

THE PARADIGM

Shifter

CHALLENGE (GOAL, OBJECTIVE):

To leave the restrictions of the paradigm through creative and cooperative teamwork; to exceed initial expectations.

GROUP SIZE: 6-15 per facilitator

TIME: 30 minutes

EQUIPMENT: 1 ball

PROCEDURE AND RULES:

The group and facilitator stand in a circle facing each other. The facilitator begins by transferring the ball to the first participant. The participants must continue to transfer the ball around the circle from person to person as many times as possible. No one can use the same technique or resource for receiving or passing the ball (fingers, hand, foot, elbow, shoe, etc.). The facilitator begins by transferring the ball with his or her hands, thus eliminating the use of hands thereafter. The facilitator states, "Oh, by the way, I am using my hands so that body part is out." (This statement sets the scene for an assumption of "body parts must be used.")

- If the ball is dropped, start over.
- Everything is in bounds, so participants can use "anything" to receive the ball—they simply have to think of it. (Do not tell the group this. If a group member challenges the paradigm of using something other than body parts, simply restate your instructions, letting them decide to shift the paradigm.)
- Group members can help one another (but may not touch the ball for others).
- The facilitator keeps the ball going until he or she is ready to debrief.


VARIATIONS:

Instead of a ball, pass an apple, orange, or other object relevant to your group.

DISCUSSION /DEBRIEF:

Assumptions and paradigms often create limitations that prevent forward movement and success. When these are appropriately challenged a limitless resource of solutions can appear. Careful attention to the words we use, especially when we are in a leadership position is important. Are we expanding possibilities through our questions and comments?

- Paradigms provide boundaries that often limit new/ different solutions.

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- Individuals in a team (and individuals in recovery) often appear to be working together, but actually they take care of themselves before giving to the group. Teamwork occurs when individuals think of the team first, knowing that the team will support them.
 - When a team is effectively working together, its members move from their "positions." They get closer to the problem, work together to generate solutions, and give support. This allows participants to use "out of the box" thinking with positive group support. Many times people will not think creatively for fear of negative feedback.
 - Use resources in different and creative ways.
 - Assumptions and paradigms influence our perceptions.
 - Narrow department goals or individual/personal goals can impede the success of the whole. When everyone focuses on everyone succeeding, no one needs to worry that they will not have help should they need it.