

Session Three

Pieces of the Puzzle

Supplies Needed: 24, 50, or 60 piece jigsaw puzzle (can be purchased at most toy stores), small labels

Facilitator Preparation: Use the list of components for a meaningful leadership experience (see Session Three outline). Write one component on a label. If necessary, depending upon the number of puzzle pieces, you may have more than one label with the same component written on it. Place one label on the back of each puzzle piece.

Participant Instructions: Give each participant a puzzle piece. They should look at the label on the back, but should not share this information with other participants.

Once the participants have had time to look at their puzzle pieces, instruct them to work with other participants to put the puzzle together. (You may choose to set a time limit.)

Once the puzzle is completed, the facilitator will congratulate the participants and ask them to discuss what was written on the back of their puzzle pieces. Write the components on the flip chart at the front of the room as participants share them.

Questions:

- Why are these components necessary for a meaningful leadership experience?
- What other components (that may not have been mentioned) are important for a meaningful leadership experience?
- What would happen if component “X” were removed? Would the end result be the same? Why or why not?

Twist #1 (for alternate activity): Hold some of the labeled puzzle pieces back, rather than distributing all of them to the group. The end result will be an incomplete picture. In order to complete it, the participants must try to guess which components are missing. When a participant guesses correctly, the facilitator will give him or her the corresponding puzzle piece to include in the picture.

Twist #2 (for alternate activity): Label all of the puzzle pieces except for five or six of them. Hold back the blank pieces, rather than distributing them, and also have some blank labels on hand. The end result of the group effort will be an incomplete picture. Ask the participants to think of important components which may not have been included on the labels for their puzzle pieces. The participant who suggests an additional component gets a blank puzzle piece and a label. Instruct him or her to write the component on the label, affix it to the back of the puzzle piece, and add the puzzle piece to the picture. The brainstorming can continue even when the puzzle is complete.