

THE AUGUST 8-9, 2008 • DENVER, COLORADO  
LEADERSHIP  
CHALLENGE  
FORUM 2008

**Activity Name:** How Important Is the Picture?

**Submitted By:** Deborah Britt Roebuck, Executive Director, Siegel Institute for Leadership, Ethics, and Character

**Objective(s):** noting how/if the activity relates to particular Leadership Challenge concepts or one of the five practices

**This activity relates specifically to:** “Inspiring a Shared Vision”. Participants will learn how difficult it is to complete an activity without an understanding of the final outcome.

**Audience:** Anyone interested in having an exercise to help students or participants understand the importance of having a shared vision of an organizational goal or outcome.

**Time Required:** Typically this exercise is completed in three rounds that last three to five minutes each. With debrief, it is probably a 20 minute exercise.

**Materials Needed/Setup:** Children puzzles with approximately 25 pieces  
A table where participants can all stand around to work on the puzzle  
Stopwatch  
Flipchart

**Process:** Each group is given a puzzle to complete and instructed to turn the puzzle pieces upside down with the blank side up. Participants are also instructed to turn down the top of the puzzle box so that they can not look at it. The facilitator tells them they will be timed to see how long it takes them to complete their puzzle. The facilitator tells them that a team member must raise his or her hand when the team has completed the puzzle so that the time can be recorded on the flipchart. When all the teams finish, the facilitator leads a brief discussion about what went well and what could be changed to make the process work better. Typically, teams will say, we needed a leader. So at that point, the facilitator tells each team to choose a leader. The facilitator instructs all the teams to put their puzzle pieces back into the box. Then the facilitator collects and switches the puzzles around so that each team has a new puzzle. For round two, the facilitator allows the leader of each team to see the picture, but the puzzle pieces are still turned face down. Once again, the teams complete the puzzles and the facilitator times the completion for each team.

After the second round, the teams compare and contrast their scores and the facilitator leads a brief discussion on whether having a leader made a difference. Once again, the facilitator asks what would make it better and typically the participants will say if we could all see the picture on the box and if we could turn the puzzle pieces “right side up”. So the puzzles are once again collected and redistributed. This time everyone can see the top of the puzzle box and the pieces of the puzzle are face up. Typically, the scores are the best for this round. Then the facilitator can lead a discussion upon why having everyone see the picture (having a shared vision) is important for an organization or team.

**Facilitator Tips:** Need to keep the focus around leadership and vision

**Variations:** Only do one round rather than all three