

# Jigsaw Puzzle

## Team Building Exercise

Adapted by Doug Kelley • [www.DougKelley.com](http://www.DougKelley.com)

<b>Objective:</b>	Be the first team to complete the Jigsaw Puzzle
<b>Lessons Taught:</b>	Team building, communication, negotiation, and delegation
<b>Time:</b>	Approximately 15 minutes
<b>Items Needed:</b>	Several inexpensive, children's themed jigsaw puzzles (approximately 12 pieces each)
<b>Reward:</b>	Buy some small candy bars to give to the winning team
<b>Modification:</b>	Feel free to modify this exercise as you see fit

**Preparation:** Check with Wal-Mart or a similar store for children's jigsaw puzzles containing 12 pieces. Often, the puzzles will carry a particular theme such as cartoon characters, etc. Ideally, the theme picture will "spill over" from the puzzle pieces to the sides of the puzzle board. This makes it easy to place the correct pieces into the correct puzzle board.

Divide your jigsaw puzzles into groups. Then separate the pieces so that you have an equal number of different pieces for each puzzle. For example, if you are using 4 puzzles with 12 pieces, each puzzle group will get 4 correct pieces, and 4 pieces from each of the other 3 puzzles. This way, every puzzle has the same number of correct and incorrect pieces. Put each puzzle group (board and pieces) into a bag.

**Instructions:** Divide participants into small groups of 3 to 6 people, depending on the size of your group. Ideally, you will have at least 4 teams. An easy way to do this is to determine how many teams you want, and then number each person. For example, if you want 4 teams, start with the first person in the row and tell them they are number 1. The next person is number two; the next, number 3; the next, number 4. Then start over... the next person would be number 1, and so on. Once this is done, invite each group number to take a place in different sections of the room, so they are all grouped together.

Now tell participants that the objective is to be the first team to complete the jigsaw puzzle. Then go through the instructions below. You may want to incorporate the PowerPoint Slide when giving the game rules.

- **Small Groups**
- **Each group will choose a Team Leader**

[Allow teams to choose a Team Leader, then continue with instructions]

- **Each Team will be given a jigsaw puzzle with incorrect pieces**
- **The Team Leader will delegate the task of finding the correct pieces to Team Members, who will then trade with other teams for the correct piece**
- **Each Team Member can only trade one piece at a time**

[All team members will be searching, negotiating, and trading for correct pieces, not just one team member at a time]

- **Team Leaders CANNOT go find pieces**
- **Team Leaders CANNOT physically place the pieces in the puzzle; they CAN direct**

[Tell them to let you know when their team has completed the puzzle so you can verify that it was done correctly and proclaim them the winners]

**COMMENTS:** Once you have given the instructions, have each Team Leader come to the center of the room and get their Jigsaw Puzzle Bag, in random order.

**DEBRIEF:** After the exercise, give each team a few minutes to answer the questions below, after which you will ask for their answers and add in your own thoughts. You may want to copy the last page and hand it out.

**What are the lessons?**

- **Productivity increases with good communication**
- **Productivity is low without communication**
- **Communication is important**
- **Productivity increases when people work together to solve problems**
- **Everyone plays a part in the success of the team**
- **There is always a way to do the seeming impossible**

**What other lessons can you come up with?**

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### What Are the Lessons?

Take a few minutes and answer the question above as a team. See how many lessons you can identify from the Jigsaw Puzzle exercise that will help you to grow as a person and employee (try to come up with at least 5).

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.