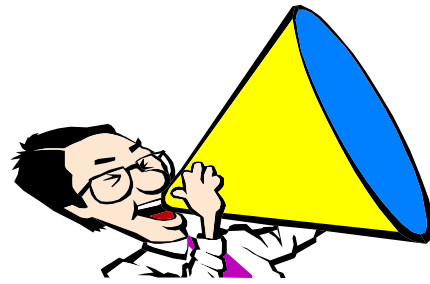


Seminar Secrets



Overview:

A simple and fun communication game that demonstrates the pitfalls inherent in verbal communication of information. Teams pass an important business message down the line intact to win a major prize.

Sequencing:

Anytime it's necessary to illustrate communication blocks and filters in action. A good session opener for communication training that works well in conjunction with a model such as the *NLP Communication Model*.

Potential:

This game has the potential to:

- get participants into action
- challenge communication assumptions
- illustrate communication blocks and filters in action
- show how people distort messages through the filtering process
- demonstrate the working of a communication model
- identify the pitfalls of verbal communication
- encourage asking for feedback to ensure understanding of the message

Participants:

From 5 upwards - no maximum,
in groups of 4 - 8 (ideal team size 5)

Timing:

Time to play: 10 minutes
Time to debrief: 5 - 10 minutes

Ratings:



Energiser



Fun



Listening



Competitive



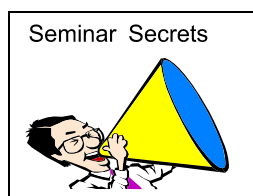
Teamwork



Minutes



Indoors



Comments:

“Simple games often have a profound impact. Playing a version of chinese whispers with an important business message to be conveyed is a great way to demonstrate communication blocks and filters in action. And participants love it!”

John Radclyffe, Trainer

Logistics:

Essential:	Optional:
Materials: Message sheet, flipchart paper, marker pens for each team.	Music: <i>“Do You Remember”</i> Phil Collins
Props: None	Assistants: None
Set-up: Prepare by setting out a message sheet (see page 6), sheet of flipchart paper and marker pens for each team. Form participants into teams of 4-8 (optimum size 5 or 6). If possible, line teams up in a straight line (see sample room layout), however, this game can also be played seated around a table or along a seated line of conference delegates, if necessary.	

Script:

Introduction:

Ask the teams to line up and number themselves off.

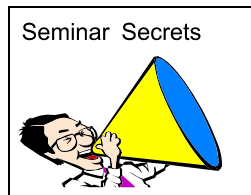
Please line up and number off within your team, starting at the front with number one. Make sure you remember your number within the team.

Tell the groups that their task is deliver an urgent and vital message down the line.

Your team task is deliver an urgent and vital business message down the line. The message must be delivered quickly or the company will lose its biggest customer, worth millions of dollars.

Ask person number one from each team to come to you and read the message

Please send the person number one on each team to me to receive the message.



Main Activity:

Start the game by getting number ones to stand on the opposite side of the room but still in line with their teams (see sample room layout).

Give instructions

The message is to be passed from person one to person two and so on through to the last member of the group. The message is very urgent so speed is essential. No communication of any sort is allowed between group members during the game other than the passing of the message.

When I say "Go", person two will come to person one and receive the message. You will have one minute. After one minute, person one will withdraw and person three will come and receive the message from person two, and so on until complete.

I will give you one minute to study and remember your message on the message sheet.

After one minute, collect all message sheets

Okay, go! Person two, come and receive your message and remember, only the people exchanging the message may talk in this game.

After one minute

Okay, time's up. Person three, come and receive the message from person two.

Move person one away from the group (move to another area of the room, send them outside to talk among themselves or as appropriate)

Person one, please move away. You are not to communicate with anyone on your team who is still playing, until the game is complete.

Repeat the process until the last member of the team has received the message

The last member of each group will return to their table and write down the message on the sheet of flipchart paper provided. Your task is to write out the message in full, exactly as delivered to you.

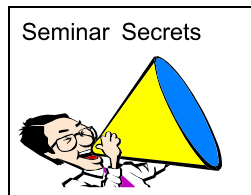
When all flipcharts are completed, get all participants to return to their seats. Call the last members of each group to the front of the room and the messages are displayed to the room simultaneously. Facilitator then reads out the original message on the message sheet and compares the results.

Everyone back to your seats.

How close were your messages? Let us see.

Will the last member of each team please bring their flipcharts to the front and hold them up for us to see. (optional: Please read out your messages for the rest of the room to hear)

The original message was... (repeat the message on page 6)

**Debrief:**

Please thank your team.

Debrief the game

Please complete your debrief sheets headed “Seminar Secrets”

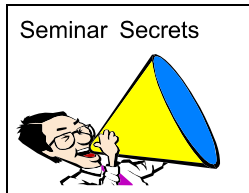
Debriefing:

(Please note: possible responses are in parentheses)

- Get participants to record their individual experiences on the pre-prepared debrief sheet. Talk them through the questions on the sheet.
- Debrief all participants in the room:
 - *How different was your message?* (Very!)
 - *How important was the message?* (Very!)
 - *May you have just lost your biggest customer?* (Yes)
 - *Was anyone not trying?* (No)
 - *So what went wrong?* (Too much to remember. Couldn't write it down)
 - *Did everyone listen?* (Yes)
 - *Was the original message confusing?* (No, clear)
 - *Did the message become confused?* (Yes. No)
 - *What could have been done to produce a better result?* (Write it down. Draw out: use a more appropriate communication system)
 - *If we are using only a verbal communication system - what strategies can help ensure we get the message across and understood?* (Draw out: monitor the response you get and adjust the delivery methods until you get the right response. Ask questions to ensure the recipient has understood. Get them to repeat the message back to you in their own words).

Use “**Communication is the response you get**” flipchart.

- *What was the response in this case?*
- *Did it match to the communication you thought that you had delivered?* (No)
- *How often do you give a clear message that is not received in the way you intended?* (Very often. Sometimes)
- *Do you keep using the same delivery methods thinking it's the other person's fault?* (Yes. No)



If using this game to illustrate a communication model such as *NLP Communication Model*, discuss communication blocks and filters.

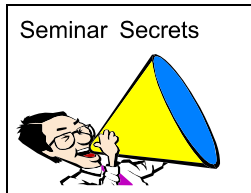
- *Did different people interpret the message in different ways? (Yes)*
- *Did this distort the message as it passed down the line? (Yes)*
- *What are some of the blocks and filters that cause us to put an individual interpretation on a clear message like this one? (Draw out: Beliefs, Values, Experiences, Culture, Language, etc)*
- *According to the NLP model, we are receiving about two million bits per second of external data. That would cause a massive overload if we attempted to convert this all to an internal representation in our mind. In fact, we create our internal representation out of only about 140 bits per second of that information - so to get from 2m bps to 140 bps, what do we do? (Draw out: Delete, Distort, Generalise)*

Source:

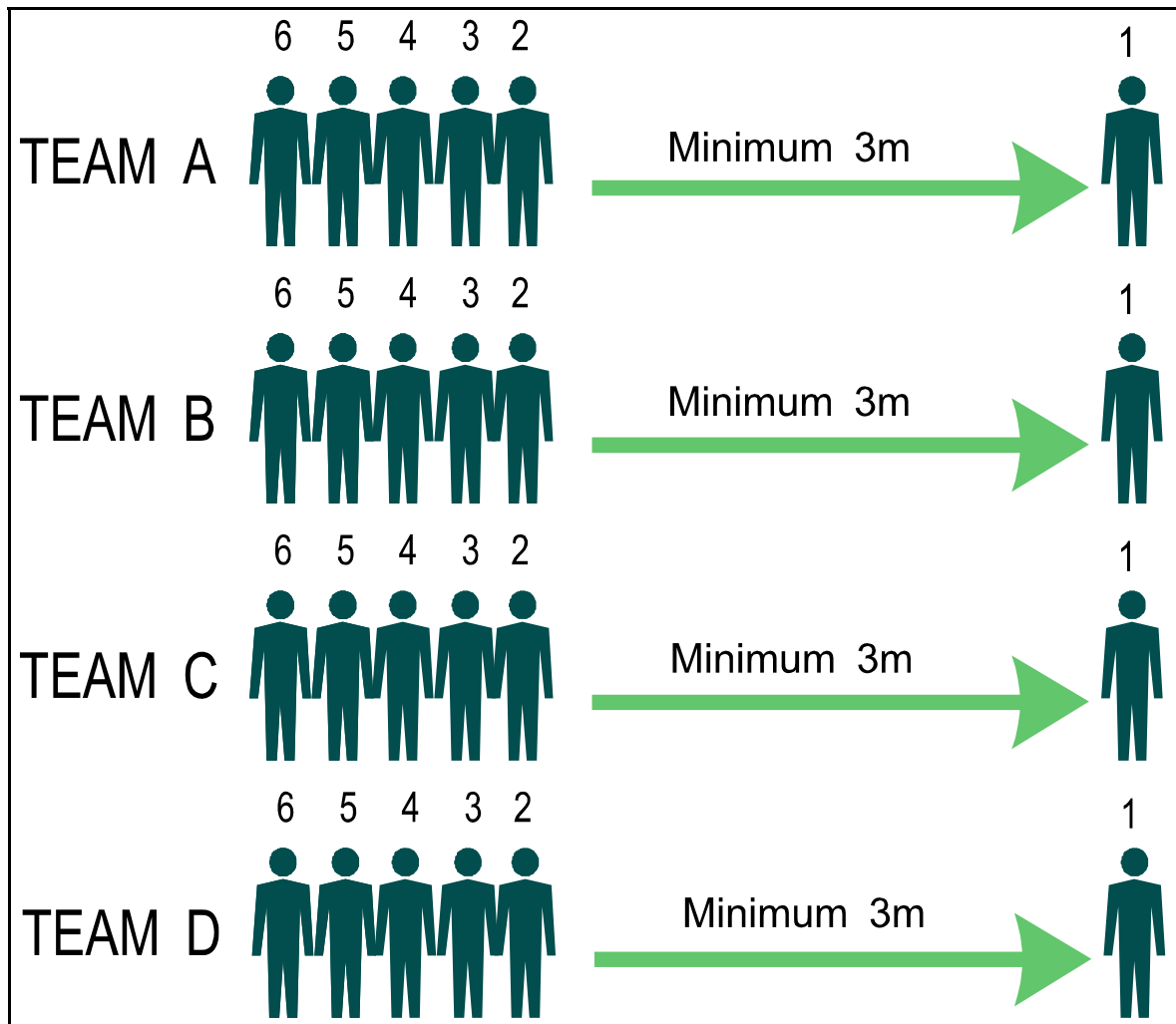
WorldGAMES 1995

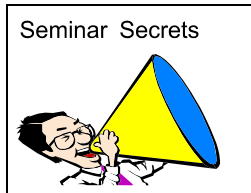
Trainers Note:

Please feedback new variations, solutions, outcomes and debriefing points for WorldGAMES to update and circulate.



Sample Room Layout:





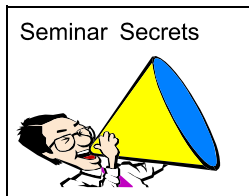
Seminar Secrets

MESSAGE:

"Peter Bosworth from Allied Consolidated rang. He has a top secret export order and needs to know by 3pm if we can deliver 23,200 Grade 2 units by 26th September at \$ 135 each, less their normal 12.5% cash discount. He will be in a meeting until 1pm, then lunching at the Regent. You can call him on his mobile or leave a message but only with his personal assistant, Sharon."

REMEMBER:

You are totally responsible for your own safety and play at your own risk. Unsafe play or sabotage of any kind will result in team disqualification



Debrief Sheet

1. What were your results?

2. What was your strategy ?

3. What worked for you and your team? What did not?

4. How could you improve your results?

5. What can you learn?

6. What feelings came up for you?