

# Learning Squared

Two practical exercises in collaborative learning & planning , team briefing and delegation



Learning<sup>2</sup> was developed in response to many new trainers who were in need of proven but inexpensive & powerful (yet simple to use) communications related activities.

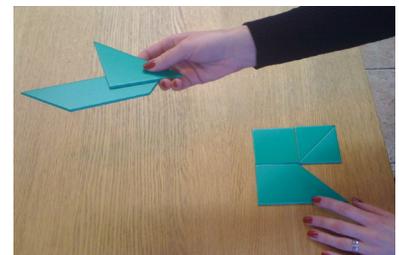
RSVP Design had used variations of the classic Broken Square and Hollow Squares activities for many years, and decided to produce a professional package of materials including all Activity Briefs, durable components that could be re-used, and full facilitator instructions.

The resulting package – called Learning<sup>2</sup> - provides two team activities that work well in developing first line supervisors, as well as any intact team, looking at issues such as working collaboratively and planning & briefing skills. Complete copies of Broken Square and Hollow Square are included so that both activities could be used concurrently if required.

RSVP Design's Broken Squares activity is developed from the original activity created by Alex Bavelas, published in *Studies in Personnel Psychology*, 1973: 'The five squares problem: An instructional aid in group cooperation.' The RSVP Design version works with groups of up to 16 people, and takes 20 minutes to complete. Working in groups of 4, with 21 puzzle pieces distributed between them, the task requires each of the 4 individuals to finish the exercise with a complete and identical square shape made from the available puzzle pieces. However, they are working with serious constraints: there is no verbal communication allowed and no-one is allowed to request a puzzle piece from anyone else.

The success of the exercise is dependent upon an awareness of what others need and a willingness to offer individual puzzle components to others.

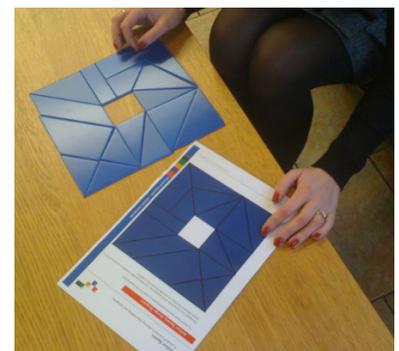
Broken Squares encourages individual team members to be pro-active in contributing to a team goal and focus on giving, rather than taking, in order to be effective.



RSVP Design's Hollow Square activity is developed from the original activity created by A Shedlen and W Schmidt and published in 1974 in JW Pfeffer and JE Jones 'A Handbook of Structured Experiences for Human Relations Training'. The RSVP Design version works with groups of up to 16 people, and takes 30 minutes to complete. Working in pairs (a Planning Team and an Operational Team) up to four teams work independently, representing the relationship between supervisors and their teams. Materials include four sets of 16 plastic pieces, plus laminated briefs and assembly diagram solutions.

The Planning Team prepares and delivers a briefing to the Operational Team which should allow the Operational Team to be able to complete a task without further input from the Planning Team. It highlights the importance of involving operational staff in developing plans that they will be required to implement, clarifying instructions and checking understanding throughout the delegation process.

Hollow Square is an activity that explores issues of trust, effective communication, clarity of goals and expectations in a process of delegation.



To add LEARNING SQUARED to your resource library:

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