The MTa Insights consists of 53 activities in 9 volumes:

Volume 1: Team Working Level 1

Title	Level	Discussion Topics
1 Group Necklace	Intro	Basics of team problem solving and team working Understanding objectives and constraints Planning The benefits of getting it 'right first time': the cost of errors and re-work
2 Short Thread	Intro	Understanding constraints Importance of planning even when working to a tight deadline Cost of mistakes Basics of team working
3 Wheel Barrow	Intro	Basics of team working Challenging norms (what is a wheelbarrow?) Basic quality issues Effect of competition and time constraints on performance
4 Boxed In	Intro	Basics of team working Challenging norms (what is, or is not, a box?) Creative thinking
5 Enclosed	Intro	Understanding criteria for success Understanding constraints and their implications Spending time planning vs. fast action Achieving a result before the competition Breaking taboos (personal space and touch)
6 Tall Stack	Intro	Working together – attitudes and skills Introduction to group problem solving Testing and revising ideas Agreeing on what is achievable: introduction to risk taking
7 Tightly Packed	Inter	Understanding the criteria for success Understanding the constraints and their implications Creative problem solving and experimenting with different ideas Spending time planning and reviewing progress vs. fast action
8 Odd Type of Stack	Inter	Understanding priorities Keeping focussed on priority issues Achieving identified priorities within specified times Concerns for quality
9 Balancing Act	Inter	Problem solving Reviewing progress and agreeing acceptable standards Team working Impact of competition and deadlines
10 Shapes	Inter	Group problem solving Thinking logically and creatively Valuing and building on each other's ideas

Volume 2: Team Working Level 2

Title	Level	Discussion Topics
1 Minefield	Intro	The importance of monitoring progress and revisiting plans Team working Team problem solving Effects of obvious competition The cost of simple or careless errors
2 DIY	Inter	Sharing, respecting and building on each other's ideas Learning about each other as people
3 Feet of Clay	Inter	Understanding constraints Agreeing and working to plans Individual contributions to a team effort
4 My Success	Inter	Understanding success: personal drivers and attitudes Beating others vs. doing as well as you can Co-operation vs. competition Attitudes to risk taking
5 Spinning Your Web	Inter	Planning in a competitive situation Setting achievable personal goals Team skills (sharing and building on ideas, reviewing, communicating) Trust in, concern for, and encouragement of each individual
6 Caught in a Web	Inter	Attitudes to others who may affect your success Setting achievable personal and team goals The cost : benefit of reviewing progress and re-planning Team skills (sharing and building on ideas, reviewing, communicating) Concern for, trust in, and encouragement of each individual.
7 Successful Pairs	Inter	Success means different things to different people Personal attitudes affect decision making and actions Planning for personal and team success Developing alliances and making agreements Trust
8 Speedy Stack	Inter	Clarifying objectives and constraints The cost : benefit of thought and planning vs. action Reviewing progress against objectives The cost of failing to understand and reach quality standards The impact of competition and time

Volume 3: Communication

Title	Level	Discussion Topics
1 Getting It Right	Inter	Accuracy in communication: the cost of errors The importance of clear and unambiguous instructions Verbal vs. pictorial vs. written instructions Detail in communication: what is and is not required An introduction to standard operating procedures Observing the impact of your actions
2 Sorting Shapes	Intro	Accurate verbal communication Clarifying understanding Attention to detail Team problem solving Logical thinking
3 Blind Statues	Intro	Agreeing and working to plans Verbal communication Understanding and working with others' limitations
4 My Views	Inter	Learning about each other, their personal views and ideas Attitudes to, and value of, personal disclosure Sensitivity to others
5 Swinging	Inter	Identifying and communicating key information Communication between remote teams Producing clear written instructions Inter-dependent team working Working under time constraints
6 Seeing Red	Inter	Using verbal communication alone to develop a common understanding of complex issues Thinking through problems logically with others The effect of competitive pressures on accuracy Attitudes to cheating the system (sometimes!)
7 Back to Back	Inter	Communicating and appreciating the big picture Effective two-way verbal communication Appreciating and working with others' restrictions Giving and receiving clear instructions Team problem solving

Volume 4: Problem Solving

Title	Level	Discussion Topics
1 Colourful Necklace	Intro	Basics of creative problem solving in teams The benefits of turning a problem around Thinking ahead to identify key problems and avoid waste Realising the cost of ignoring problems
2 Girders	Intro	Personal blocks to problem solving e.g. getting stuck in a rut, thinking in 2 dimensions, not identifying the key issues Lateral and logical thinking Learning from experience, not being limited by experience Trial and error
3 Jigsaw	Inter	Preparing to work effectively with others Sharing and utilising others' knowledge and skills Thinking together, building on each others' ideas Recognising and using everyone's unique and vital information Creating a positive working environment
4 Odd Colour of Stack	Intro	Identifying and understanding (customer) priorities Homing in on the key problem that can prevent success Avoiding distractions and secondary issues Working together to complete a task within a tight time schedule Attention to detail and quality
5 Water Tower	Inter	Understanding and working to constraints Planning, even when under time pressure Working together to agreed plans Reviewing progress and re-planning
6 Through the Slot	Inter	Understanding the context Identifying the critical issues (sorting the wheat from the chaff) Targeting effort where it can provide most benefit The benefits of using different approaches to problem solving Making good use of team members' differing skills

Volume 5: Business Priorities

Title	Level	Discussion Topics
1 Delivered on Time	Intro	Understanding customer priorities Paying attention to priority issues Understanding and meeting quality requirements Monitoring competitors
2 Build to Design	Inter	Developing and gaining commitment to concepts Individual implementation of group decisions Developing and applying quality standards Revising plans with new information Impact of individuals' attitudes and actions on colleagues
3 Money Matters	Inter	Financial awareness Cash flow The impact of high margins Business planning
4 Artifacts	Inter	Questioning the customer to identify needs and priorities Agreeing how to meet the customer's needs Making a customer presentation (the principles behind a value proposition)
5 Container Freight	Adv	Setting and agreeing achievable targets (there will always be scope for improvement) Managing complex problems Developing and evaluating options Reviewing progress, revising plans and targets if necessary Estimating
6 Getting Ahead	Adv	Financial awareness Focussing on priorities Making sales profitable Negotiating
7 Disc Transporter	Adv	Questioning the customer to identify needs and priorities Adapting the sales offering to meet these needs Costing the product Developing and presenting a value proposition

Volume 6: Business Priorities

All the activities in Performing for Excellence are very demanding. Good numerical understanding is a base requirement rather than a development opportunity with the exception of disc roll.

Title	Level	Discussion Topics
1 Disc Roll	Intro	Defining and agreeing objectives and plans Redefining plans with new information Decision making Evaluating risks
2 Our Success	Inter	Understanding success: beating others vs. doing as well as you can Thinking through the implications of decisions and actions Revising decisions with new insights or information The impact of personal attitudes on decision making and success Departmental vs. organisational success
3 Meeting Expectations	Inter	The value of accurate planning and forecasting The cost of not meeting customers' expectations Evaluating and learning form others' approaches Making best use of individuals' competencies
4 Leading Pairs	Adv	Assessing and making the most of opportunities for success Monitoring progress then utilising individual initiative vs. sticking to the plan Coping with different levels of performance in a team Developing and managing alliances Ethics and values
5 Meeting the Challenge	Adv	Developing criteria and plans for success Balancing opportunities for success against the cost of failure Calculating and taking risks Revising plans in line with progress Attitudes to risk taking Making best use of the groups' competencies
6 Everyone's a Winner?	Adv	Gaining commitment to a plan which may not be of personal benefit Enabling others to outperform you so you can improve your absolute performance The impact of relative success / failure on feelings Developing and managing alliances Ethics and values

Volume 7: Leadership 1

5 Short (15 – 30 Minute) leadership activities

Each of the 5 activities in this volume creates quite different leadership situations and therefore different learning opportunities, e.g. isolation from the workplace, freedom to move between workers but with workers are in different places, workers who do not have a competence possessed by the leader (achieved by using blindfolds), changing roles.

In each of the activities, specified individuals are given roles and/or information that provide them with opportunities to lead whilst from the other perspective team members experience different approaches to leadership and are encouraged to think about their role as followers.

Title	Level	Discussion Topics
1 Taller Stack	Intro	Valuing and working with other's experience and ideas Gaining and demonstrating commitment to others' ideas Challenging the way a group is approaching a task Managing changes in group membership
2 Led Statues	Intro	Preparing to lead a task Identifying and using a team's resources effectively Using a team to solve a problem and implement the solution Providing effective and precise verbal instruction
3 Led Jigsaws	Inter	The fundamental elements of leadership required when leading a team in which each individual brings something unique and vital: direction, planning, communications, resources, encouragement etc.
4 Leading From Afar	Inter	Elements of leadership required when leading a remote team Effective verbal communication.
5 Leading the Team	Adv	Motivating teams to work effectively against deadlines Balancing personal workloads against leading a team Understanding standards of performance Coping with change and revising plans in line with progress Attitudes to risk taking

Volume 8: Leadership 2

Two long leadership activities

The Hoist:

- Building on ideas
- Applied team skills
- Instructing others effectively
- Communications
- Understanding priorities
- Keeping the overall objective in mind
- Gaining commitment

The task is to win a competition but members of another team must build your product in your absence. Can you communicate your requirements effectively, provide them with appropriate instruction and motivate them to build your product to a standard that will beat the one they designed?

Cable Car:

- Managing geographically isolated teams who are working on the same project
- Core elements of leadership
- Understanding the needs of teams
- Inter-team working

A manager has three isolated teams, each with a team leader. Success depends on the output of each team being compatible. The manager's constantly changing role includes: providing the overview, managing resources, decision making, co-ordinating ideas, reviewing progress, technical support - there's always the job in hand to distract...
Besides direct learning through personal involvement, the variety of roles (3 separate teams, 3 team leaders, a manager) in this activity provide participants with an appreciation of how their actions affect others who are working elsewhere.

Volume 9: Leadership 3

Two long leadership activities

Maxi Market :

- Project management
- Establishing the core problem
- Understanding the criteria for success
- Team problem solving
- Utilising people's particular skills

One of the most difficult aspects of project management is developing a clear and thorough understanding of the project: its objectives, priorities and constraints.
In this activity, a project team has to prove to a customer that their company should be awarded a contract. Distractions like 'getting on with the job in hand' make it easy to miss this objective completely, fail to identify and satisfy customer priorities, and even forget the clearly stated needs of their manager. The learning relates all too easily to the 'real world'.

Waste Away:

- Applied leadership
- Balancing technical and people issues
- Understanding the bigger picture and maintaining focus on the priorities
- Preparing people to manage others
- Applied team skills

A customer is coming for a demonstration that involves managing people doing an unfamiliar task. The manager cannot be there, so others need to be prepared. Later the goal posts appear to be moved by the customer, or are they?
The activity is split into 3 stages each of which introduces different learning opportunities. Roles change within the activity with people switching between leading, being team members and observing.