

# A Mini Mystery Puzzle

**Purpose:** This team building Activity will assist in developing problem solving skills and team cooperation. Use this as an energizer for well performing team and a development exercise for troubled teams.

## Materials:

- Paper and Pens
- One Printed game for each group
- One Solution Key for you
- To add some ambiance, you can purchase Detective badges and some costume pieces at your local party supply store
- Fake Tokens or Coins (these will be given 2 per team to be used when asking for Help)

## Setup:

- Follow the Prep instructions on the Solution Key before you begin the game

## Activity:

- Set Rules – No cell phones or outside resources are allowed
- The Goal is to complete the mission in 30 minutes or less
- Complete the Prep from the Setup
- Form Teams and give each team one copy of Print Out #1
- Welcome the teams and hand out detective badges. Tell them they are all honorary detectives and their assistance is needed in solving a possible crime. They are to read the first piece of information and find the next clue.
- Tell the teams that each time they solve a Puzzle they will report their solution to you. If they are correct you will hand them the next Piece of the Puzzle.
- You may allow teams to ask for “Help” only 2 times during the exercise. They can ask for help from you or from another team. Each time they use Help, they must turn in one token or coin.
- Set a Timer and tell the teams GO!
- As the teams check back in with their puzzle solutions, do a quick check in to see how they are working together. If a team is completely stumped it is ok to offer some help, even if they don't ask.
- At the End of the 30 minutes
  - Re-group with everyone and check-in to find out How many teams have completed the puzzles and solved the crime
  - Debrief the exercise. Take time to reflect. See questions below



## **Debrief:**

1. What made this task challenging?
2. What methods did you use to solve the puzzles?
3. Did a leader emerge in your group? How did that occur?
4. What contributed to your success or failure in this task?
5. What would you do differently next time?
6. When you started this task what was your performance expectation? Did you meet your expectation why or why not?
7. What are one or two things you can take away from this exercise?

## **Conclusion**

This activity can be a lot of fun for teams that communicate well and do a good job of cooperative problem solving. Groups like this will likely enjoy the process and want to do a similar exercise in the future (Contact me I can make a custom group of exercises for you). Groups who have trouble working together may experience some bums along the way. They may need additional support with the puzzles due to disagreements on how to solve or interpret a message. Allow these teams some space to work things out before you step in, but step in if they get stuck and absolutely can't move forward. Either way, spend at least 30 minutes in the debrief and takeaways. They are an important part of this activity and will help the team verbalize their experience with each other.



## Instructions: Travel Agent

You are playing the role of a Travel Agent. In the activity, you will ask the questions below. You are attempting to plan a trip for their upcoming vacation. While asking the questions, Do not explain yourself or why you are asking the questions. Simply ask the questions until you receive a response.

Materials: Magazine vacation photos (2), camera, paper and pen

1. What is your favorite time of year to travel?
2. When is the last time you went swimming? Where did you swim?
3. Do you prefer a cold drink or a hot cup of coffee?
4. On a scale of 1-10 with 10 being the best, how would you rate the following
  - a. A tent
  - b. An RV
  - c. A Hotel Room
5. What are three items you carry with you on every trip?
6. Ask them to pose for a picture (this is for a passport photo, but don't tell them). Take a photo with your phone or a fake camera
7. Describe your ideal dinner?
8. What do you like to do for fun?
9. Have you seen the show "Cats"
10. What size shoe do you wear? What would you prefer flip flops or Dock Martins?
11. Do you like picture A or B ( Use magazine vacation photos)



## Instructions: Restaurant Server

You are playing the role of a Restaurant Server. In the activity, you will ask the questions below. You are waiting on a customer's table but the kitchen is running behind and their meal is taking a very long time to come out. While asking the questions, Do not explain yourself or why you are asking the questions or completing the requested actions. Simply ask the questions or complete the actions until you receive a response.

Materials: pen and paper, empty glass

1. Are you waiting on someone to join you?
2. Action: Bring them an empty glass?
3. What would you like to eat?
4. Do you have any napkins?
5. Would you like some water?
6. I'm so sorry you are still waiting. Are you doing something later today?
7. Have you thought about taking something with you ToGo?
8. Action: Walk by the other participant several times as if you are a waiter. Look at them but don't say anything as you walk by.
9. Action: Leave the room for 30 seconds and come back in. Don't say anything just get up and leave
10. When you return to the room ask; Are you still waiting? Did anyone come by and speak to you?



### Instructions: Clothing Stylist

You are playing the role of a Clothing Stylist. In the activity, you will ask the questions below. You are working with the customer to style them for an upcoming awards ceremony. While asking the questions, Do not explain yourself or why you are asking the questions or completing the requested actions. Simply ask the questions or complete the actions until you receive a response.

Materials: Ruler, items of clothing such as scarfs, hats and gloves

1. Ask the participant to remove a shoe, then measure the shoe.
2. Action: Put several items of clothing on the participant and step back to review the look. Adjust the items several times.
3. Ask the participant to do a model walk
4. Action: Walk around the participant saying hmmmmmm
5. Take off a few of the clothing items and shout, "No! No! No!"
6. Action: Take the ruler and measure
  - a. The length of their hair
  - b. The length on their hand
  - c. Their nose
7. When all is done, Tell them they can go now
8. Sit down and stop speaking to them.

