

How much is trust worth?

Overview

The following exercise shows the worth of trust by setting up general goals for all the teams but assigning different roles to individual team members.

How does it work?

Participants are divided into three teams and they need to sort shuffled decks of cards into the “correct” order (just make up the order and write it down or use the one in this printout). Each deck is checked and then shuffled by the instructor before a new deck is given to the team. Whoever arranges the most decks within the time limit is the “winner”.

In reality there is no winner as the whole setup is skewed because every team member has a personal assignment as well.

1. In team A, everybody is working for a common goal and is assured that everybody has the same goal.
2. In team B, everybody is working for a common goal, but they are given the info that somebody is working against the common goal within the team.
3. In team C, there are actually 1-2 persons who have the personal goal to work against the team and stay unnoticed.
- 4.

So ideally the outcome is A-B-C.

What do you need?

- Standard 52-card decks (2 decks for each team). Strip all the nonstandard cards from the deck, so only suits remain.
- Whiteboard or a way to mark the points for teams.
- Personal assignments for each team member (printout sheet in last page).

Setup

Get participants into 3 teams (not more than 4-5 participants in each), seated separately. Get three trainers checking the decks (or involve somebody from participants if needed). Brief the exercise (use the rule sheet).

Give every person their personal goal (print out the “personal goal sheet”) and stress to keep it secret.

The rules

Goal

Sort as many decks of shuffled cards into the correct order within time limit.
Your team will receive the next shuffled deck when the previous one is submitted for checking.
If there is even the smallest mistake in the order of the submitted deck, the team will not get a point for this deck and the deck will be re-shuffled.

Each participant will also get a secret personal assignment in writing. Do not reveal your assignment.

Time limit ___ minutes

Correct order face up



A 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 J Q K

The correct pack face up starts with Ace of Spades and ends with King of Clubs.

Personal assignments for team A

Your goal is to help your team to arrange as many decks into the correct order as possible. Everybody in your team is working for the same goal. Do not reveal your mission!

Your goal is to help your team to arrange as many decks into the correct order as possible. Everybody in your team is working for the same goal. Do not reveal your mission!

Your goal is to help your team to arrange as many decks into the correct order as possible. Everybody in your team is working for the same goal. Do not reveal your mission!

Your goal is to help your team to arrange as many decks into the correct order as possible. Everybody in your team is working for the same goal. Do not reveal your mission!

Your goal is to help your team to arrange as many decks into the correct order as possible. Everybody in your team is working for the same goal. Do not reveal your mission!

Personal assignments for team B

Your goal is to help your team to arrange as many decks into the right order as possible. There might be people in your team working against this goal. Try to find and eliminate them. Do not reveal your mission.

Your goal is to help your team to arrange as many decks into the right order as possible. There might be people in your team working against this goal. Try to find and eliminate them. Do not reveal your mission.

Your goal is to help your team to arrange as many decks into the right order as possible. There might be people in your team working against this goal. Try to find and eliminate them. Do not reveal your mission.

Your goal is to help your team to arrange as many decks into the right order as possible. There might be people in your team working against this goal. Try to find and eliminate them. Do not reveal your mission.

Your goal is to help your team to arrange as many decks into the right order as possible. There might be people in your team working against this goal. Try to find and eliminate them. Do not reveal your mission.

Personal assignments for team C

Your goal is to secretly work against arranging the decks. Others will try to find out who is working against them so stay undercover. Do not reveal your mission.

Your goal is to secretly work against arranging the decks. Others will try to find out who is working against them so stay undercover. Do not reveal your mission.

Your goal is to help your team to arrange as many decks into the right order as possible. There might be people in your team working against this goal. Try to find and eliminate them. Do not reveal your mission.

Your goal is to help your team to arrange as many decks into the right order as possible. There might be people in your team working against this goal. Try to find and eliminate them. Do not reveal your mission.

Your goal is to help your team to arrange as many decks into the right order as possible. There might be people in your team working against this goal. Try to find and eliminate them. Do not reveal your mission.

PS! For team C there are two different assignments. Make sure you secretly assign one or two persons as a saboteur depending on team size.

Additional info

Detailed process

One person from each team comes to the instructors and will receive a shuffled deck of cards. He will return to the team and they need to arrange it so the order is correct.

Then he brings it back to the instructor. He will receive another deck of shuffled cards and the instructor checks the previous deck.

The team can start working on the new deck, but the instructor will let them know if it was all good and they got a point.

The instructor shuffles the deck for the next round.

Time limit

10 minutes is a good time for the shuffling part of the activity.

Always let teams know how much time they still have.

Making it shorter might not bring out the effect. Making it longer will create more anxiety and break the exercise eventually.

One possible variation

To amplify the learnings do the following: When checking the decks, announce one deck "wrong" even if it was correct. Do that for every team. Do it early in the activity (second or third pack).

Take the deck from the team, give them the new one, check the cards and announce that it was wrong and they will not get a point for that.

This will amplify and make teams think about what went wrong and work on that.

You do not have to do it, but it does work wonders. I recommend not doing this when you have training participants checking the decks.

Debriefing

When time is over, do not accept decks from teams (last deck must be submitted before the time is over). You will usually end up with team A winning, team B lagging close behind and team C somewhere farther behind.

In team A everybody is working for the same goal and they should have complete trust. Even if there is a “mistake” then the team just takes it as such and moves on.

In team B everybody is working for the same goal, but trust level should be lower. So if mistakes are made, people start checking each other etc.

In team C you have people actually working against you.

Sometimes the team B can outperform team A. The reasons can be that somebody is a very capable card handler or team members just disregard the possible saboteur and focus on the task at hand. In the latter case, they basically operate in a full trust environment.

As this exercise was set-up and skewed to say the least, the debriefing should be thorough. Go by the team but do it together.

Few sample questions:

- Did you fulfil your goals?
- What did you focus on during the activity?
- What was your process (write it down on the whiteboard if possible)?
- Was something holding you back?
- How much time did you use on checking before you submitted the decks?
- Let every person reveal their roles in a team.
- Any surprises about the roles?
-

Move to the second team. Then third.

This is an activity that usually drives quite a bit of discussion. If so, let it flow.

At the end of the debriefing, make it very clear that this was a skewed and setup exercise that does not actually show how well participants worked in a team. It only showed how the circumstances will affect the performance of the team.