

TLI226 –

# 10 STEPS TO SUPERIOR LEADERSHIP

Presented by J.W. Owens

# What Does It Mean to Be a Leader?



**Leadership is influencing people by providing purpose, direction, and motivation, while operating to accomplish the mission and improve the organization.**



# ***Are You Cut Out for Leadership ?***

- You may be interested to know if you are a good leader OR if you *would* make a good leader.
- Take this quick assessment for leadership abilities to see if leadership is right for you and review the answers.
- If you are training leaders, use the simple checklist below as one of your assessments for leadership abilities.
- Ask the leader (or potential leader candidate) to answer each question.
- An additional option is to ask someone who knows that person well to answer the questions about them.
- This second option will give you a broad perspective on the person's capabilities.



# ***Are You Cut Out for Leadership ?***

**Answer each of the following questions with an honest  
“yes” or “no.”**

- 1. Do you believe that people are basically good and want to do the right things, even if they sometimes don't know what those things are or don't know how to do them ?**
- 2. Do people naturally “come to you” and seek you out about things—interests, problems, joys, or just passing the time ?**
- 3. Do you get along with most everyone ? Oh, sure, there are a few difficult ones, but in general, can you co-exist peacefully with nearly everyone ?**



# ***Are You Cut Out for Leadership ?***

**Answer each of the following questions with an honest  
“yes” or “no.”**

- 5. Are you approachable and available to those around you ?**
- 6. Are you able and willing to communicate frequently and make communication a top priority in your leadership role ?**
- 7. Do you possess a healthy measure of humility ?**
- 8. Are you able to make firm decisions and take actions while, at the same time, taking into account the needs and suggestions of others ?**



# ***Are You Cut Out for Leadership ?***

The questions in this short checklist are a ***self-assessment of leadership abilities.***

Use this simple assessment of leadership abilities to help point out directions for your own leadership development.

However, the predictive value of this assessment is dependent upon **how well you know yourself—how accurately** you are able to judge your own attitudes and behaviors.



# ***Are You Cut Out for Leadership ?***

Regardless of what you think, your success as a leader and potential leader is really based on the **perceptions others have of you**. That's why it's a good idea to find out how someone else would answer these questions *about you*.

Your intention may be very good, but it is **others' opinions** about you that will determine how well they will work for and with you and, therefore, how effective you are in your leadership role.

Consider asking your **manager, mentor, or a trusted colleague or employee to answer the same eight questions about you**. Their perspective will help you see yourself more clearly and increase your self-awareness. You will better understand how you are viewed in the eyes of others.



# *Are You Cut Out for Leadership ?*

so....**How Did You Do?**





# ***Are You Cut Out for Leadership ?***

## **How Did You Do?**

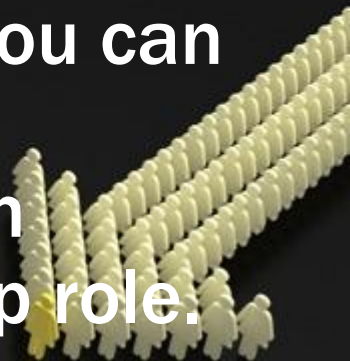
- As noted, the correct answer to each question above is **YES**. So, how did you do on the assessment?
- How similar or different were your own answers when compared to the answers of your trusted (and honest!) colleague who rated you?



# *Are You Cut Out for Leadership ?*

## **How Did You Do?**

- If you had one question that you could not answer with a resounding **YES**, you can probably still do well in leadership. You can learn to compensate and gradually overcome any weaknesses as you learn new ideas and practice new skills.
- If your honest **answer to two or more questions was NO**, and you still believe leadership is right for you, **then let's get to work**. If you are open to learning and changing some of your thinking, then you can still learn to lead well and become more successful. Keep your mind open so you can learn to be more effective in your leadership role.



# *Are You Cut Out for Leadership ?*

## **Did You Notice...?**

*Notice that **none of the questions** on the above assessment of leadership abilities asked you to rate how intelligent you are, how much subject-related knowledge or experience you have, or how much direct work experience you have in the area you are leading.*

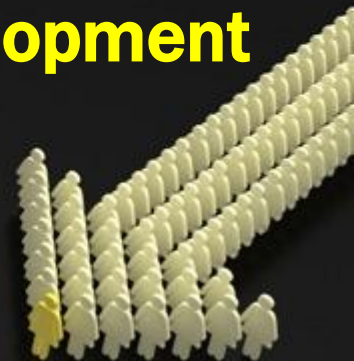


# Characteristics of a Successful Leader:

## Ten Basic Skills of Outstanding Leadership



- Integrity
- Vision/strategy
- Communication
- Relationships
- Persuasion
- Adaptability
- Teamwork
- Coaching and Development
- Decision-making
- Planning



# Definition and Explanation of the

## Leadership Skills List

### Integrity

- *How deep are your convictions on the things you believe in ?*
- *What do you believe in SO MUCH about your work that you will stand up to anyone about it ?*
- *How much are you willing to compromise your important beliefs ?*
- *To what extent do your behavior and the choices you make align with your guiding values and principles ?*



# Definition and Explanation of the

## Integrity Leadership Skills List

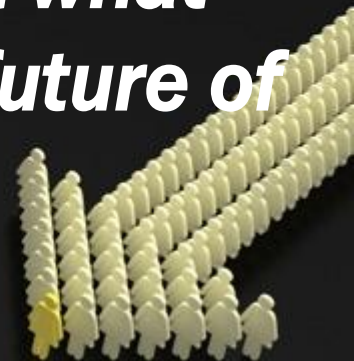
- Integrity means honesty and more. It refers to having strong internal guiding principles that one does not compromise. It means treating others as you would wish to be treated.
- Many experts believe that a **solid sense of right and wrong and strong guiding principles** are the most essential and basic of all leadership skills or characteristics. Integrity promotes trust, and not much is accomplished without trust.
- Integrity is a skill to the extent that we see it in action. But it goes much deeper than surface actions. It is based on one's guiding beliefs and values, and is an important example of an essential leadership quality.
- Integrity (or lack thereof) is reflected in thinking, attitudes, and actions. People can't directly see your level of integrity, but they judge it pretty accurately on a gut level based on your actions and your words.



# Definition and Explanation of the Leadership Skills List

## Vision/strategy

- **Can you see**, do you see where your department, team, and organization are going ?
- **How often do you talk** about the ways in which what you are doing in your area are related to the overall mission ?
- **Do you think and speak inspiringly** about what the organization is doing and about the future of the organization ?



# Definition and Explanation of the Leadership Skills List

## Vision/strategy

A leader must have a clear idea where his or her organization and unit **are going** beyond this month's results or this year's budget.

Where is it going in the long term ?

Even tactical leaders must be clear about this and need to refer frequently to the **vision, mission, and values of the organization** in their communications with others. Vision is another example of an essential leadership quality.





# Definition and Explanation of the

## Leadership Skills List

### Communication

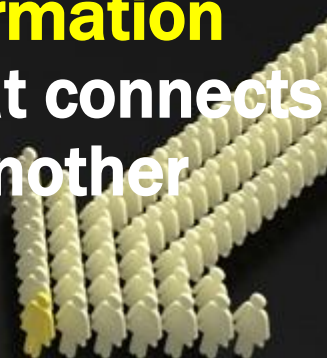
- **How much and how willingly** do you speak out and keep information flowing ?
- Conversely, **can you keep confidential information private** ?
- How often **can and do you listen more than you speak** in conversations with your employees ?
- How would you **assess your communication skills** with each of your employees ?
- How do you **handle “bad news”** when you receive it ?



# Definition and Explanation of the Leadership Skills List Communication

The chief complaint of employees in nearly every organization of all types, whether large or small from any industry segment, is **“lack of communication.”** Communication in the context of leadership refers to both interpersonal communications between the leader and followers and the overall flow of needed information throughout the organization.

Leaders need to **learn to be proficient** in both the **communication that informs and seeks out information** (gives them a voice) **and the communication** that connects interpersonally with others. Communication is another example leadership skill that must be cultivated by all leaders.



# Definition and Explanation of the Leadership Skills List

## Relationships

- *What is the **level of trust and respectful** feelings you have with each of your employees ?*
- *With **each** of your peers ?*
- *How **easy or difficult** is it for you to initiate new relationships ?*
- *Deepen **existing** relationships ?*

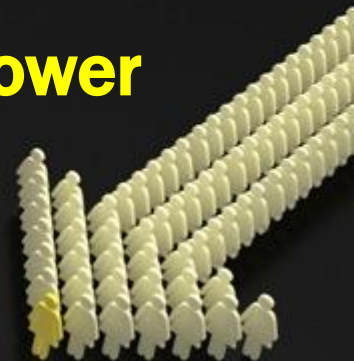


# Definition and Explanation of the Leadership Skills List Relationships

**Networking** (the art of social “schmoozing”) is also a relationship skill. Relationships develop from good interpersonal and group communication skills but relationship skills also go deeper.

A leader who **likes dealing with people issues**, who can initiate and deepen relationships with others, has a great leadership advantage. This is a leader who can build a team and achieve impressive results.

This kind of leadership is based on **personal power** (the right kind of power), **not position power**. Relationship-building is an example of an essential leadership quality.



# Definition and Explanation of the Leadership Skills List

## Persuasion

- *How **persuasive and influential** are you ?*
- ***Under what circumstances** can you persuade others to your point of view ?*
- *To what extent do **people value your opinion and follow** your lead ?*



# Definition and Explanation of the

## Leadership Skills List

### Persuasion

The ability to influence others and cause them to move in a particular direction is a **highly important skill in leadership**. In fact, leadership is often defined as the ability to persuade or influence others to do something they might not have done without the leader's persuasion.

Your ability to be persuasive is directly related to **how much people trust you and how good your communication and relationships are**.

Persuasion (also called influence) is a good example of an essential leadership skill.



# Definition and Explanation of the Leadership Skills List

## Adaptability

- *To what degree can you **relinquish** rigidity ?*
- ***Control** ?*
- *When is it **easy and when difficult** for you to **embrace** change ?*
- *How do you **react** when things don't go as planned ?*



# Definition and Explanation of the

## Leadership Skills List

### Adaptability

Adaptability and flexibility in not being bound by a plan are **important success factors** in leadership today. The leader must move easily from one set of circumstances (the plan) to the next (the plan is not going as expected) and take them all in stride, even when the circumstances are unexpected.

The good leader **has to embrace change and see it as opportunity**. The leadership skill of adaptability is another example of a critical skill.





# Definition and Explanation of the Leadership Skills List Teamwork

- *To what extent do you value **working cooperatively** as part of a group ?*
- *How do you **promote** teamwork among those you lead ?*
- *In **what ways** do you work collaboratively with your peers ?*
- *How do you **handle team conflict** ?*



# Definition and Explanation of the Leadership Skills List Teamwork

**No one person can do it all.** That's why a team, comprised of others with different skill sets, is essential. A leader must know **how to build and nurture such a team.** A good leader knows when to be a leader and when to be a follower.

The **best leaders are good followers** when that's what is needed. **Building teamwork** is another essential leadership skill example.



# Definition and Explanation of the Leadership Skills List

## Coaching and Development

- *How do you feel about **developing others** around you ?*
- *How do you **encourage, nurture, and build** the capacity of those you lead ?*
- *How easy or hard is it for you to **set your needs aside and share control** with others ?*
- *Can/do you **delegate** well ?*



# Definition and Explanation of the Leadership Skills List Coaching and Development

**Developing others** is an important role for a leader. Encouraging others to expand their capabilities and take on additional assignments is part of the leader's responsibility.

Leaders who feel threatened by the capabilities of others are challenged in this area. **Coaching and development are essential skills** all leaders must cultivate.



# Definition and Explanation of the Leadership Skills List

## Decision-making

- *How comfortable are you with having to **make the “final decision”** on things ?*
- *Do you have any **tendency to decide too quickly** without due consideration or, conversely, to **gather data, analyze and ponder endlessly** and be unable to decide ?*
- *In **what areas do you struggle** with making firm decisions and standing up for what you believe ?*



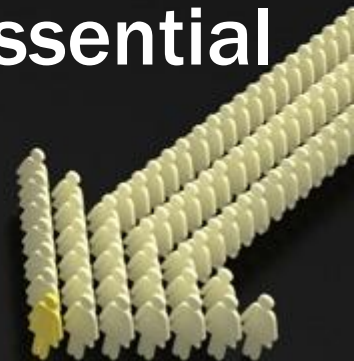
# Definition and Explanation of the Leadership Skills List

## Decision-making

A leader must be able to wade through information, comprehend what's relevant, make a well-considered decision, and take action based on that decision.

Making decisions too quickly or too slowly will impede your leadership effectiveness.

**Decisiveness** is another example of an essential leadership quality.



# Definition and Explanation of the Leadership Skills List

## Planning

- *How easy is it for you to put together **plans for activities and projects, including contingency plans** (what will happen **IF...**) ?*
- *How easily are you able to **focus your attention and stick to your plan**, yet without being rigid about it ?*
- *How do you decide when to **push ahead or, instead, to modify your plan** ?*



# Definition and Explanation of the Leadership Skills List

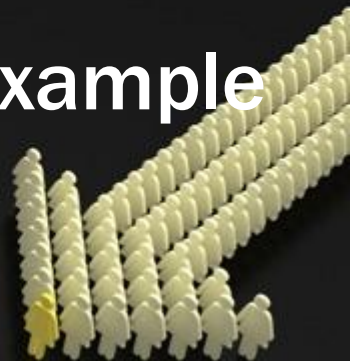
## Planning

Planning involves **making certain assumptions** about the future and **taking actions** in the present to positively influence that future.

To plan means **to focus** more strategically.

Plans are important for **guidance and focus**, but plans can seldom be cast in stone.

**Planning** is an excellent and necessary example leadership skill.





# Definition and Explanation of the Leadership Skills List



***“You have brains in your head.  
You have feet in your shoes.  
You can steer yourself  
any direction you choose.  
You’re on your own. And you know what  
you know.  
And YOU are the guy who’ll decide where  
to go.”***

***–Dr. Seuss,***

***Oh, the Places You’ll Go!***



# ***"I'm Supposed to Supervise These People!"***

## **Have you felt like this?**

- 1) I have to conduct an important meeting;**
- 2) I've got to interview somebody;**
- 3) I'm supposed to be in charge of a big project;**
- 4) I need to make a really good decision;**
- 5) I've got so many deadlines and time pressures;**
- 6) I may need to let somebody go, and I'm not sure how to do it;**
- 7) I've got to do employee performance reviews, and I don't know how;**
- 8) I may need some help with one part of my job, but I'm afraid to admit it;**
- 9) I've got to make a presentation to the "big wigs";**
- 10) I know I need to delegate, but how?**
- 11) One of my people is late all the time;**



# ***"I'm Supposed to Supervise These People!"***

## **Have you felt like this?**

- 12) I've got two people fighting all the time;**
- 13) I think two of my people are romantically involved;**
- 14) I have an employee who I think is being unethical;**
- 15) I've got an employee who tries hard and just can't do the job;**
- 16) I have to supervise somebody I don't like;**
- 17) One of the people I'm supervising is my best friend;**
- 18) I've got an employee who just won't do the work;**
- 19) I've got someone who is negative all the time;**
- 20) I've got a lazy employee who isn't motivated at all;**
- 21) How closely should I be checking up on my people?**
- 22) We're not much of a team...and we need to be;**
- 23) My people just will not accept any kind of change;**



# ***"I'm Supposed to Supervise These People!"***

## **Have you felt like this?**

- 24) There's too much goofing off around here;**
- 25) I don't know what to say when they tell me their personal problems;**
- 26) My people are all complainers;**
- 27) I'm supervising people who can't speak English;**
- 28) I've got too many young kids working for me;**
- 29) Every time I turn my back they stop working;**
- 30) I've got problems with the boss;**
- 31) How do I handle all the gossiping and rumors?**
- 32) I have a bad temper I need to control.**



# Games Make Training Stick



The following **sample games and activities** for leadership workshops will provide you some ideas for doing your own training if you wish. Or they can be used to supplement formal training.

If these activities are not exactly right for you or your organization, use these as a starting place, a beginning idea.

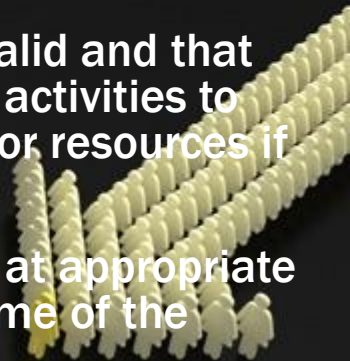
Consider how you can modify the activity to meet your specific needs.



# Games Make Training Stick

## Activity 1) I Wish...

- Objective: Identify problem areas within an organization in order to select problems you can solve; have a positive impact on organizational culture.
- Assign people to interview an employee or have trainees interview each other, using the questions below. This will reveal issues that are worth discussing in your training at appropriate times.
- What do you like best about your job?
- If you were in charge of the organization, what would you most want to change?
- What wish for change do you think your boss would make?
- What could be done to make your job more productive or more enjoyable?
- Compare answers (if employees were interviewed do not divulge their names, only the data they provided). Discuss and compile a list of suggested changes. Choose those that are appropriate for your training participants—which issues are they willing to tackle? Narrow the list down.
- If possible choose one item, one suggested change, that you believe is valid and that you could work on. Make this into a group project. Set a plan and assign activities to support the attainment of the goal. Secure organizational endorsement or resources if needed.
- Keep this list of problems you identified in "I Wish..." and refer back to it at appropriate times. Check yourself quarterly to see how you are doing on reducing some of the problems identified.



# Games Make Training Stick

## Activity 2) Urgent and Important?

**Objective:** To align workplace time and activities with organizational priorities.

*This is a Stephen Covey exercise, outlined in **Seven Habits of Highly Effective People**. The objective is to help people manage their time in ways that align with their personal and organizational priorities.*

*Explain the concepts of Urgent/non-urgent and Important/unimportant.*

*Urgent – pressing, needs to be completed promptly.*

*Non-urgent – You have more time on these items. They do not need to be completed immediately.*

*Important – has significance and impact; is high priority,*

*Unimportant – has little significance and is a lower priority, maybe even unnecessary, item.*

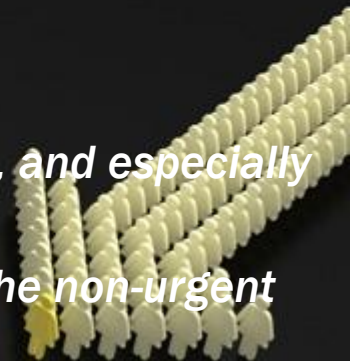
*Introduce the 4 quadrant chart below:*

*Break people into groups of 3-5 people. Ask each group to identify three or more typical tasks and activities that fall into each quadrant.*

*Debrief by discussing:*

*Where they should spend most of their time (in the Important quadrants, and especially spend more time in long-term activities).*

*Which quadrant(s) they should avoid (the Unimportant ones, especially the non-urgent one).*



# Games Make Training Stick

## Activity 3) Tangled

**Objective:** To demonstrate that difficult problems can usually be solved through teamwork, collaboration, and taking them one step at a time.

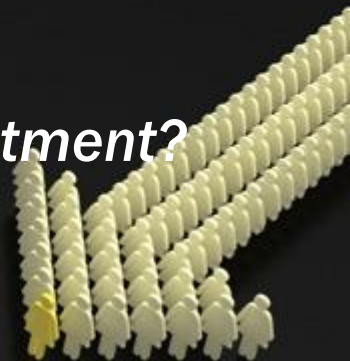
Ask your group to stand in a circle, shoulder to shoulder. Ask each person to extend their right hand to one other person across the circle. Then ask them to extend their left hand to a different person. Now that they are tangled, ask them to untangle themselves without releasing anyone's hand (twisting hand positions is acceptable, but no releasing). They will protest and say there is no way. But encourage them that they can do it.

When finished, debrief by discussing what people learned:

What does this exercise suggest about teamwork?

What does this exercise suggest about problem solving?

How can you apply this idea to your work and your department?





# Games Make Training Stick

## Activity 4) Trashcan Ball

**Objective: Demonstrate importance of both instruction and feedback**

*Ask four people to exit the room while you and the group set up the game. Now arrange a trash can in an open area where your “player” can stand 10-20 feet from the can.*

*Crush 5 pieces of paper and make them into paper balls. Bring each player back into the room one at a time. Players should either be blindfolded or brought into the room with eyes closed and turned around to face away from the trashcan that is their target so they can't see it.*

*Each person is given 5 balls and told they are to throw the balls into the trashcan.*

*First person: Give this person no instruction and no feedback. When they ask where the trashcan is, just tell them (“Behind you” or “In front of you.”) With each ball they throw, do NOT tell them how far away they are, and do not give them any encouraging comments. In fact, you and your audience may want to remark that they are pretty bad at this game.*

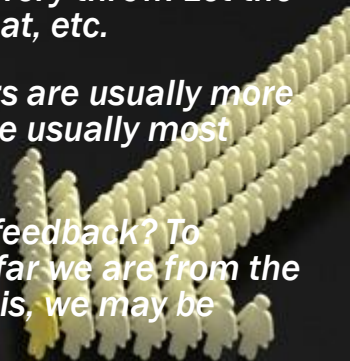
*Second person: Give this person instruction but no feedback. Tell them “You are \_\_\_ feet from the can. It’s directly in front of (behind) you.” Then, as they toss each ball, say nothing or tell them only how bad they are at this game.*

*Third person: Give this person no instructions but provide positive and encouraging GENERAL feedback. “You’re doing well.” “Keep trying.” “That’s pretty good.” “Way to go.” DO NOT SAY, “A little more to your left,” or anything that offers direction.*

*Fourth person: Give this person adequate, detailed instructions, and positive feedback after every throw. Let the player know how close they are after each toss, encourage them, tell them they are doing great, etc.*

*At the end of the game, ask each player how frustrating it was for them. The first three players are usually more frustrated than the last person. People who receive no instruction and/or critical feedback are usually most frustrated. Who performed best (probably the last player, but not always)?*

*Have a discussion: What does this game teach about providing feedback, especially positive feedback? To perform any task it is vital to have adequate instructions, specific feedback that tells us how far we are from the goal, and positive feedback that is encouraging and makes us want to keep going. Without this, we may be tempted to give up.*

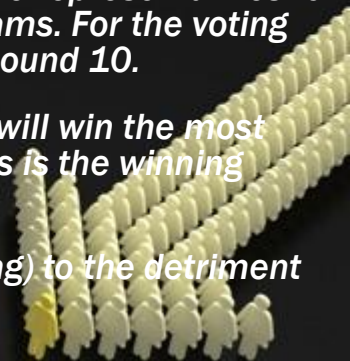


# Games Make Training Stick

## **Activity 5) Win as Much as Possible** (Source: Stewart Tubbs, A Systems Approach to Small Group interaction, McGraw-Hill, Inc, 1995)

**Objective: To consider the theme of sub-optimization [when one subsystem maximizes its own benefit. This action often hurts the organization as a whole, when others look out for their own self-interests] and how it can be counterproductive.**

- If you have more than 16 people, consider playing two games. Teams in this game generally work best with four or fewer players per team.
- Break group into four teams. The teams will play 10 rounds and the goal is to maximize their winnings. Each team will vote privately by consensus to submit an X or a Y for each round. Payoffs are based on what all teams do, as follows: [Post these payoffs in a visible location such as a whiteboard for all to see]
- 4Xs– everyone loses \$1 each  
3Xs– win \$1 each  
1Y– lose \$3  
2Xs– win \$2 each  
2Ys– lose \$2 each  
1X– win \$1  
3Ys– lose \$1 each  
4Ys– everyone wins \$1 each
- Facilitator keeps score and announces vote after each round but NOT which team voted which way.
- Before Rounds 5, 8, and 10 there is a mandatory conference. Each team will send one or more representatives to the 3-minute conference. This is the only time you are allowed to communicate with other teams. For the voting on these rounds the scores are multiplied by 2 for Round 5, by 5 for Round 8, and by 10 for Round 10.
- The point of the game (do not give out this information until the game concludes): your team will win the most only if EVERYONE wins the most. If everybody agrees to vote Y and sticks to their promise, this is the winning strategy.
- Discussion: How does this apply to our organization? Where are we competitive (suboptimizing) to the detriment of the organization as a whole?



# Games Make Training Stick

## Activity 6) Twenty Dollars

**Objective:** Have group go beyond lip service in just saying “our people are important.” Discuss why our people are important and how we can better demonstrate to them their importance.

- Take a \$20 bill and show it to your group. Ask how many people want that bill. All hands will go up! Then crumple it up in your hand and ask how many still want that bill. Then throw it on the floor, step on it, and grind it into the floor. Ask how many still want it. Start to tear the bill, and ask how many still want it.
- Finally, ask them what they are willing to do to get the \$20 bill. You may have some people that begin singing or dancing or offering to wash your car! [You can decide if you have a “winner,” and whether or not you even want to or can award the money to someone. The bill is used mainly to make a point and instigate discussion.]
- After this exercise, open a discussion about people. Are people more valuable than the \$20 bill? In what ways in this organization do we crumple them up, step on them, and tear them apart?
- How can we better show our people that we truly value them without using money to do it? You may want to break the group into several teams and see which group can come up with the most ideas.



# Games Make Training Stick

## Activity 7) What Do You Have On You?

**Objective: Self-awareness and learning to know others better.**

*This is a good warm-up activity for groups that know each other not so well or not at all.*

*Ask participants to choose one item that they are wearing or that they carried with them into the room that they think symbolizes something about who they are.*

*Ask each one to introduce themselves, showing the item they picked and what they think it says about them.*

*Is this something they are proud of or something they would like to change?*



# Games Make Training Stick

## Activity 8) Grumbling

**Objective:** *To release tensions and negative energy in a safe way in order to get on with a new activity or a change.*

*Divide your group into pairs. Instruct each participant to talk simultaneously and share any gripe, complaint, irritant, worry, resentment, or concern that he or she is currently aware of. When one member runs out of issues to disclose, he or she continues speaking by saying “grumble, grumble” until all pairs are done.*

*Stop the exercise when you believe that the significant negative energy has been released.*

*Lead a discussion on the following questions or on questions of your choosing.*

### **Discussion questions:**

*How did you feel during the exercise?*

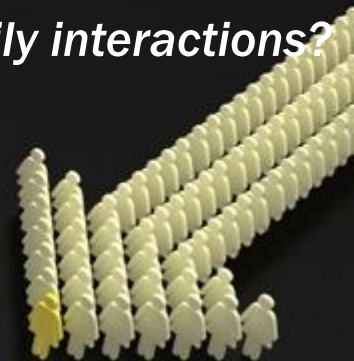
*What are the benefits of this exercise?*

*In what ways do we fall into grumbling conversations in our daily interactions?  
Are these productive?*

*How can they be made more productive?*

*Did you feel “heard” by your partner?*

*What does this exercise say about listening skills?*



# Games Make Training Stick

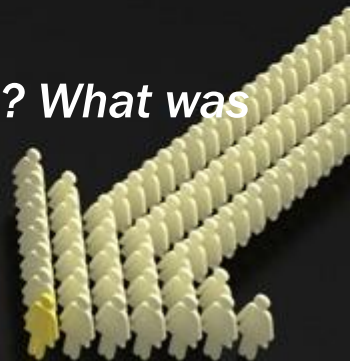
## **Activity 9) One Minute Praise** (From Ken Blanchard, *The One Minute Manager*)

**Objective: Demonstrate how easy and quick it is to give positive feedback.**

- *Group participants into pairs. Tell them you are going to ask them to do something that may make them feel self-conscious or awkward. Tell them to turn to their partner and say something nice about that person to the person. Both partners should give the other a “one minute praise (which usually is only a few seconds long).*

**After all groups have completed this, discuss the following:**

- *How do you feel right now?*
- *How easy was it to give praise?*
- *How easy was it to hear yourself being praised?*
- *How many of you were uncomfortable enough with this assignment that you said to your partner “you go first”?*
- *When was the last time you gave someone a word of praise like this? What was their reaction?*



# Games Make Training Stick

## Activity 10) Why Learn Good Leadership Skills?

**Objective: Powerfully demonstrate the importance of interpersonal and leadership skills in all management and supervisory positions.**

- *Get a group of managers together. Ask them each to privately list 10 things that make them good at their jobs—qualities they have or things they know. When they are finished open the discussion by recording their answers on a whiteboard or flipchart in two categories:*
- *Technical skills they possess (if they are engineers, anything related to engineering knowledge; if they are insurance managers, anything related to insurance knowledge, etc.) and Skills related to dealing with people (good communicator, approachable, positive attitude, democratic, etc.)*

**In nearly all cases, managers will construct a longer list of people-related skills than they do technical skills related to the content of their jobs.**

*This helps to make a case for the need for training and development, particularly in the areas of leadership, teambuilding, and communication. They probably went to school for (and/or have worked for years to learn) the content knowledge of their jobs. But where did they ever get training or instruction in handling people? Most of us are poorly trained in these practical skills and have often had poor role models as well.*



# Games Make Training Stick

## Activity 11) Uses for a...

**Objective:** Spur the group's creativity when creative ideas, problem-solving, and strategic planning are the focus.

- Present the group with a series of simple objects (plastic cup, brick, pencil, rubber band, book. Three to five items is generally a good number, but if you have more time or need maximum creativity, add a few more.).
- Give them one minute with each object to list as many uses (oral or written) for the object as possible other than the use for which it is intended (including silly or fanciful ones).
- You may want to award small prizes for the most total answers or the most outrageously creative answer after you discuss these.





# Games Make Training Stick

## Activity 12) Think “Dumb”

**Objective:** Take a new look at old problems to discover possible solutions.

- *People often have either the belief that their organization’s problems are simply to be accepted and negotiated but never to be solved (we just have to live with them). Or they have a different reaction: the issue could probably be corrected but it would take an expensive and nosy consultant (somebody from outside the company) to do it.*
- *Either of these common notions may discourage people from naming and tackling their own problems. In truth, many of the problems leaders face with employees in any and all organization can be “solved” (i.e., situation improved) with a simple exercise done on a regular, or even intermittent basis. It’s called “Think ‘Dumb’.”*
- *For this exercise, ask people to jot down a few of the problem situations they commonly confront. What are their problems/challenges? They can think in terms of “this job would probably be okay IF, or this company would probably run much better IF...” (Tell them to scratch “fire the boss” off the list!) Then they need to select one of their ideas for the purpose of this exercise.*
- *Pair each person with someone in the training group that they work with least or work with less directly (preferred method), or simply use a counting off system, pairing ones with ones, etc. One member of the pair presents their problem to their partner for half the available time (10-15 minutes is recommended, so you need a total of 30 to 40 minutes for this Activity). The question/challenge for each pair is: How can you look at this problem from a new angle?*



# Games Make Training Stick

## Activity 12) Think “Dumb”

**Objective:** Take a new look at old problems to discover possible solutions.

*The job of the “Dumb Consultant” is to ask the presenter all kinds of simple questions about the situation, as if he/she did not know anything at all about the company, the department, or the people involved. Let the dumb one generate their own questions, if possible, but if they protest that they can’t think of anything, get them started with a few of the suggestions in the list below.*

- When does this situation happen ? When is it most challenging ?
- Who is involved ? Whose fault is it ?
- Who really cares about this?
- Why do you do it like that ? Why do you do that ?
- What is not working about this ?
- How is it affecting you? ...other people in the department? ...the entire company ?
- Why does it bother you ?
- Who else recognizes the problem ?
- What have you tried already to do to address this issue ?
- What communication issues are involved ?
- How can you improve the motivation for those involved to change ?



# Games Make Training Stick

## **Activity 12) Think “Dumb”**

**Objective: Take a new look at old problems to discover possible solutions.**

Once they get started the questions and answers will probably flow easily. The idea is for the dumb person not to give advice but just to keep asking dumb questions, like a young child would. Let the presenter get his/her own ideas from the questions raised. Challenge all assumptions.

The job of the problem presenter is to take notes, record any insights, and be prepared to briefly share these insights with the entire group at the end of the Activity.

**Once half the allotted time has passed, get the partners to change roles.** The other partner presents a new problem (even if it's related to the original one, discuss it anyway). The first presenter now becomes the “Dumb Consultant” continuing to ask questions, which the presenter takes careful notes.

**When the partner time is completed, allow three minutes for each person to go round-robin** to share with the group the problem they presented and any new information and insight they gained from being questioned. Each participant should be prepared to make a pledge in front of the group to take one immediate action in regard to this problem.

**Agree on a reasonable date** for the actions to be taken, and set another time for reporting back to the group on any and all progress in regard to the issue presented. Access our free leadership training material that may help you with your personal leadership development or group training.

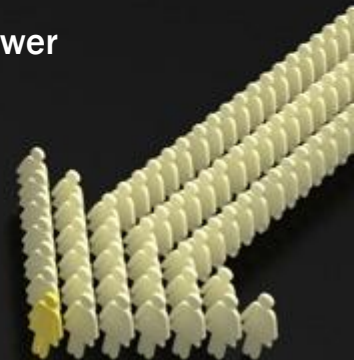


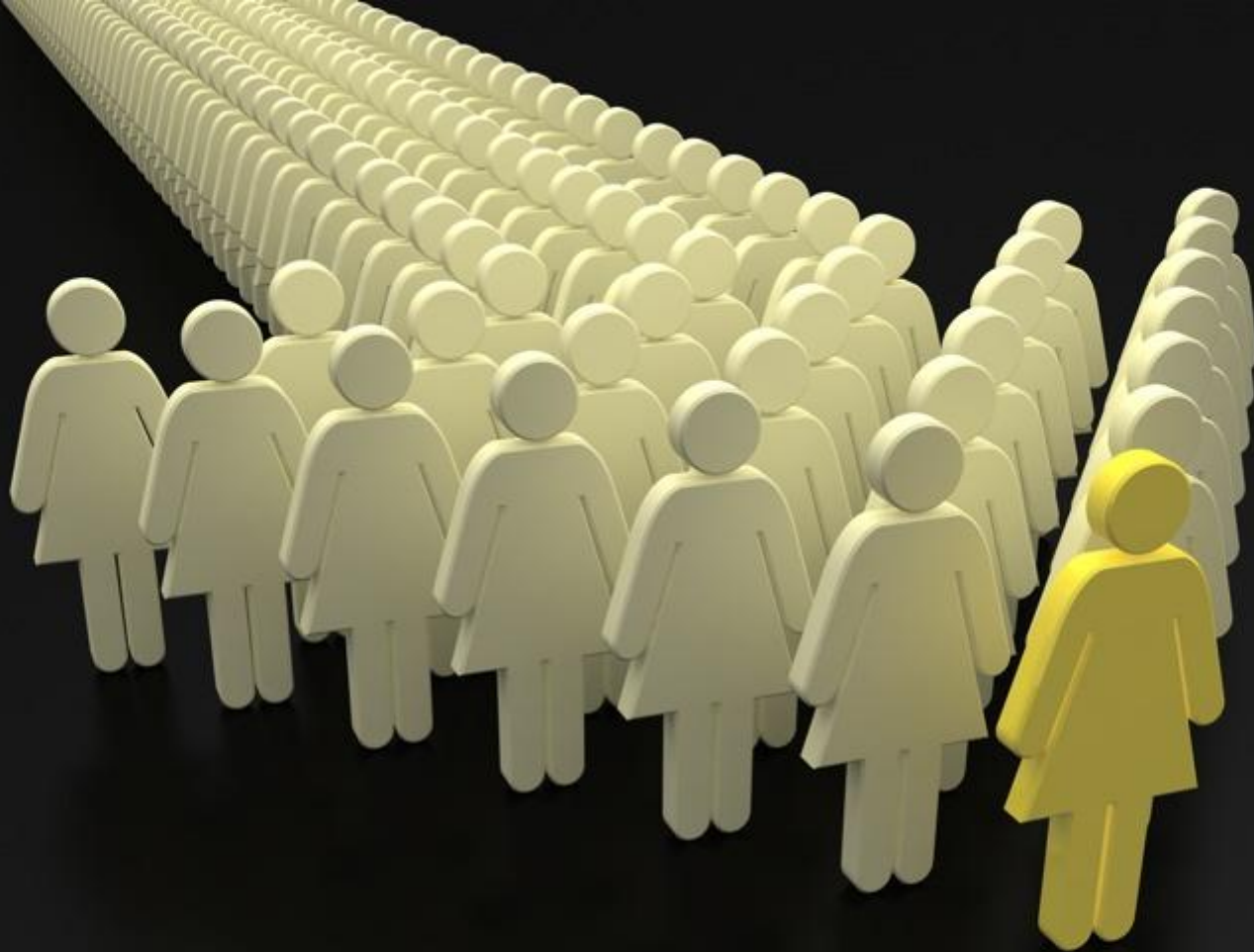
# Are you a Leader?



A sense of humor  
is part of the art  
of leadership,  
of getting along with  
people,  
of getting things  
done.

~Dwight D. Eisenhower





**Thank you**

Presented by J.W. Owens