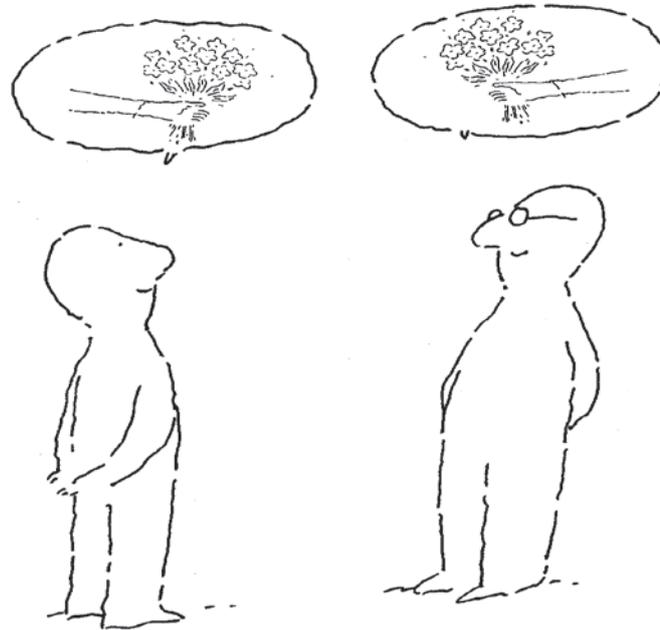




# How can I become better at giving and receiving strokes?

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Many people find it difficult to give positive strokes. But most of us find it even more difficult to receive them.

This exercise is designed to create a developmental environment for any group of people who have to function together on a daily basis – a family, a department, a board of directors, a management team, a project team, a committee, etc.

The exercise is also designed to improve the culture in a company and help people from different departments and teams to cooperate.

## Purpose

To improve cooperation in a team and build a culture where each member of the team contributes to strengthening their own, and other people's self-esteem.

## Results

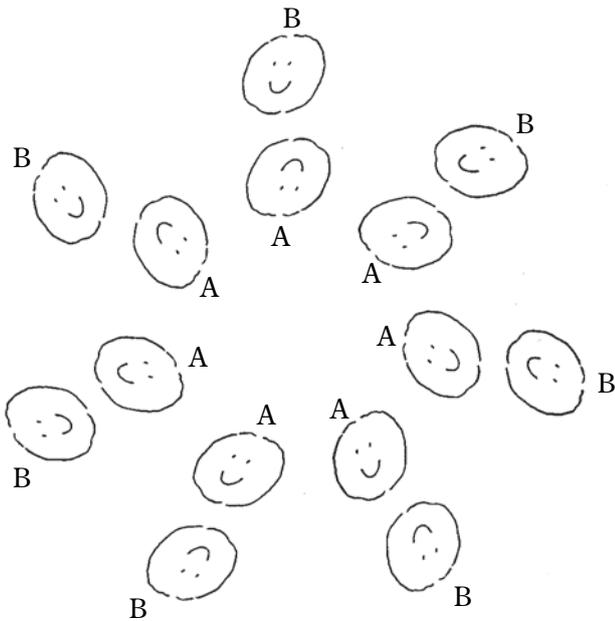
- Participants will understand the importance of strokes for the team's well-being and effectiveness.
- Participants will learn what the different members of the team especially want to receive strokes for.
- Participants will be aware of some of the inhibitions which make receiving and accepting strokes difficult.

## How to do the exercise

Choose a room which is large enough for the members of the group to move around freely.

The exercise may also be done outdoors.

1. The group members form two circles, an inner and an outer circle, with an equal number of people in each. Everyone in the outer circle faces the inner circle. Everyone in the inner circle faces the outer circle. The inner circle is Group A, and the outer circle is Group B.
2. Everyone pairs off, so that each person from Group A is standing face to face with someone from Group B.



3. Next, every Group A person gives a positive, sincere stroke to the B person facing them.

*Give strokes concerning qualities, accomplishments, skills, appearances, attitudes, patterns of behaviour, actions, etc.*

4. The person from Group B now accepts this stroke without reservation, and acknowledges it by repeating the stroke word for word. Something like this: "Thank you very much! I'm glad you appreciate my efforts. I am quite proud of the results myself ..."

5. Next, the B person adds yet another positive statement about themselves. In other words, the B person gives themselves a positive stroke by describing some accomplishment or skill they really feel they deserve strokes for: "But that's not all. I'm also good at ..."
6. Repeat the procedure. This time it is Group B's turn to give strokes to the people in Group A. And it's the A people's turn to receive and acknowledge them by saying thank you and then giving themselves another positive stroke.
7. When every pair has completed their exchange of strokes, everyone in Group A takes one step to the left so that they are now facing a new B person.
8. Next, the new pairs exchange strokes – in other words, the whole procedure is repeated. Continue this exercise until everyone from Group A has had a chance to exchange strokes with everyone from Group B. The exercise could also be continued until every person has had the chance to exchange strokes with every other person present.

*The exercise is not meant to encourage every individual to go around bragging and emphasising their own virtues in addition to the ones already receiving attention.*

*The exercise should be considered a means to recognise the importance of giving and receiving strokes for the well-being and effectiveness in a team.*

*The exercise is a means to encourage the team members to give and receive strokes.*