

Antarctic Challenge

FACTSHEET

A demanding, realistic activity on planning a complex project

-  **3-4 hours + debrief**
-  **3-24** (in 1, 2, 3 or 4 teams of 3-6 per team)
-  **For staff at any level**
-  **No computer required**
-  **595 ex VAT**



Antarctic Challenge!

There's no plan B
in the Antarctic!



Learning objectives

- learn to brainstorm to decide what information is required
- break a project into bite size chunks
- establish the key factors around which to base plans
- to plan within given limits
- to manage time and resources
- to cooperate with others
- to collect and interpret data and information
- to review progress regularly
- to make a persuasive presentation for funds



About the activity

This activity now comes with a short introductory video. Play to the group or use it to brief yourself. Similarly there is a video to lead the debrief and bring out some key issues before you take over.

The whole activity is based on a real expedition data which lends credibility and excitement. Teams start with a letter congratulating them on mounting an expedition to the South Pole. The next step is brainstorming to draw up a shortlist of data required and to submit it as written requests to the Databank (controlled by the Trainer). The Databank opens only at intervals - which helps to focus team thinking. Requests at further openings are always more fruitful as teams gain more understanding and drill down to what the expedition actually needs.

Gradually plans are fleshed out: weather windows, dates, distances, speeds, getting to Antarctica, base camp, skidoos, sledges, food, kit lists, back-up plane, fuel dumps, etc... through to a completion date! Crucially, teams must rendezvous on a certain date with another expedition. This date in turn, sets the timing for all other stages of the expedition. The Trainer knows what this date is so it provides an easy way to spot if teams' plans are 'on track'.

Finally, with the full plan and full costs in place, teams, in competition with each other, prepare persuasive presentations to deliver to their 'potential sponsors'. Despite the rigorousness of the challenge this exercise is smartly designed to make it easy to facilitate and easy to check on team progress.

Pack contents

- Trainer's Notes
- PowerPoint Presentation
- Introductory Video
- Debrief Video
- Trainer's Databank Reference
- Sponsors' Questions
- Team Briefs
- Antarctic Maps
- Data Request Forms
- Set of Databank Cards
- Equipment Brochures
- Fuel Dump Planning Kits
- Handouts
- Rulers

Ideally suited to

Quite large teams - up to eight members. So teams need a lot of coordinating and managing. You can of course use with smaller numbers.



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Customer reviews



We used Antarctic Challenge as a case study over three days with individuals in mixed groups from Corporate Offices. We *appreciate the level of detail and research* behind the game. The best learning points included: do not assume anything, *plan carefully*, promote and market your project to gain buy-in. We *love* running this exercise... as it's the sort of expedition we'd love to do!

Sonja McCoy, Method & Training Team, John Lewis & Partners



We use Antarctic Challenge to allow course members to experience real issues of *strategic planning* in some depth, with little prior knowledge of the 'environment'. The format is *flexible* and the powerful image of Antarctica creates a *memorable connection* to the learning.

Ian Sasse, E.ON UK



Trainer's role (full guidance supplied in Trainer's Notes)

- Briefly introduce the activity and explain the timings (using the PowerPoint and introductory video if required).
- Divide the group into teams of 3-8. As there is a lot to do, you can have bigger teams than usual.
- Issue the Team Brief (a letter) together with a data request slip, to each team. Explain that teams can write down 10 questions and that the Databank opens in 20 minutes, for 10 minutes. Stand by to receive data requests and issue those datacards that cover information teams have asked for.
- Allow teams to continue working on their plans. Observe teams but do not get involved in their plans.
- Continue with more databank sessions where teams can collect information.
- When time is up, ask them to prepare presentations to the sponsors.
- Listen to presentations (sometimes senior managers play the part of the sponsors). Decide which team wins the sponsorship.
- Conduct a Debrief on the activity and stress all the key learning points (see Trainer's Notes). Use of Debrief video is optional but does take the pressure off!

Northgate says...

A great activity with multiple uses - project planning, leadership, teamwork, interpersonal skills and much more. Crucially, presentations are a real focus as most teams 'show off' without taking account of the needs of their target audience - their potential sponsors.

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Northgate customers

