

Creating Shapes Exercise

Most meetings and training sessions involve sitting in one place for longer than is comfortable. Before and during a session, it can be useful to get people moving to change the social dynamic and stimulate new interactions.

The steps in the team-building exercise are as follows:

1. The room needs to be sufficiently large to allow everyone to move around freely.
2. Tell everyone to walk around the room, changing direction at random without bumping into each other.
3. When you clap your hands, everyone forms a straight line without talking or physically directing one another.
4. The team is asked to maintain the straight line until you clap your hands again.
5. Random walking is resumed.
6. When you next clap your hands, ask them to form a square, again without speaking or directing. Request they evenly space themselves around the edge.
7. Repeat the straight line and square shape a couple of times until it appears more straightforward.
8. Next (after random walking), you can attempt a circle, or other shapes, even a heart.

Other variations include changing speed (asking them to do it very quickly or slowly) and more complex shapes such as a star or a letter.

In time, awareness of one another's presence will form, and the team will more intuitively adjust and interact with one another to create the next shape.

It is essential to understand that when working well as a cohesive unit, more can be achieved in less time through understanding our own and other's needs.

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