

MODULE H

Problem-Solving Activity

Lutts and Mipps

1½ hours

Objectives for Participants

- To explore the effects of collaboration and competition in group problem solving.
- To observe problem-solving behaviors and strategies within each team.
- To become more clearly attuned to the effectiveness of the team's interactions and to be able to identify areas for improvement.

Key Links to Other Modules

This experiential problem-solving activity will allow participants to gather additional information about themselves and about the interaction of individual members. This is an important enhancement to modules designed to generate this information through feedback or from the results of instruments, interviews, and observations. The goal and style of this activity is similar to that of the "Sales Puzzle" problem-solving activity. The facilitator can choose to use one or both, depending on personal preference and the time available.

Materials Needed

- A newsprint flip chart and a felt-tipped marker.
- Flip charts: Objectives
Lutts and Mipps Answer Guide
- A copy of the Lutts and Mipps Instructions for each participant.
- A set of Lutts and Mipps Information Cards for each group (26 cards in a set).
- A copy of the Lutts and Mipps Reaction Sheet for each participant.

Procedural Outline

Time	Activity
10 minutes	<i>Introduction:</i> Briefly explain that participants will work through a problem-solving activity designed to convey additional information about building

From "Lutts and Mipps: Group Problem-Solving" in *A Handbook of Structured Experiences for Human Relations Training* (Vol. II, rev. ed., pp. 24-28), edited by J. William Pfeiffer and John E. Jones, 1974. San Diego, CA: University Associates. Based on a problem by Rimoldi, *Training in Problem-Solving*, Publication No. 21, Loyola University Psychometrics Laboratory. Adapted with permission.

a team. Post and review the “Objectives.” The team is divided into groups of five or six members each, and an observer is selected for each group.

Meet separately with the group of observers to give each a copy of the Lutts and Mipps Reaction Sheet to complete during the activity. Ask them to monitor the processes within their own groups but not to communicate with the group members during the activity. Review all questions on the sheet and clarify them if necessary. Suggest that observers take notes on the role each person plays and the effects of that role on other group members.

30 minutes

The Activity: Each participant is given a copy of the Lutts and Mipps Instructions. Ask each group to sit in a circle and read the instructions silently. Answer any questions. Distribute one set of Lutts and Mipps Information Cards randomly among the members of each group (except the observer) so that each member of a group has approximately the same number of cards. Inform the participants that each group has twenty minutes to reach consensus.

50 minutes

Results: After twenty minutes, stop the process and distribute a copy of the Lutts and Mipps Reaction Sheet to each participant who does not have one. Ask them to complete the form individually.

Post the Lutts and Mipps Answer Guide (which should be transferred to a newsprint sheet in advance). Ask the groups to compare their answers with the answer guide, and lead a discussion about the methodology used by each group to obtain its answer. If members of a group were unable to agree on an answer or if their answer is incorrect, ask them why they had difficulty and what they might do differently next time.

Ask observers to report their observations and to be as specific as possible. The other group members should respond by sharing their own observations and comparing them with those of the observers.

Lead a discussion on any of the following questions that were not addressed, and record salient points on newsprint:

- Did anyone assume a leadership role? If so, at what point? Did leadership shift? If so, at what point?
- How were clues communicated to the group?
- What techniques or strategies were used in problem solving?
- What were the effects of collaboration and competition on group effectiveness? How were differences of opinion handled?

Key Learning Points

A knowledge of the characteristics that enhance and inhibit team effectiveness will guide the team in improving its interactions.

The way the team shares and processes information is an important characteristic in solving problems.

FLIP CHART

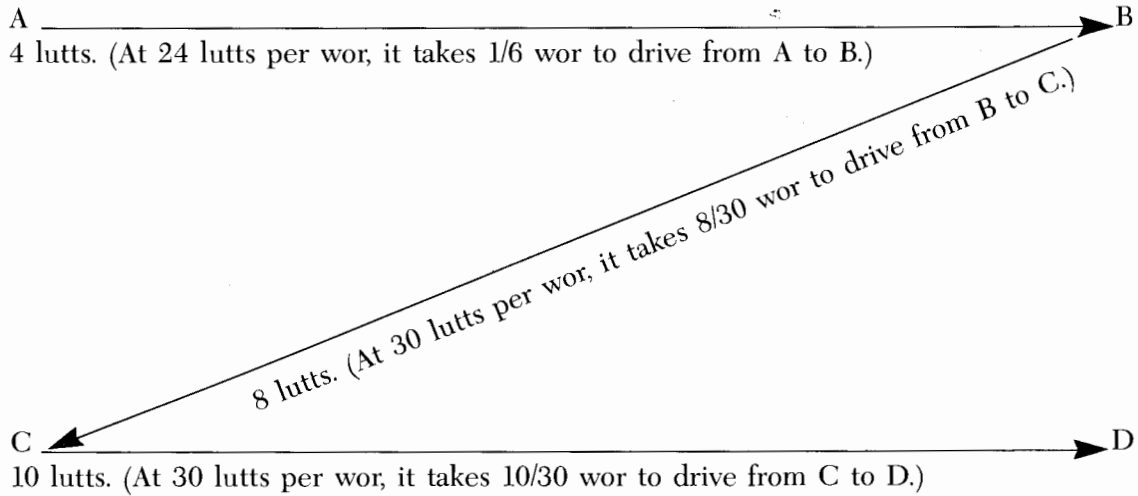
Objectives

During this session you will:

- Explore the effects of collaboration and competition in group problem solving.
- Observe problem-solving behaviors and strategies within the team.
- Become more clearly attuned to the effectiveness of the team's interactions and be able to identify areas for improvement.

FLIP CHART

Lutts and Mipps Answer Guide



$$A \text{ to } B = \frac{1}{6} \text{ wor} = \frac{5}{30} \text{ wor}$$

$$B \text{ to } C = \frac{8}{30} \text{ wor}$$

$$C \text{ to } D = \frac{10}{30} \text{ wor}$$

$$\text{TOTAL} = \frac{23}{30} \text{ wor}$$

Note: The clues referring to dars, mirs, and mipps are not relevant to the solution.

Lutts and Mipps Instructions

- Assume that lutts and mipps represent a new way of measuring distance and that dars, wors, and mirs represent a new way of measuring time.
- A man drives from Town A through Towns B and C to Town D.
- Your group must reach consensus on how many wors the entire trip takes.
- Do not choose a formal leader.
- You will receive cards containing clues. You may verbally share the information on your cards, but *do not allow anyone else to read your cards*.
- You will have twenty minutes to complete the task.

Lutts and Mipps Information Cards

[**Note to facilitator:** Each question or statement should be typed on a separate card, so that twenty-six cards make up a set. One set is needed for each small group of participants.]

What is a wor?

A wor is 5 mirs.

What is a mir?

A mir is a way of measuring time.

How many mirs are in an hour?

There are two mirs in an hour.

How fast does the man drive from A to B?

The man drives from A to B at the rate of 24 lutts per wor.

How fast does the man drive from B to C?

The man drives from B to C at the rate of 30 lutts per wor.

How fast does the man drive from C to D?

The man drives from C to D at the rate of 30 lutts per wor.

How far is it from A to B?

A is 4 lutts from B.

How far is it from B to C?

B is 8 lutts from C.

How far is it from C to D?

C is 10 lutts from D.

What is a lutt?

A lutt is 10 mipps.

What is a mipp?

A mipp is a way of measuring distance.

How many mipps are in a mile?

There are 2 mipps in a mile.

What is a dar?

A dar is 10 wors.

Lutts and Mipps Reaction Sheet

1. Whose participation was most helpful in accomplishing the task?
2. What behavior was helpful?
3. Whose participation seemed to hinder the accomplishment of the task?
4. What behavior seemed to be a hindrance?
5. In what ways could the group's communication be improved to enhance its problem-solving ability?