

# Workstations

## A simple and highly engaging team communication and problem-solving task



Many of you will be familiar with the type of puzzle that uses a matrix of information and a process of elimination in order to find the answer to a set of questions. Fewer of you will have exploited these puzzles to turn them into fascinating team development exercises.

In RSVP Design's version of the matrix puzzle, 'Workstations', key information is divided up between members of a working team. As team members are not allowed to draw or write anything, they are dependent upon gathering and 'collating' verbal information in order to solve the puzzle.

As they work together, it becomes clear that they need a strategy for managing the information. There are various options available to them and, whichever they choose, the whole team must co-operate in order to be successful.

*"It is difficult to make some training programmes really engaging and fun and also to ensure that I am developing skills. Do you have any ideas how I can make a programme on 'Managing Meetings' more participative?"*

*"I want my learners to become more aware of the way in which they present and remember information. Do you have a team activity that makes them really think about how to manage a large volume of confusing information?"*

*"Have you got a simple team development tool that will help me to explore team roles, team communication and team-problem-solving?"*

*"What can you suggest as a simple but relevant exercise so I can get to know my team members quickly?"*

*"Here are some of the things I've used Workstations for recently. It isn't a new activity but maybe some of these applications will give you some new ideas about how to get the best out of some 'classic' tasks!"*

1. As part of an induction day for new public sector employees, we used 'Workstations' to explore how it felt to be overwhelmed with new information and unsure of how to make sense of it all. We identified ways of expressing confusion without appearing to lack confidence, how to ask the right questions to find the information you need and how to clarify and summarise to confirm understanding.
2. On a 'Managing Meetings' workshop for the Greater London Authority, 'Workstations' is used to simulate an information-sharing and decision-making meeting. Participants practise skills of chairing meetings, managing inter-actions, ensuring understanding and reaching agreement.



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To add WORKSTATIONS to your resource library:

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