

# how to *accelerate* learning.



## Printer's Box Exercise

This exercise can be used to demonstrate the principles of performance management and also coaching.

### Equipment

- Several pieces of A4 paper for each team
  - different thicknesses and grades
- Jug full of water
- Bowl - to catch any drips
- Timer (mobile phones can be used)
- 1 Envelope marked "Printers Box instructions"

Split the group into teams and maybe even offer some sort of prize to add the element of reward into the topic. The teams should be no bigger than 5 or 6 people to allow everyone to participate.

Explain that they will be asked to perform a task, which involves the paper, the water and the timer.

### Task 1:

The task is to create a container from a piece of A4 paper, which will hold 300ml of water for 1 minute. Let them decide in their groups how they complete the task.

Some people may achieve the objective and you as the facilitator should praise them if they do. Give them the prize later.

### Task 2:

- Open the envelope marked "Printers box instructions".
- In their teams, they should read the instructions and make the printers box
- The instructions are a little vague, so you may have to coach the groups, when they are struggling - resist the urge to tell them or show them - part of the exercise is about them having the answers
- Test its ability to hold water

The prize can go to the winners - those who were the first to achieve the objective.

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Once each group has achieved the objective, ask them to write how they can improve the performance on this task?

Things to look out for are: more water, longer time, carry across the room etc

De-brief:

- What made it hard the first time?
- Did they choose someone who is adept at practical tasks?
- Was it a success on the first run?
- How did they define success?
- Whose success was it?
- How could they further improve their performance?
- If they succeeded on the first run - was there a right way?
- Did they learn anything about performance management doing this task?

Link to key principles of performance management:

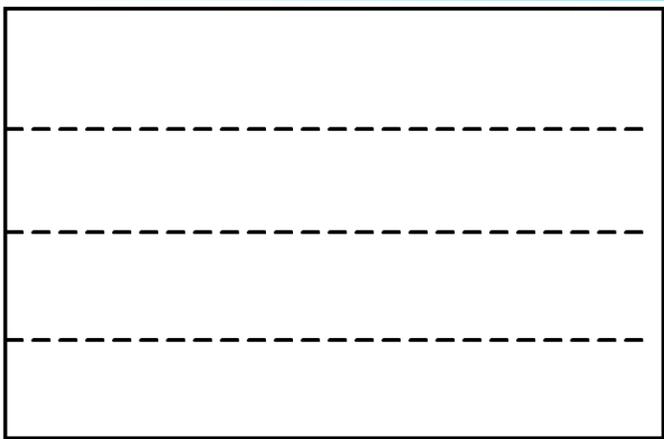
- Choosing the right person for the job
- Tell them WHAT to do not HOW to do it
- Can get them to the end point through coaching, asking questions etc
- The success is theirs if they manage it, not the managers, but the manager benefits
- Clear objectives help in the task
- The reward may be a motivator ..... or not ..... and many more points that you can draw out.



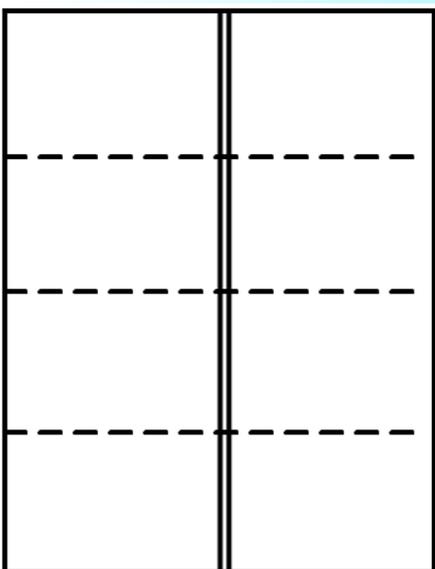
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## The Printer's Box Instructions

1. Fold the paper lengthways, open it up and then fold each long side to the central crease. Then open it up again. Your sheet of paper now looks like this:

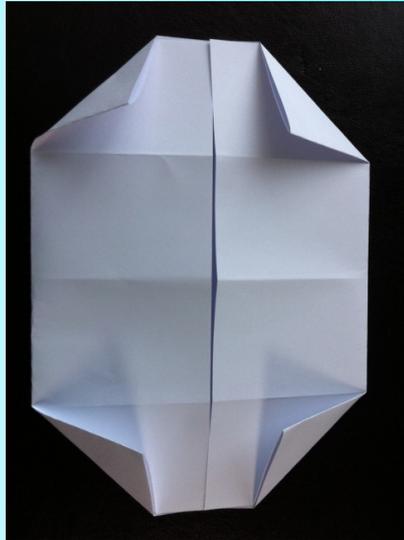
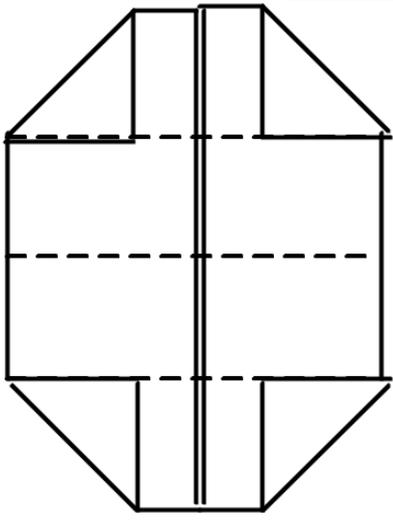


2. Fold the paper widthways and then fold each short side to the central crease. Your paper now looks like this:

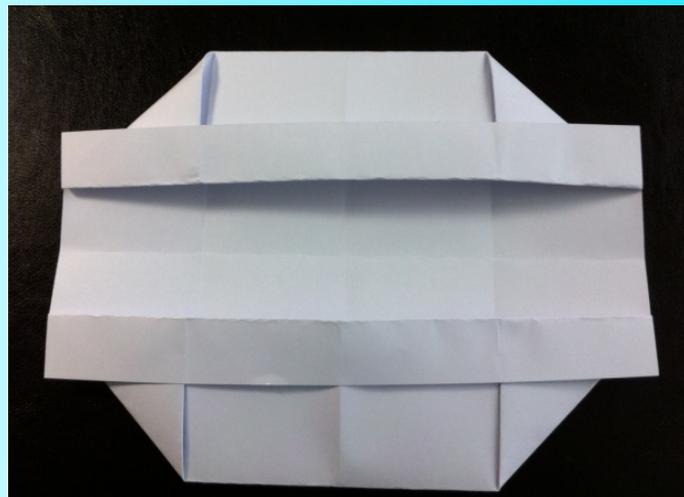
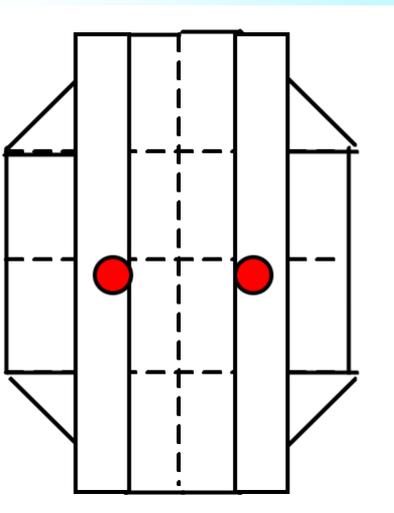


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3. Fold each corner down so that it aligns with the nearest horizontal crease. Your paper now looks like this:



4. Fold the short edges of the paper back over the corner folds. Your paper now looks like this:



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5. Lift up the flaps where indicated by the two red dots. Your printer's box will open up. Straighten the sides and base folds and you will get a sturdy little box like this:

