

“The Great Barter”

You can download:

1. Letterheads/mailheads

Each page accommodates two letterheads. Get five copies of each page and cut them into two. That will give you ten letterheads/mailheads for each bank. You can call them letterheads if you're teaching letter writing; you can call them maileheads if you're teaching e-mail writing.

2. A possible first letter/e-mail.

You can make changes in the text to suit your approach to letter/e-mail writing. The sample first letter/e-mail demonstrates the planning done by the Bank of Spades. It has a subject line and an opening paragraph that must be of tremendous interest to the Bank of Hearts. It also makes clear what the Bank of Spades would like the Bank of Hearts to do. The second paragraph anticipates the problems that the Bank of Hearts may have, and suggests a way out. If this is not done right in the first letter/e-mail (and most teams fail to think of this; they want to just get the first mail out as fast as possible), time will be wasted in exchanging letters/e-mail to figure sets things out.

You will want to use a timer with a buzzer to keep track of time. If the game does not get over in seven or eight minutes, you might want to create a little extra pressure by announcing “last two minutes” and “last minute.” Do not allow any team a second beyond the deadline. Do not give them more than 10 letterheads/mailheads either.

Most of the learning comes from the debriefing. It helps to review some of the letters/e-mails that have actually been exchanged between the banks. You and the class will be amazed at the lack of clarity in many of the exchanges. Although there is a provision for quoting a premium, it would be foolish to do so. There is so little time that getting into negotiations about premium can slow down a team considerably. Similarly, you will observe many different things which you will want to comment on.

I have had fun and learning using this fast-placed game in the classroom and collective reflection on what happened. I wish you also the same.

Mathukutty Monippally
Indian Institute of Management
Ahmedabad
India



Federal Bank of Diamonds



Subject:

Date : Friday, December 16, 2008 09:42:40 +0400

From :

To :



Federal Bank of Diamonds



Subject:

Date : Friday, December16, 2008 09:42:40 +0400

From :

To :



Federal Bank of Clubs



Subject:

Date : Friday, December16, 2008 09:42:40 +0400

From :

To :



Federal Bank of Clubs



Subject:

Date : Friday, December16, 2008 09:42:40 +0400

From :

To :



Federal Bank of Hearts



Subject:

Date : Friday, December16, 2008 09:42:40 +0400

From :

To :



Federal Bank of Hearts



Subject:

Date : Friday, December16, 2008 09:42:40 +0400

From :

To :



FEDERAL BANK OF SPADES



Subject:

Date : Friday, December16, 2008 09:42:40 +0400

From :

To :



FEDERAL BANK OF SPADES



Subject:

Date : Friday, December16, 2008 09:42:40 +0400

From :

To :

Think before you leap!

A possible first mail from Federal Bank of Spades to Federal Bank of Hearts



FEDERAL BANK OF SPADES



Subject: Hearts available for exchange
Date: December 16, 2008 09:42:40 +0400
Organization: Federal Bank of Spades
From: tsmani@fbs.com
To: foreign_exchange@fbh.com

To Director of Foreign Exchange

We have three billion Hearts. We would like to let you have them. Could you possibly send us in exchange all the Spades you have?

If you do not have three billion Spades to spare, please send us as many Spades as you have. We will be happy to accept Clubs or Diamonds to make up for the shortfall in Spades.

If you have more than three billion Spades, please send them all to us. Besides three billion Hearts we will send you Clubs or Diamonds to match the number of Spades you send us.

We will dispatch our Hearts to you as soon as we hear from you.

T S Mani
Director, Exchange