



## Summary

This is a good ice breaker or introduction exercise to use in communication skills sessions. The aim is to demonstrate how information can be distorted as it passes through layers of recipients. The exercise is best played with 8 or more people (max 12). For larger groups, divide into teams (8 – 12 per team).

This session is designed to assess and develop the following skills:

Communication & listening skills

## Materials

Printed message to be passed – use something unusual for example:

“Don’t forget to wash the elephant before you go to bed and put out the beer bottles to be recycled, they collect on a Wednesday”

Flipchart & paper

## Timing

5 - 10 minutes

## Procedure

Introduce the session as an interactive way of demonstrating communications and listening skills. Ask the group(s) to form a line or a circle. Explain that the first person will be given a written message that they must pass on to the next person by whispering it. There must be no other communication, the receiver then whispers the message to the next person and so on until it reaches the last person. The last recipient of the message then writes the message onto a flipchart. Open to discussion:

- Is the message received by the last person the same as the original?
- Is it similar?
- Why is it different?
- What could be the consequences?
- How can you prevent message distortion?