



MACHINES

- This is . . .** An activity in which participants create a human machine and then have to change the machine per the customer's request.
- The purpose is . . .** Participants learn that changes can create opportunity for improvement.
- Use this when . . .**
- ▶ The group is experiencing lots of change at work.
 - ▶ Individuals need to be creative about finding solutions during change.
 - ▶ You don't have prep time and/or materials for anything more elaborate.
- Materials you'll need . . .**
- ▶ No materials are necessary for this activity.
- Here's how . . .**
1. Divide the group into teams of 6–10.
 2. Give each team 6 minutes to plan a human machine. All participants must be a part of this machine.
 3. Watch each team demonstrate its machine.
 4. Then, select a participant from each machine. Announce that these "machine pieces" are obsolete.
 5. The teams now have 3 more minutes to adjust or reinvent their machines using their selected participant in a new way.
- Ask these questions . . .**
- ▶ How did you decide on the machine design?
 - ▶ How did you handle disagreements in the team?

Tips for success . . .

Try these variations . . .

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- How did you feel when I rejected your original design? (*Frustrated and angry with you, hurt that you singled me out, anxious to improve the design, etc.*)
- How do we typically react to changes in our own work environment?
- What implications does this have for us back on the job?

Tips for success . . .

- Encourage the teams to be highly creative in their efforts, to use sound effects, and so forth.
- When selecting the participant who will be obsolete, choose the one who has the most pivotal role in the machine. This will force the team to really work on redesigning it.
- Give a 1-minute warning before time is up.

Try these variations . . .

- Impose a purpose or use for the machine, so the teams are then in competition with each other for the best machine for that purpose.
- Require that the planning, assembly, and demonstration be done without speaking.
- After the first machines have been demonstrated, have the teams find a way to incorporate all their machines into one giant machine. This will take the emphasis off of change and place it on creative teamwork and cooperation.
- Have some unusual props available. Assign one or more props to each team. Have them incorporate the prop into their machine design from the beginning or halfway through the activity. Props could include an eggbeater, a broom, a watering can, a silk flower, and so forth.