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Monday, 28 September 2009 14:31

Try this: divide your team into groups of three or four; put two silver dollars on the table and direct each group to decide who gets the money.

Teams, departments and companies need to interact and negotiate effectively in order to be productive, but with all the reorganization going on in business these days, chances are good you are working with or for people you hardly know. But who has time for team building when time and money and staff are all in high demand?

Question is, who has time not to build better teams? One company I worked with held an annual meeting which always included a game or activity designed to bring people together. The complicated and forced fun usually was met with eye rolling, head shaking and a few newbies reaching for phones or running toward the door to avoid being embarrassed or put on the spot.
Developing great teams does not have to be painful. Recently, I went in search of activities that would bring professional people together without insulting their dignity or intelligence. I found the book, *Quick Team Building for Busy Managers*, by Brian Cole Miller. It promised results in 15 seconds. I figured I could spare 15 seconds and I put it to work.

The silver dollar activity above is from Miller. Designed to teach negotiating and collaboration, teams are given a time limit and then briefly talk about how they came to their decision. In the end, the people chosen to keep the money actually get to keep it. This works. It can be an ice breaker or a time-out tool at a meeting with zero prep time required.

And what about the eye-rollers? Someone who is shy or fears being singled out, or simply does not see the activity as worthwhile will resist. If you know ahead of time that someone might hold back, talk with him beforehand. Clue him or her in to the activity and explain your motivation. If they can't be cajoled into joining, let them observe and then comment afterward along with everyone else. This allows someone to be included, but on their own terms.

In my case, I didn't happen to have two silver dollars in my pocket so I improvised using two new dollar bills. The key to quick and impactful team bonding is simplicity. There are few rules and fewer directions. There is no wrong outcome, only varying perspectives. Ultimately, my group came out better connected than it had been a few minutes before and above all, connected was my goal.

Please send your career planning questions to Julie@insightnews.com .