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**PURPOSE** To explore how a group works together when faced with a problem that doesn't appear to have a logical solution.

**TIME** 30 to 45 minutes

**SUPPLIES** Participant Handout and Observer Form

**PARTICIPANTS** 10 to 36 people.

**METHOD** Form groups of five or six. Assign a person from each group to be an observer.

Take observers outside and give each an observer form. Advise them that they are to report only on what they see. Their task is to observe how the group works together, using the observer form as a guide, and report later. After being briefed, the observers may rejoin their groups.

Advise the groups that they are a team that is celebrating the successful completion of a project. They've gone to the racetrack for a bit of fun and want to bet on the race. Their problem is to figure out which horse is going to win the race. They have 15 minutes to solve the problem.

Give each person a participant handout and assign them a different part of the room to work.

After 15 minutes, call time and have each group report on who they bet on and why they chose that horse.

(Correct Answer is Fire Dancer - the winner is based on the number of vowels in the horse's name - 1<sup>st</sup> race - horse with one vowel; 2<sup>nd</sup> race - horse with two vowels...)

Advise participants that not only was the activity to have them solve the problem, but it was also to see how they worked together as a group. Have observers report on what they saw.

Have group members report on what the observers noticed.

**DEBRIEFING** Ask: What contributed to your success/lack of success in solving the problem? How could your team have been more successful? How does this activity apply to how you solve problems at work?

**PARTICIPANT HANDOUT**

Your team is celebrating the group's successful completion of a major project. You decided to take the afternoon off and relax at the horse races. Three races have passed and the group wants to place a bet on the fourth race.

The winners of the first three races were:

- First race - War
- Second race - Lobo
- Third race - North Racer

The names of the horses in the fourth race are:

- Black Bullet
- Fire Dancer
- Autumn Leaf
- Hoarfrost

Which horse are you going to bet on to win? Why?

(Note: there is a logical, though not readily apparent solution to this problem.)

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**OBSERVER FORM**

What problem-solving methods did the group use to solve the problem?

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Did the group work as a team or as individuals?

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Was there a specific leader or was the leadership shared? Give examples.

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What behaviours helped the group solve the problem?

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What behaviours hindered the group solving the problem?

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