

THE PAY-OFF GAME

Examining the Spirit of Co-operation
through a Group Role-Play

MATERIALS

- 120 Draughtsmen or poker chips
- a Large copy of the Pay-Off Formula, placed where it can be seen clearly by all players
OR individuals copies on 3"x5" system cards
- Black and Red "Decision" Boards for each group
- a stop watch or watch with a second hand
- paper and pencil for banker to record loans
- small table for each team, if desired

PLAYING THE GAME

1. This Game is sometimes called the Co-operation Game, but it is best promoted to un-suspecting players as the Pay-Off Game ... so that questions of Co-operation or Competition emerge more naturally from the game itself.

The Facilitator forms the group into FOUR TEAMS and seats or otherwise locates them in a square with the teams at least six feet apart.

Slightly more distance will be needed for larger teams.

2. Display or distribute the Pay-Off Formula and give the players about three minutes to study it.

While they are becoming familiar with it, the banker distributes TEN draughtsmen or poker chips to each team. Explains that they will need to make a decision during the game of placing the chips on either the red or black squares of the the decision boards. The combined team choices lead to the pay-off formula.

3. At the end of the three minutes, teams may discuss among themselves their understanding of the game for a further minute.

They should then choose one person to present their choice during each round.

If only four people are playing, omit discussions.

4. The Facilitator reads aloud these directions :

**WELCOME TO THE PAY-OFF GAME.
THIS IS ABOUT WINNING AND LOSING.
YOUR GOAL IS TO WIN AS MANY CHIPS AS
YOU CAN.**

**PLEASE RESPECT THE FACILITATOR AND DO
NOT CONFER WITH ANY OTHER TEAM IN ANY
WAY UNLESS GIVEN SPECIFIC PERMISSION
BY THE FACILITATOR.**

**TEAMS MUST AGREE ON A CHOICE OF
EITHER BLACK OR RED FOR EACH ROUND AND
PLACE YOUR CHIP ON THE APPROPRIATE
SQUARE OF THE DECISION BOARD.**

**IF YOU RUN OUT OF CHIPS DURING THE
GAME YOU MAY BORROW FROM THE BANK.**

**YOU MUST KEEP YOUR CHOICE SECRET
UNTIL YOU ARE ASKED TO REVEAL IT.**

**THERE ARE TEN ROUNDS TO THE GAME.
DURING EACH ROUND YOU WILL HAVE ONE
MINUTE TO CONFER WITH OTHER MEMBERS
OF YOUR TEAM TO MAKE YOUR CHOICE.**

**ROUND ONE BEGINS
NOW !!**

THE PAY-OFF FORMULA

4 REDS	<i>Everyone LOSES ONE CHIP to the Bank</i>
3 REDS, 1 BLACK	<i>Each Red WINS ONE CHIP from the Bank Black LOSES THREE CHIPS to the Bank</i>
2 REDS, 2 BLACKS	<i>Each Red WINS TWO CHIPS from the Bank Each Black LOSES TWO CHIPS to the Bank</i>
1 REDS, 3 BLACKS	<i>Each Red WINS THREE CHIPS from the Bank Each Black LOSES ONE CHIP to the Bank</i>
4 BLACKS	<i>Everyone WINS ONE CHIP from Bank</i>

5. After the lapse of one minute, the facilitator goes around and writes down the choices that were made by each team.

6. The facilitator then announces the score and the consequences... according to the pay-off formula.

7. Continue as in the first round above for the next three rounds, allowing a

minute for choosing each round, and extra time for borrowing from the bank of extra chips, if necessary. (at no interest rate)

8.
At the beginning of round five, the facilitator should say :

**ROUND FIVE IS A BONUS ROUND.
ALL AMOUNTS WON OR LOST IN THIS
ROUND WILL BE MULTIPLIED BY THREE.
BEFORE YOU MAKE YOUR CHOICE FOR THIS
ROUND, YOU MAY DISCUSS THE GAME WITH
THE OTHER PLAYERS IN THE GROUP.
AFTER THE DISCUSSION YOU WILL HAVE
ONE MINUTE TO MAKE YOUR DECISION OF
EITHER RED OR BLACK.
START YOUR GROUP CONFERENCE NOW.**

9.
Continue playing as normal for Rounds Six and Seven.

10.
Round Eight is a Bonus Round
All amounts won or lost on this round are multiplied by FIVE.

11.
Round Nine is a normal round.
Round Ten is a Bonus Round
All amounts won or lost on this round are multiplied by TEN.

12.
Teams count up their Pay-Off Score (Total chips in hand).
Players must pay back all loans to the Bank, and their pay-off score is stated in minus terms.

13.
Count the Net Pay-Off score of the four teams.
(For instance, $+20+11-3-18 = 10$ etc)

DE-BRIEFING

An evaluation and de-briefing session is particularly important with this game since feelings may be heated over betrayals of trust.

14.
What was the maximum group Pay-Off possible ?
If everyone consistently chose black, the collaboration option, the combined group Pay-Off would have been +100 or +25 for each of the four teams.

15.
Compare the actual group Pay-Off with the possible net of +100.

16.
Did any players consider combined group Pay-Off, or did they think only of their own team score ?

17.
Discuss the merits of co-operation versus competition.
Read aloud the first set of instructions.
Did everyone assume the "YOU" meant the team or the combined group?

18.
Did any team or player consistently betray the others?
Were there any who stuck to agreements?
Ask these players how they felt during the game.
Talk about feelings until everyone has had the chance to express theirs.

19.
Did any player or team attempt to cheat the bank?

20.
What can you learn from this game to take into other situations that call for co-operation between individuals or groups ?