



The New Teamwork & Teamplay Nail Puzzle

For the past year, Jim Cain has been working with Kirk Weisler to create the content for a corporate focused book related to building unity, community and connection in the workplace. In need of the perfect activity to demonstrate the major concepts presented in this book, Jim invented the following puzzle. The puzzle begins by placing the two nail stands within the square locators on the board shown in the illustration. Next, pass out about 30-40 large nails. Instruct the team that their goal is to use these loose nails as resources, and with them, create a connection (build a bridge) between the two single nail towers. Ready, begin!

Teachable Moments The 'ah-hah!' effect in this puzzle comes from realizing that the option to move the nail towers and their wooden block bases is always possible. When this occurs, it is possible to create a 'bridge' between the two towers using only a single nail. Teachable Moment - it takes less materials and less time to create a connection between the two 'groups' when the first thing you do is bring the groups closer together.

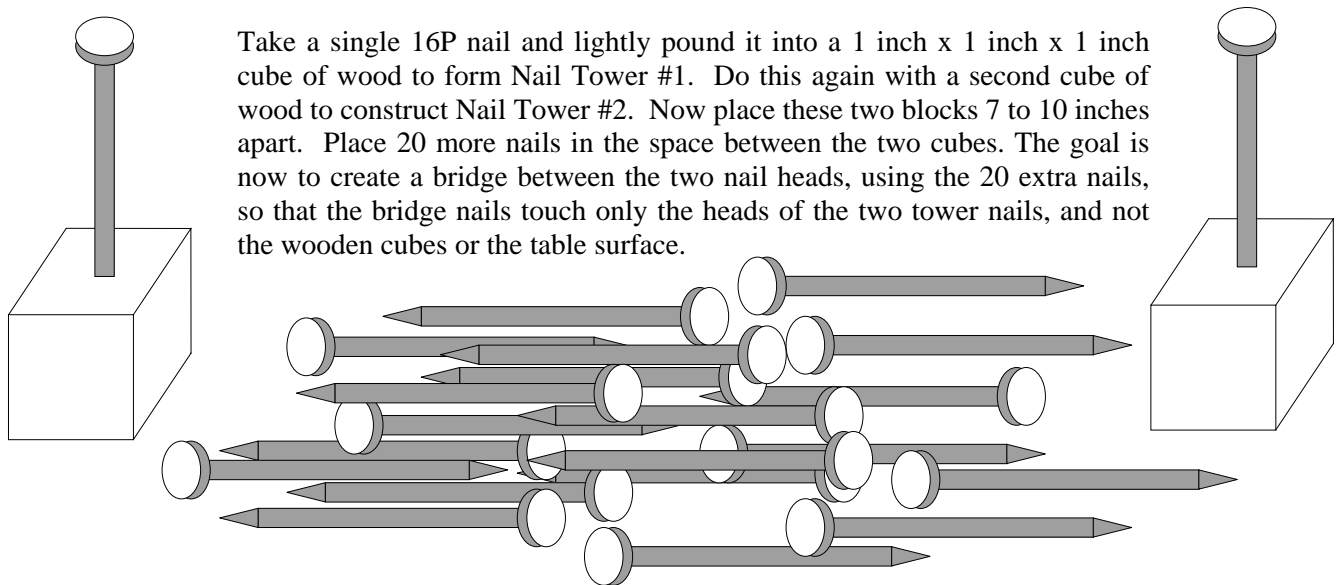
The Value of Connection - In the Workplace, You can become the catalyst for building unity, community and connection and creating a positive environment in your corporation, 2006, Jim Cain and Kirk Weisler. Visit the Teamwork & Teamplay website at: www.teamworkandteamplay.com for information about the availability date for this publication, in 2006.

Proving the Point About 'Connection'

There is a very real need to create connection between the members of a workforce. Right here. Right now. It's economically justifiable, corporately responsible, and overall just a plainly good idea. And if you'll read on, we'll prove it to you. Second, there is a very real reason why adventure-based and active learning concepts need to be a part of your connection process. They are a better return-on-investment training technique than nearly anything else your corporation has. The retention of information rate is higher for a well planned active learning session than your typical computer based training program or your company's thickest policy manual. They involve the same kind of 'thinking on your feet' action that is required in the workplace. The knowledge imparted during the session is easier to transfer to the work environment than unfacilitated learning. And finally, and probably most importantly, it doesn't take a major corporate decision or an act of congress for you to begin the process yourself, using some of the concepts, tools, strategies, activities and ideas in this book. With that said, here is an excellent challenge for proving the point. Good Luck!

Instructions

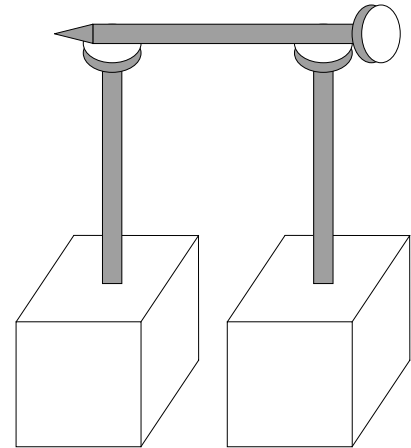
Take a single 16P nail and lightly pound it into a 1 inch x 1 inch x 1 inch cube of wood to form Nail Tower #1. Do this again with a second cube of wood to construct Nail Tower #2. Now place these two blocks 7 to 10 inches apart. Place 20 more nails in the space between the two cubes. The goal is now to create a bridge between the two nail heads, using the 20 extra nails, so that the bridge nails touch only the heads of the two tower nails, and not the wooden cubes or the table surface.



For many teams, the problem shown on the previous page is either a complex puzzle to be worked out, or an extremely difficult problem with no apparent solution, using the resources available. It is exactly this type of problem that illustrates the main concept of the connection book.

The solution to this problem (like many other problems in the corporate world) becomes so much easier (and more cost effective, and requires less resources, and takes less time), if the first thing you do is bring both groups closer together!

By simply moving the two nail towers closer together, the task of building a bridge between the two towers becomes simple. So simple in fact, that a single nail can be used to accomplish the task. Why then, is it so difficult, or to use a more demonstrative phrase, so against the present corporate culture, to move the towers closer together? Some will say, “but you placed the towers a few inches apart for a reason!” Ok, but what is it about that reason that keeps you, the empowered team member from changing it, especially if it means successfully completing the task?



This simple puzzle provides some of the same insight found throughout this book. The existing corporate culture in this case, provides the framework (two nail towers a set distance apart), the resources (20 nails and the members of the team), and the goal (build a bridge) for the team to accomplish. Is the team empowered enough to suggest solutions that require modifying the corporate culture, or are they constrained to working within the traditional framework to accomplish the task? What is the resistance of the team to moving the towers? What does moving the towers closer together represent in the actual workplace? How much time, energy, and resources were used trying to solve this problem while the towers were still inches apart?

If we as a corporation are to successfully complete tasks like the one above, and continuously reduce the time, energy and resources used in the completion of our work, then we must first establish a corporate culture that compliments this result. We must ‘bring the group closer together’ first. We must build a connection between the members of the group that lasts longer than a single day, one-shot teambuilding program. We need more than an awareness level of interest on the part of the team members. We need real skills, real community, unity and connection between members of the team, and we need a corporate strategy that embraces these characteristics today and in the future. We need to make stronger connections within our workforce, and we need to make them now. Not at the speed of evolution, but at the speed of revolution.

It is time to make the connection!

In addition to the upcoming book, *The Value of Connection in the Workplace*, you can read the following valuable team and community building books from Jim Cain, available from Kendall/Hunt:

Teamwork & Teamplay	417 pages of adventure-based learning activities
A Teachable Moment	300+ pages of processing, debriefing, reviewing and reflective activities, ideas and techniques
Teambuilding Puzzles	100+ puzzles, challenges and activities for teams.
The Book on Raccoon Circles	Hundreds of team things to do with tubular climbing webbing

Thanks for purchasing this teambuilding prop from Teamwork & Teamplay. You can find out more information about additional teambuilding equipment, books, workshops and staff training programs at our website: www.teamworkandteamplay.com. You can also purchase Jim Cain’s complete series of teambuilding books and other teambuilding equipment from Training Wheels Inc., at www.training-wheels.com or via telephone at 888-553-0147.