

Connect the Dots



Directions:

Connect all of the dots with four straight lines. Do not lift your pencil off the paper. Do not retrace any line. Lines may cross if necessary.

Connect the Dots

Goal:

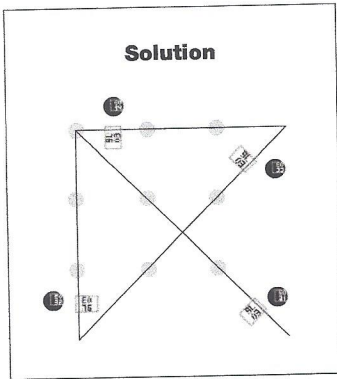
Participants will experience the fact that we often subconsciously limit our perspectives and alternatives.

Time:

15–30 minutes, depending on discussion.

Materials:

Copies of the “Connect the Dots” handout, a pencil with an eraser for each participant, an overhead projector, and a marker.



Procedure:

Begin the activity by telling participants that you'd like to challenge their thinking. Pass out copies of the “Connect the Dots” handout and pencils. Ask participants to try to complete the puzzle following the directions on the handout. Ask participants who already know the solution or figure out the solution before time is called to please turn their paper over and allow the others to figure out the solution themselves. Give participants three to five minutes to work on the problem.

At the end of that time, have participants put down their pencils. Ask if anyone has found the solution. If so, ask that person to come to the overhead projector and demonstrate the solution for the group. If no one has found the solution, draw the correct solution for the group.

Discussion:

Why is it that most of us did not think of going outside the boundaries to solve the problem?

To solve the problem, we had to get outside of our usual way of thinking—outside of the box we put ourselves in. We had to literally draw outside the lines. This is what is required of us when we interact with people who are different from us. We have to look at other ways of “thinking about thinking.”

Drawing outside the lines is very difficult because we are so used to our own way of thinking and our own point of view that it is hard to see other points of view. To successfully interact with people from different backgrounds and different cultures, we must learn to look at the world from many points of view.

Ask participants to share examples of situations when finding a good solution to a problem required thinking “outside of the box.”