

# MTD Quick Tips

## An Exercise To Use With Your Team

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# An Exercise To Use With Your Team

At MTD we are firm believers that learning should be fun.

Therefore we use a variety of learning methods including accelerated learning techniques, NLP, emotional intelligence, action learning sets, role plays, assessments and practical exercises to name but a few.

Our practical exercises always go down well with our delegates.

Why is this? I hear you ask!

Well, first and foremost our exercises prove a point - they are all designed to be fun and practical and at the same time they provide an invaluable learning experience that the delegates will never forget because they actually "experience" the learning for themselves.

Secondly, the wash up session after the exercises are planned out to ensure that the learning is applied back in the workplace with the lessons learned and the delegates can go away from the exercise with practical techniques to use.

And thirdly - without fail I always get asked to email the delegates some exercises that they can use with their own teams - that is the acid test of whether they are worth it!

I thought I would give you an exercise that you can use with your team either during a meeting or a team building session.

This particular exercise demonstrates the importance of:

- Communications
- Instructions
- Interpretation
- Developing mutual understanding
- Active listening
- Clarifying questioning techniques

Your role will be to act as the facilitator and leader to ensure that all of the learning points come out of the session.

Time to complete - 30 minutes

This exercise can be carried out in pairs with several pairs playing the game at the same time, or one pair playing and the remainder of the group observing.

Two people sit back to back.

Each has a piece of paper (can be any sheet of paper provided it is rectangular - not square - a large sheet of newspaper works well particular if the activity is being observed).

One player (the instructor) folds and tears his/her sheet of paper at the same time reading pre-prepared instructions to the other person (the student) as to how the student is to fold and tear/cut their sheet of paper.

For added interest issue each pair with a hole-punch and a pair of scissors (smaller sheets of paper are more likely to require scissors).

Other than giving the instructions the delegates cannot discuss or explain anything else. Instructions must be read out exactly as they appear on the instructions sheet, which is created and supplied by the facilitator. Neither player must be able to see what the other is doing while the exercise is under way.

After the instructions have been completed, the team members turn and face each other, unfold their sheets and compare their paper doilies, which will look quite different, even though each has been made from the same instructions.

Here are examples of instructions for the instruction sheet (you can create your own variations or use these, or reduce them for a quicker simpler exercise - do not include the bracketed points, which are facilitators notes and to help with the review):

Fold the paper in half horizontally (this depends on what way the sheet is held and could be interpreted to be folded along the landscape or portrait axis)

Fold in half again diagonally (again, this is open to interpretation - normally an asymmetrical fold corner-to-corner).

Fold in half again vertically (again, this is open to interpretation).

Fold the top right corner so that the point is at the centre of the folded sheet (the folded corner could be one of four).

Fold the longest point to the corner farthest away from it (can be open to interpretation).

Fold in half again or as close to two halves as possible (it may not possible to fold exactly into two symmetrical or even asymmetrical halves).

Tear or cut off 2cm of the sharpest corner with a straight cut or tear.

Tear of cut off 1cm of the opposite or farthest corner to the above corner with a curved cut or tear (curved what way? – again this is open to interpretation).

Punch three holes along the longest edge (where exactly along the edge is open to interpretation).

Punch two holes in the next-to-longest edge (where exactly along the edge is open to interpretation).

Cut a 0.5cm sharp 'V' two-thirds into the shortest edge (this is open to interpretation).

Unfold the paper and compare your doily with your partner's doily.

Points for the debrief and review discussion:

How many of you ended up with paper projects exactly the same?

Why were you unable to end with exactly the same doilies?

What instructions were the least helpful and why?

How could these instructions have been made clearer?

What clarifying questions would you have asked if permitted to clarify the instructions?

What additional tools or devices would help the reliability of the instructions and fullness of understanding (the obvious ones are a ruler, and a diagram for each stage - the point here is that complex instructions often need tools, references, examples or other devices to enable proper clarity and accuracy, and the responsibility is with the writer to take the initiative to use and include these aspects if required - don't assume that words alone are sufficient, because they rarely are).

As an extension of the exercise ask everyone (in pairs of as a group discussion or brainstorm exercise) to re-write the instructions so as to guarantee producing two identical doilies.

NB If facilitating this exercise ensure you try out your instructions before using them in the activity.

Okay, that should keep you and your team out of trouble for half an hour or so!

Like always if you have got any questions or would like us to propose some training courses for your company just give us a shout!

Live, love and laugh!

Sean

Sean McPheat
Managing Director
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# About Sean McPheat




## Sean McPheat

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Founder and MD of international management development firm MTD Training, Sean McPheat is widely regarded as a leading authority on modern day management and leadership.

Sean is a bestselling author, and has been recognised for his own business building skills through the **British Business Awards** and has been featured in the **Who's Who Of Britain's Business Elite**.

He has been a regular judge for the UK's Young Enterprise Programme but was not as horrible as Simon Cowell (well almost!)




Sean has been featured on **CNN International, the BBC, SKY, ITV, The Guardian, Forbes, Arena Magazine, Marketing Weekly, Business Zone, Winning Edge** and radio stations such as BBC WM and LBC (London's Big Conversation).

Sean has over **250 media credits** to his name and his weekly email tips go out to over **60,000 people** interested in management and development strategies.

Sean is also a **much sought after media figure and motivational speaker** on all topics related to management, HR, business improvement and entrepreneurialism.