

Activity: Create Your Own*

Aims of the tool: This game encourages participants to think about the core elements of the problem-solving process. It builds skills such as creativity, negotiation, decision making, communication, and time management. After the activity, team members should be better equipped to work together and to think on their feet.

People and materials:

- Ideally four or five people in each team.
- A large, private room.
- Paper, pens and flip charts.

Time: 1 hour more or less

Description

1. As the participants arrive, you announce that, rather than spending an hour on a problem-solving activity, they will be coming up with an original one of their own.
2. Divide them into teams and tell them that they have to create an activity or one-day event that will work well in their organization. The activity, however, must not be one that they have already participated in, heard of, or previously tried.
3. After an hour, each team must present its new activity to everyone else, and outline its key benefits.

Advice for the Facilitator

There are four basic steps in problem solving: defining the problem, generating alternatives, evaluating and selecting alternatives, and implementing solutions.

Help your team to think creatively at each stage, by encouraging people to consider a wide range of options before deciding on the best one. If ideas run dry, introduce an alternative brainstorming technique, such as brain writing. This allows them to develop one another's ideas, while giving them an equal chance to contribute.

After the presentations, talk to your team about the different decision-making processes it used to create its activities. Consider asking these questions:

- How did people communicate and manage their time?
- How did they keep their discussion focused and arrive at their decisions?
- Would they have changed their approach in hindsight, after hearing the other presentations?

Some of your team members might not have been able to think of a piece of advice, or a possible solution. If they get stuck, ask them to write down a few words of encouragement or support instead.

All of these make people evaluate their experience and consider alternative ways of working in the future.