding the solution?
 - What was your strategy to finding the solution?
 - Did anyone feel left out?
 - Did anyone feel supported by others? How?

Variations

- If you have fewer than 10 people, simply remove one square (three pieces) for each missing player from the wooden box before distributing the pieces.
- If you have more than 10 people and you also have an extra Team² box, you can take one square (three pieces) for each additional player from the extra box and distribute the extra pieces to the group. If you don't have an extra Team² box, you can assign extra players the role of 'process observers.'

Possible square solutions

