

This exercise promotes flexibility, communication, negotiation and cooperation. The goal is for participants to identify the problem and resolve it by discussing it within their team and working together as a larger group.

Teams will assume that they are competing against one another—however, because the pieces of each puzzle have been divided amongst the groups, teams must work together in order to complete their puzzles. This exercise should be repeated when new teams are formed, or as needed.

ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS

Activity Preparation

- Provide a different puzzle for each participating team.
- Open each puzzle and remove approximately one quarter of the pieces and set them aside.
- Place the remaining puzzle pieces into a bag for each team. Divide up the pieces that were set aside and distribute them among each of the bags.
- Try to ensure that each team’s puzzle pieces appear to be an entire puzzle.

Activity Day

- Place participants into teams of three or four members; give each team a bag.
- Introduce the exercise: “The aim of the exercise is for each team to assemble the jigsaw puzzle as quickly as possible using the pieces provided. Raise hands when it’s completed. You will receive no additional instructions.”
- Provide enough time for the teams to work on the puzzles. Generally, they shouldn’t need any more than 30 minutes to complete, although this will change depending on the complexity of the puzzle and group size.
- Once the activity is complete, the facilitator should lead a team discussion reflecting on what happened, the choices made and how they interacted with each other. Team members should discuss what they would do differently next time.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR ORGANIZERS

Materials Needed

- Puzzle(s)—try to use a jigsaw puzzle with enough pieces to keep all team members actively engaged during the exercise
- Bags or containers

Facilitation

- Try and stay clear from giving them the solution to the problem. If they ask you, reiterate the introduction to the task as before and let them work it out for themselves.
- Choose a space that is big enough for all team members to view the puzzle and work together. All teams may assemble their puzzles in the same room if space allows.



ABOUT THE ACTIVITY

Focus Area: Teambuilding

Format (virtual/in-person): In person

Venue: Any

Activity Time: 10-30 minutes

Adapted from Venture Team Building’s [Jigsaw Puzzle Pieces](#) activity.