

Experiential Exercise – ColorBlind

Course: MBA (Finance) Semester: II No. of Students: 40

This activity was focused on teamwork, problem-solving, communication clarity, and leadership under constraints. Designed to simulate real-world organizational complexity, this activity created a scenario where participants had to operate without visual cues, depending entirely on language, listening, collaboration, and shared mental models.

Each student was blindfolded and handed one or more plastic pieces of varying shapes and colors — triangles, pentagons, stars, arcs, and irregular forms. Unknown to the group, the facilitator had removed two pieces from the full set of 30. The task was for the team to:

1. Identify which two pieces were missing, and
2. Accurately state their shape and color.

The exercise unfolded over 30–40 minutes of layers of conversation, confusion, pattern-building, and coordination. Students attempted to describe their pieces to one another using texture, edges, relative size, and assumed color — sometimes inventing new terms or categories to make communication more precise. They struggled with overlapping instructions or dominant voices. Leadership often shifted fluidly, with new leaders emerging when clarity was needed or momentum stalled.

A structured debrief was done at the end, encouraging students to reflect on:

- ☐ How did your team begin organizing information?
- ☐ Who took initiative — and how was that received?
- ☐ Were all voices heard?
- ☐ What helped or hindered collaboration?
- ☐ How did ambiguity and invisibility affect group dynamics?

The activity brought forward rich insights into:

- ☐ The power of precise language and active listening.
- ☐ The challenges of leading and participating in low-visibility environments (a metaphor for many real business scenarios).
- ☐ The need for inclusive communication, as quieter members often had critical pieces or insights.
- ☐ The importance of shared terminology and systems in solving complex problems.

The exercise also exposed habits such as interrupting, assuming shared understanding, or tuning out less articulate peers — behaviors that mirror common workplace dynamics.

Students described the activity as challenging, eye-opening, and fun. Many admitted to feeling disoriented or frustrated at first, but came away with a deeper appreciation for clarity, patience, and trust in teams.

Activity: