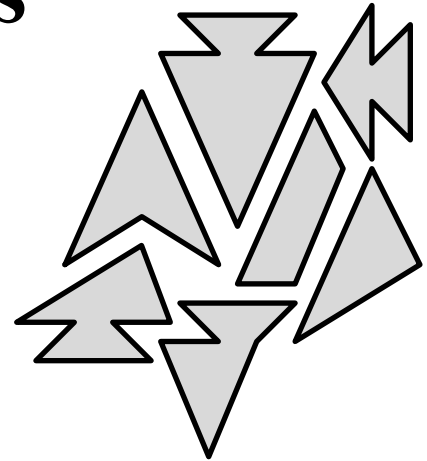




Teambuilding
Puzzles

Arrowheads

Pointing in the Right Direction



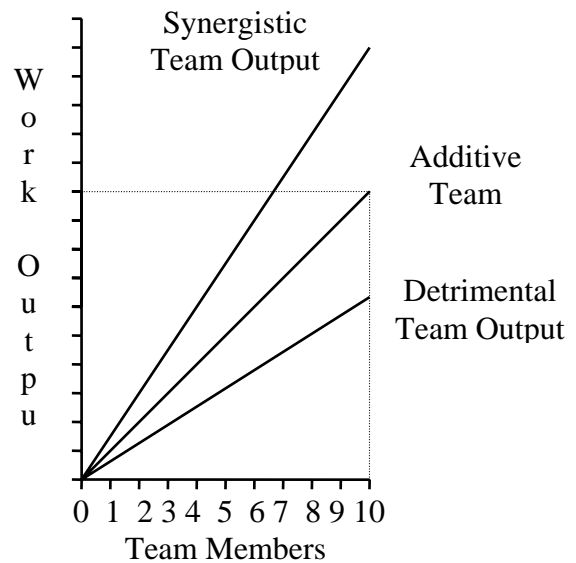
Here is a challenging puzzle for exploring the concepts of limited resources. If your team needs to successfully complete a task when there seems to be insufficient resources to do so, then this is the perfect puzzle for you.

Using the seven puzzle pieces shown here, simultaneously assemble five arrowheads. One arrowhead is already complete, and provides a size template for the remaining arrowheads. Each of the four remaining arrowheads will be the same size as this one. When you are finished, you will be able to see all five arrowheads at the same time.

Teachable Moments This specific puzzle is used to illustrate the connection between teachable moments and puzzles in the first chapter of this book.

Understanding how to get things done, especially when limited resources are available, is a valuable life skill. In this case, how was your team able to identify how to accomplish the task? How are the limited resources of this situation like other situations in your life, work, institution or corporation?

Arrowheads is the perfect puzzle to help your team understand the value of synergy. Synergy can be described metaphorically as: $1 + 1 = 3$. Synergy exists when the output of a team is greater than the output of each individual combined. The graphic shown illustrates this point. If one team member can produce one unit of output and we hire nine additional team members, we expect to be able to produce a total output of ten units. If our team members work synergistically, they can actually produce more than ten units of output. Conversely, if our team members do not work synergistically or even worse, reduce each other's effectiveness, less than ten units of output will be produced. From this simple analysis you can see that teams operating synergistically have a substantial advantage over teams that do not.



Hints and Clues You already have enough pieces to complete the five arrowheads required. Sometimes you need to get all your people (arrowheads) moving in the same direction. A two by two organization can be helpful.

Puzzles and Teachable Moments

Two Opportunities that Go Well Together

Puzzles are very much like life itself. They present challenges. They sometimes confound us. They teach us skills that work elsewhere. And, just when we figure out what is really going on, somebody changes the rules and we are forced to consider a new reality, and seek new solutions.

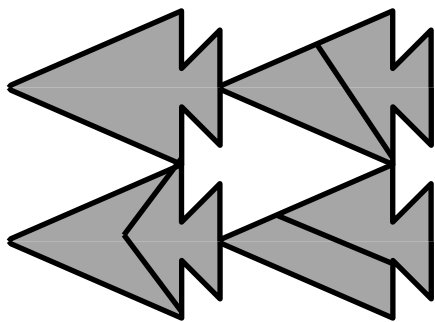
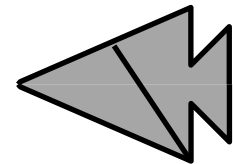
Learning how to solve puzzles then is not only a recreational pastime, but practice for real life as well. The skills required to solve challenges and puzzles translate to other portions of our lives. Patience, creative problem solving, determination, working as a team, perseverance... these are all useful skills that, when practiced are likely to improve the quality of our individual lives and our value as a member of a team.

Within the solution to a challenging puzzle, comes a key moment when the facts and realities of the puzzle become increasingly clear. This unique moment, sometimes referred to as the ‘aha!’ effect, or even as a BFO (Blinding Flash of the Obvious), is the separation between challenge and solution, between a puzzle presented, and a puzzle solved. Within this moment come lessons that last long after the puzzle has been forgotten. This is what we refer to as a ‘teachable moment.’

The puzzles and teachable moments presented in this book are designed to help you explore a variety of concepts with your students and team members. Sure, you can solve most of the problems in this book individually, but you would be missing a valuable opportunity. Each of the puzzles in this book present two possibilities:

1. To challenge teams in working together to find a solution to each puzzle, and
2. For the team to experience the learning opportunity or teachable moment presented in each puzzle.

As an example of the value of teachable moments, consider the Arrowhead Puzzle. In this puzzle participants are given a collection of wooden pieces, that when properly assembled, will create a total of five arrowheads, all the same size. One arrowhead is already complete, and provides a size template for the remaining arrowheads. Most teams quickly discover that there are only six remaining pieces, which collectively create only three more arrowheads, for a total of four. The challenge of this puzzle is to use the four arrowheads in the proper configuration to create the outline of a fifth arrowhead, thus completing the task.



The teachable moment in this puzzle is for the group to realize that even though they feel they have been given inadequate resources, it is still possible to complete the task. In many cases, we all would like ‘more stuff’ to do our jobs. More time to complete the research paper. More employees to finish the construction project. More financial resources for materials. The arrowhead puzzle illustrates that we can do ‘more with less’ if we are willing to be creative and work together.

In order to bring out the teachable moment from this puzzle, the leader or facilitator can ask the team, at the completion of this project, “does this puzzle remind you of any other situations, and if so, tell us about them?” Or, “what other projects do you have limited resources with which to complete the task?” By exploring this line of discussion at the completion of the puzzle, participants are given the opportunity to transfer the skills learned from the activity back to their respective situations. This approach sometimes helps a team member solve not only the puzzle of the day, but potentially some additional challenges they are facing as well. One of the most important questions you can ask is, “what skills did you learn from this experience that can help you solve additional problems in the future?”

Experience is a hard teacher. It gives the test first, and then the lesson.

Vernon Sanders Law

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