



Objective: Put the puzzles together.
 This activity simulates the problems associated with coordination across large, cross-cutting Agile efforts — along with possible solutions to those problems.

Puzzle Breakdown / Set Up

Take 6 unique 48-piece puzzles and spread the content in 6 boxes.

P# represents the puzzle and B# represents the box of pieces.

The bold numbers represent the original pieces from that puzzle.

	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6
P1	8	8	8	8	8	8
P2	8	30	2	2	0	6
P3	8	5	20	5	5	5
P4	8	4	4	24	4	4
P5	8	6	6	6	16	6
P6	8	4	0	4	0	32
Total	48	57	40	49	33	61

Separate participants into 6 groups of 2-3 people and give them 1 box. Identify a timer to track total time to complete puzzle (not including pauses).

Facilitator Tips and Variations

- Tip: Anticipate responses from non-Agile practitioners
- Tip: Prompt people to go talk to others or change something each round
- Tip: Prompt them to do a quick “inspect & adapt”
- Tip: Might need to shorten time in each round to 1 minute
- Tip: Team temp or “How do you feel” after each round
- Variation: Have one group in a different room
- Variation: Add a round with a priority change
- Variation: Hide a puzzle piece
- Variation: Share puzzle vision after 1st or 2nd round

Key Take-Aways



- Provide a visual big picture/vision
 - Celebrate wins along the way
 - Take time to understand needs
 - Set clear priorities and expectations
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- Inspect & Adapt often even if disruptive
 - Have a collective desire to work together
 - Encourage team to self-organize
 - Ask for help from others
 - Collaborate with each other, build relationships
 - Physical environment helped be successful
 - Ask the team when they can finish, don't tell them
 - Ask “why”
 - Have a leader (e.g. PO, SM, PM) to funnel requests

- “Helicopter Mom” your teams as they work
- Have multiple #1 priorities
- Set time constraints for others
- Fix your scope if there is a fixed delivery date
- Create restrictions or bottlenecks



How to play

4 rounds of play in which teams attempt to get their puzzle completes on time. Be sure to debrief after each round. See reverse side for debrief topics.

Round 1

Give teams 1 min to get acquainted and then 2 minutes to put their puzzle together.

RULES: Each puzzle is a priority and puzzle #1 (B1) and puzzle #5 (B5) need to be completed in 2 minutes. Puzzle 3 (B3) has to be done within 5 minutes. **Note:** it is highly unlikely any team completes a puzzle during the first 3 rounds.

Round 2

Give teams 2 minutes to continue working on puzzles. Same rules as round 1.

Round 3

Give teams 2 minutes to continue working on puzzles. Same rules as round 1.

Round 4

RULE CHANGE: Puzzle 1 needs to be completed in 2 minutes, if Puzzle 1 team approaches your team, stop everything and provide their pieces. Puzzle 5 has to be done next. If puzzle 5 team approaches your team, stop everything and help them ONLY IF PUZZLE 1 IS COMPLETE. Puzzle 3 needs to be completed next. If puzzle 3 approaches your team, stop everything and help them ONLY IF PUZZLE 1 and 5 ARE DONE. Puzzles 2, 4, and 6 can be completed in any order and do not have a time constraint.

Debrief Topics

After each round spend time discussing the following

Round 1 discussion topics

- How this is like real life
- What challenges did your team encounter?

Round 2 discussion topics

- Add to list of how this is like real life
- What are the obstacles?

Round 3 discussion topics

- Add to list of how this is like real life
- Create a list of how this is NOT like real life

Round 4 discussion topics

- Add to list of how this is like real life
- Create a list of take-aways, what did they learn about what to DO and what NOT to do?

End of Activity Data

Puzzle 1 **needed** 40 pieces from 5 teams and had to **give** 40 pieces to 5 other teams.

Puzzle 2 **needed** 18 pieces from 4 teams and had to **give** 27 pieces to 5 teams.

Puzzle 3 **needed** 28 pieces from 5 teams and had to **give** 20 pieces to 4 teams.

Puzzle 4 **needed** 24 pieces from 5 teams and had to **give** 25 pieces to 5 teams.

Puzzle 5 **needed** 32 pieces from 5 teams and had to **give** 17 pieces to 3 teams.

Puzzle 6 **needed** 16 pieces from 3 teams and had to **give** 29 pieces to 5 teams.