Tennis ball game

This game is a great activity to do with your team to help understand the principles of the model for improvement. Its fun and interactive and usually gets great feedback!
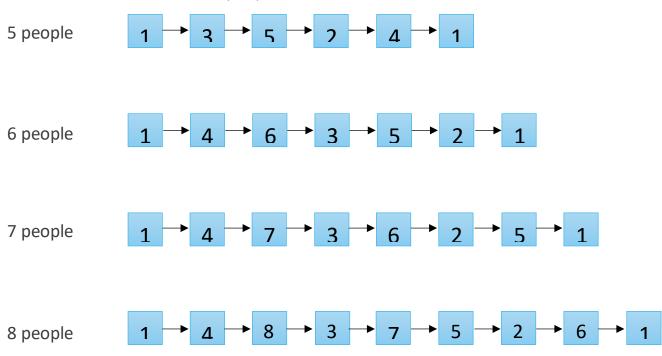
Equipment required

- Stop watch
- Tennis ball
- Open space!

Instructions

- How many people are taking part? 5, 6, 7, 8? Use the number sequence below that corresponds to the number of participants.

- Assign yourself as a time keeper/ball drop counter

- Assign a number to each member of your team taking part, starting with the number 1

- Your first process involves tossing the tennis ball (provided) from person to person, following the sequence provided below

- Have **one round!**

   Time keeper

- Time how long the team takes to complete the process (in seconds)

- Count the number of times they drop the tennis ball

5 people   1 → 3 → 5 → 2 → 4 → 1

6 people   1 → 4 → 6 → 3 → 5 → 2 → 1

7 people   1 → 4 → 7 → 3 → 6 → 2 → 5 → 1

8 people   1 → 4 → 8 → 3 → 7 → 5 → 2 → 6 → 1

Test some changes

- After the team have completed one round, inform the team of the time, and read out the aim statement below

Aim statement- Reduce the time taken for every person to touch the ball in sequence by 50%

It is important to have the Aim visible so that everyone is on the same page (shared vision)

Rules:

- Stick to the initial sequence

- Test one change idea at a time

- Record the time and ball drops after each change

Things to look out for:

- Who was the natural leader?

- What were the challenges

- Did you achieve your aim?

- What did you learn?

Analysing and sharing the Learning:

- The importance of re visiting the aim – making sure it is still accurate/ relevant

- Team working – what natural roles were adopted, did everyone have the opportunity to speak up and share their ideas.

- Communication/ listening – often teams become focused on 'the doing' and forget to re visit their aims and do not end up listening to new aim. The first aim of this game was to 'toss' the ball, this then changed to 'touch.' No longer having to throw the ball between each other will provide an opportunity for you to reduce the time taken.

- PDSAing- The participants were using the PDSA cycle, planning what may work, how they were going to test it etc. They now have a basic understanding of PDSA cycles

- Recording/ documentation / measuring. These are key elements of QI. It is important to document what happened and record your results. Also, you can only tell you have made an improvement through timing the activity i.e measurement, so this highlights how important it is.