

People-Sized Strategy Board Game

GOALS

- To give people experience in strategizing for a campaign;
- To discuss general principles of strategy;
- To share knowledge of nonviolent campaign cases;
- To build teamwork in problem-solving.

WHAT YOU NEED

At least two trainers who know the political situation, at least 1 facilitator per 20 participants.

SET-UP

Arrange on the floor of a large room a giant board game format, using tape for the first set of squares and leaving the finish line indeterminate. The squares need to be big enough for a team of 4-8 persons to squat in. 2 to 4 teams can play this game, with each team having 4-8 participants.

Develop a list of challenges/obstacles/problems which need to be solved in order to win a campaign or achieve a goal. Order them roughly in sequence. Print these on separate cards.

PROCEDURE

1. Explain that this game is won when at least one team overcomes enough obstacles to win or be well on the way to winning. Teams will leapfrog each other to race to victory. They only advance when the judge accepts their solution. If they make a major strategic error, they have to go back a square. The team must achieve consensus. It has periods of five minutes for discussion; if its proposed solution is not accepted by the trainer/referee, it must wait five minutes to propose the next solution. Because political/economic situations are fluid, a referee may announce to a team new developments at any time.
2. Teams take up the first spaces, each to a square. The referees hand each a copy of the same scenario. After 5 minutes (each team discusses), the referees begin hearing solutions and either sending teams forward or keeping them there to try a different solution.
3. When a team moves forward, a referee gives a new challenge to it. This may be duplicated with another team, or different from it to explore more possibilities.
4. Major strategic errors (e.g. accepting protection from gangsters to keep the campaign headquarters open) send a team back to previous available square.
5. Continue game until (a) time runs out (not counting 60 minutes for debrief), (b) the group achieves goal, (c) attention in the group is starting to fade.
6. De-brief questions include: which challenges were easier/more difficult? What major strategic errors were made? What are the principles underlying your successful moves? What were the group dynamics in achieving consensus in your teams?