

Pre-hunt Event – Contraband!

by Ong Kah Kien

Each team was asked to send a representative to take part in this mixer event held on-site just before the actual hunt. At the event, representatives from each team are gathered and given 15 minutes to build contacts and networks with the other inmates “in order to help them sell prison contraband”. During this time, they will need to collaborate and interact with the other inmates to find out each other's first name, team name and favorite puzzle type. They will fill in the details for each person in a unique cell in a 5x5 Bingo grid.

Hunt HQ will then read out a series of numbered descriptors of an eligible contact which each inmate can identify and add to their own network. Eg. "Contact number 1 is someone whose team name starts with P". Inmates can then individually match the descriptor to the contact in one of their cells by writing the contact number in that cell.

When an inmate forms a line (orthogonal or diagonal) of 5 contacts, a network is formed, and the inmate can shout "Contraband!" The inmate will have to first verify that all the contacts in their network match their respective descriptions, and identify those contacts in front of the group. If an inmate has difficulty in identifying a contact, inmates will be reminded that this is a collaborative activity and hinted to help each other out. Once verified, the inmate earns \$10 Contraband Cash, which can be used during the hunt as a bribe to find out if a particular puzzle is associated with a meta they had identified.

After any network verifications are complete, Hunt HQ will read out another numbered description for the next eligible contact. Unknown to the inmates, only a total of 9 numbered descriptors will be read out. This gives a high chance that each inmate will be able to form at least one network, while at the same time also limiting the maximum number of networks that can be formed by each inmate to one (as each contact can only be used once in a network).

Constructor Notes:

Given the limited time available for the hunt, last year, we tried holding the usual on-site event activity just before the hunt with some success. There was good participation, and participants did not feel their time was taken away from hunt puzzle solving, which allowed the activity to be less rushed. So the same approach is replicated this year. The aim of the event activity is to provide an opportunity for solvers from different teams to interact and network with each other. This is something not possible in an online hunt, and also lacking in an on-site hunt as solvers would normally just spend all their time solving within their teams. So a thematic Bingo-style ice-breaker was devised as a fun way to motivate participants to get to know each other. The \$10 Contraband Cash is actually a reference to the cost for the rock hammer in the original source of the hunt theme. There is some minor strategy element in choosing which cells to match given descriptions to in order to maximise the chances of forming a network. To make the interactions more memorable, an additional criteria was set to identify the contacts during verification. This also allowed for a more collaborative environment, as participants would be encouraged to help each other out if necessary.

Contraband!

Instructions

You are one of many inmates in the Puzzleville State Penitentiary. Prison contraband is high in demand but you should only carry out transactions within your trusted network. Build contacts and networks with the other inmates to help you sell prison contraband:

- Within 15 minutes, interact and collaborate with the other inmates to find out each other's first name, team name and favorite puzzle type. Fill in the details for each person in a unique cell in the 5x5 grid below.
- A list of numbered descriptors of an eligible contact will then be read out, eg. "Contact number 1 is someone whose team name starts with P". You can then individually match the descriptor to a contact in one of your cells by writing the contact number in that cell.
- The objective is to form a network – an orthogonal or diagonal line of 5 contacts, and you can then shout "Contraband!" Verify that all the contacts in your network match their respective descriptions, and identify those contacts in front of the group. Once verified, you earn \$10 Contraband Cash, which can be used later during the hunt.
- After any network verifications are complete, another description for the next eligible contact will be read until the list ends. Each contact can only be used once in a network.
