



THE BOAT (LOST AT SEA)

The ship on which you were sailing has sunk, and you, fortunately, have managed to find space on one of the lifeboats. On the boat, there are 14 items to help you and the others stay alive until you are rescued. However, due to shortage of space, you must throw four items overboard. The 14 items are listed overleaf. Everyone must personally agree upon the order of importance of each item before it becomes a group decision.

It is very difficult to get everyone to agree. Therefore, not everyone will be happy with the order of the list. As a group, try to ensure that all members at least partly agree with the order of each item on the list. Here are some guidelines for you to consider when trying to reach agreement:

- Try to avoid arguing in favour of your own opinion. Use your reasoning.
- Don't change your mind to avoid arguing and to reach agreement. You should only support those decisions with which you at least partly agree.
- Don't vote in favour of a decision because it is a way of avoiding dispute.
- If people have a different view, try to think of this as being a help to the group rather than a hindrance.

These are the 14 items in the lifeboat:

	Individual	Group
Sextant		
Small radio		
Shaving mirror		
5 gallons of water		
20 square feet of dark plastic		
Mosquito net		
Box of food		
Nylon rope 15 foot		
Map of the area		
2 boxes of chocolate bars		
Floating cushion		
Fishing line		
2 gallon tin of a gas and oil mixture		
A quart of rum		

Throw four items overboard and place the other ten in order of importance to help keep you alive until you are rescued...

Facilitator Notes

- Explain the activity, and tell them that they have 5 minutes to complete it by themselves. During this time, everyone must remain silent.
- They then have to try and reach agreement as a group on the order of the list – 15-20 minutes.
- Explain that during the activity, they are unable to approach the facilitator for advice or answers to any questions that they may have.
- Facilitator to observe the group, and make notes underneath each question:
 - Is everyone contributing?
 - Do some contribute much more than others?
 - Do the members listen to each other?
 - Do they listen to and accept the opinions of each other?
 - How do they react to each other – kindly, courteously, nastily, with hostility?
 - Do some undermine others confidence?
 - Is everyone's behaviour acceptable? Is there any prejudice regarding sex, race...
 - What are the roles of individuals within the group?
 - How do they reach a decision – through reasoning and clear debate?
 - Is there an expert in the group? Does anyone listen to him or her?
 - Does anyone ensure that everyone contributes?

- Once the time is up, ask one member of each group to read out their answers, giving the reasons behind their choices. Then distribute the 'One Possible Answer' sheet and read some of the reasons etc.
- Discuss the group work. Ask –
 - What it was like working in a group?
 - What was good/bad about the experience?
 - What prevented them from contributing?
 - How can things be different next time?
 - Did everyone listen?
 - Was everyone's opinion accepted?
 - Was everyone's response/behaviour acceptable?
 - Is it possible to reach agreement about what is acceptable?
 - What was the role of individuals in the group?
 - Was it easy to agree as a group? If not, why?
 - What can we do to make it easier next time?
- Facilitator to hand out the 'Group Roles' handout. Go through the list with them, then as a group slot each other into a role.

One Possible Answer

	Item	Reasons
1	Shaving Mirror	Essential for drawing the attention of those who will rescue the group
2	A 2 gallon tin of a gas and oil mixture	Again essential for drawing attention – can be ignited
3	A 5 gallon tin of water	Essential to have drinking water – everyone will lose a lot of body water through perspiring
4	One box of food	Basic food
5	20 square feet of dark plastic	To collect water and give shelter and refuge
6	2 boxes of chocolate bars	To eat when the food box is empty
7	Fishing line	A way of getting food, but no certainty of catching fish
8	Nylon rope 15 feet	To lash things down so that nothing falls into the sea
9	Floating cushion	Can save someone's life if they fall into the sea
10	Quart of rum	80% alcohol – useful as an antiseptic
11	Small radio	Without a transmitter, it is useless
12	Map of the area	Useless without equipment to tell you exactly where you are, e.g. compass
13	Mosquito net	There are no mosquitoes in the middle of the sea
14	Sextant	Useless without tables and a chronometer

GROUP ROLES

LEADER – perceived as a task role and a maintenance role. Carries status and expectations. The leader will be in the forefront of group discussions, helping others process ideas, giving instruction.

MAINTENANCE LEADER – expected to give encouragement, settle disputes, and help people feel included and effective.

TENSION RELEASER – releases tension by telling a good story, cracking jokes, making pertinent comment. This individual provides timely relief within the group. The role is valued – but when the group is working hard and looking seriously at a problem, untimely jokes are not acceptable.

INFORMATION PROVIDER – brings in data, research, reading, interviews, expert opinion, and observations. Many individuals should/can perform this role, some groups appoint one. It calls for critical skills, especially ability to analyse the reasoning and suggestions made by others.

CENTRAL NEGATIVE – challenges the leader/members when he/she believes the group is moving too rapidly over the data and uninformed opinion sways the group. This individual may criticise, not necessarily destructively, since this can assist the group look more critically at the task and group process.

QUESTIONER – seeks clarification, evaluating ideas.

SILENT OBSERVER – every group is likely to have one who sits quietly and is evaluating what is going on. Not a passive role, therefore by non-verbal signs after everyone has spoken becomes a valued resource.

ACTIVE LISTENER – overlaps silent observer. Head nodding, statements of agreement, and other references. This role invites others to explain their view. Important since it encourages participation. More active listening = more participation = group idea discussions greatly enhanced.

SELF CENTRED – truly negative, unlike central negative, offers what group does not need. Special pleading, negative responses, lack of concern about what group is doing or it is communication that blocks group action – difficult to handle but can be counteracted.

[illegible]

