

Dutchman: Survey Results Summary

We got back 55 survey responses. Most people responded to all the questions and the comments and remarks were congruent with the results. Here are the data:

Our user group is an experienced one so their perspective on team building issues should be pretty solid. While nine people were using Dutchman as their first teambuilding game, 39 respondents had used 6 or more different formal team building exercises. We hope that the perspectives they shared about **The Search for The Lost Dutchman's Gold Mine**, compared to other exercises in the marketplace, is useful to you.

23 of 46 people reported that their first delivery of LDGM “*was wonderfully successful*” while the rest simply found that first play successful. A single person said that it did not go well but they learned from it. (Some people never even tried to contact me prior to their first delivery, which should be surprising given how easily I can be reached!)

36% (20 of 55 people) report they have run the game more than 10 times. Most (89%) have run the exercise multiple times while a few have delivered it only once because of the size of their organization only allowed for that one delivery.

Most people thought the exercise to be very solid and useful. If they went to another company, 96% of responders said that they would consider purchasing the exercise *again* for improving teamwork, communications, engagement or leadership.

We asked a really tough T/F question: **LDGM is the best exercise I know of to work with senior managers on issues of strategy, alignment, and organizational collaboration.** Fully half (53%) said this was TRUE! Only 9 people said this was False, which given the highly experienced and global nature of our users, is pretty fantastic. The comments were all supportive of our design, packaging and pricing.

30 people (55%) responded that LDGM is “*the best overall team building exercise I have used.*” (One suggested his own game using LEGO was better!) And, fully 100% would recommend the Dutchman game to others for purchase and use, with 63% saying they would recommend it to ANY trainer or consultant.

90% of purchasers agreed that our support materials were sufficient or more than sufficient to learn the exercise and deliver it with competence, with 3 people disagreeing. Note that this is a complex but relatively bombproof design and we offer a LOT of ideas around probable outcomes and delivery / debriefing alternatives in our different versions of the exercise. (Please also understand that we are continually working to improve these support materials, but that the wide diversity of user applications and our global sales makes this all pretty complicated.)

From a support perspective, 100% agreed that I was *readily reachable and available* to answer any or all questions they had; 7 people did not even bother to contact me at all! Only one person said that calling and email were apparently not sufficient to get a fast answer to any question (a customer in Oz).

As to value, two-thirds of users (64%) strongly agreed that the purchased of the exercise represented an excellent value to their organizations and 11 merely agreed, with 5 people sharing a neutral response.

Organizational Impact and Effectiveness:

Impact is the meat of the matter; how effective was the exercise in generating awareness and producing some behavioral changes?

Insofar as effectiveness and organizational improvement, the exercise was designed so that play and its debriefing to be a primary driver of change and performance improvement. Fully 7 in 10 agreed or strongly agreed that the simulation was effective in generating observable, "desired changes in behavior after the session ended, back on the job." One person disagreed.

96% of respondents agreed / strongly agreed that, "*the exercise linked well to our issues of workplace collaboration and performance management*" with two people being neutral.

As to representing a Best Value for a teambuilding exercise in the global marketplace, 21 people *strongly agreed* and 16 others *agreed* of 52 registered responses, or 71% of our users. Again, we framed that question up as a real test of perceived value and even the neutral responses were supportive! It seems we are doing pretty well out there, and no one would actually name an exercise they thought was better than ours.

Note: 40% of our customers were not aware that we rented the game for large group usage. I am guessing that we can do a lot more to improve our marketing and we are continuing to work on the design of our teaching and support materials.

Comments about Dutchman being the Best Value included these:

- I have used a number of (team building simulations) and still feel this is the strongest, participants totally drop their guard and engage in the experience. The Dutchman was one of the strongest simulations I ever used to accomplish what Kurt Lewin's change model seeks to do, the ability to momentarily unfreeze / transition / freeze an organization and its culture.
- The exercise I use depends upon the team and the outcomes they need to achieve. I use a range of exercises all of which I rate very highly and I could not really say that one is better than the others.
- In fairness, I have also had some remarkable success using other forms of teambuilding activities. It just depends on my objectives, the time allowed and the number of participants.

- It is good as one of a suite of activities we use. It isn't the first one I pull off the shelf for teambuilding but works well with larger groups.
- As already stated, Dutchman is excellent. Hard to make a general "best" judgement, because I will always make a context call as to group, background and so on. But it is undoubtedly ranks "among my best"!

When purchasing LDGM, what made you choose this exercise over another team building exercise or simulation?

- I have been extremely satisfied with all the materials you have developed.
- I was a participant in LDGM many years ago at a different company. The message from it stayed with me throughout my career. At my present company (7 years employed) upper management recognized a problem and asked what we can do and I remembered LDGM and contacted Scott to bring it in. We purchased so we could put our other sites through it.
- It was very appropriate to the particular groups and their development, providing a fun environment in which to learn some key leadership / strategy lessons.
- For Sure! I have successfully or several years. It never gets old.....
- I learned about LDGM by a referral. When I looked at it, the package was very professional, look fun and very interactive and had a track record of being a catalyst for behaviour change and producing results.
- I was looking for something Gold of the Desert Kings but less expensive. Through doing googling I found Dutchman, and found it to be superior to GDK.
- This exercise was referenced in a training article (...I would have to find the exact citation!) This introduced me to the exercise and also to Scott. The exercise was the perfect way to study the ways in which collaborators acted on their strengths or chose to exhibit different behaviors.
- We think it is very energetic, simple but with great debriefing opportunities.
- A man in my company had participated in it at a previous company and his description of it sold us all on it. :)
- The situation. The organization needed something that would be fun and would ALSO contribute to the needs of the team to excel in the organization. Hence collaboration messages of the exercise contribute greatly to the success (or not!) of the players! I'm always amazed at the competitive spirit that seems to get them going and blinds their opportunity to hook up with another team.

Some Additional Comments to the survey:

- The exercise has worked extremely well in different countries and with people from various other countries and cultures.
- I appreciate Scott's enthusiasm for professional development and also his efforts to support research on this topic. He made us feel confident in our ability to deliver the exercise and served as a support throughout the process. Scott's

work is very valuable and I look forward to hearing about new developments in the future!

- Great program which I'm glad to be able to use and deliver.
- Having the chance to facilitate LDGM, really helped me establish my skills in facilitating simulations for larger audiences and to establish laser focus for organizational groups. It also really supported my development of sound best practices in cultivating these events to ensure sustainability and true participant reflection. An awesome tool!


If we can answer any questions or provide more information, please contact me. I love to chat about this exercise and I can refer you to experienced users. Please also note that we have some amazing testimonials about the exercise.

A search for “[slideshare dutchman testimonials simmerman](http://www.slideshare.net/ScottSimmerman/testimonials-for-lost-dutchmans-gold-mine-teambuilding)” will take you to <http://www.slideshare.net/ScottSimmerman/testimonials-for-lost-dutchmans-gold-mine-teambuilding> where there are 37 of them. This is from a line manager who has rented it three times now to build her downstream teams of managers:

Hey Scott, I just wanted to give you a follow-up to the Lost Dutchman exercise. It was a huge hit – if anything, it went over better than the first time I used it a couple years ago.

This was the *perfect* exercise for me to run since I came in as group leader a few months ago and was new to the team -- their team dynamics were already well established and were highlighted during the course of the game.

Being the Expedition Leader gave me exposure to all 50 of them, and they got to “know” me a little quicker this way. Plus I used the exercise to underscore ideas such as I am always here to help them be successful. Funny enough, that was one “best practice” that spread quickly.



I've received tons of positive feedback about the exercise - that it was the best one that they've ever done, it was fun and they learned something, etc. While I've always had an open door policy, people are using it more now - I have heard about more issues unsolicited in the last ten days than I had in the previous five months, which of course means I can do something about them.

Let me know about your other exercises! This one is so great. Megan

For the **FUN** of It!

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Scott's blog on themes of [People and Performance](#) is here.