

BLASTOFF

BLASTOFF: THE INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION SIMULATION

- Space debris has hit and knocked out the satellite communication system that is used to communicate with the International Space Station (ISSP).
- It may be a few months before communication can be restored, so the International Partners involved in the ISSP have decided to launch an unmanned rocket to the Station with a message that informs Station astronauts about the communication failure and to assure them that the ISSP agencies are working on restoring communication as fast as possible.
- Your job is to work together both as individual teams (Green, Blue, Purple, and Orange) as well as with the other international agencies to build a model rocket to send a message to the astronauts aboard the Space Station.



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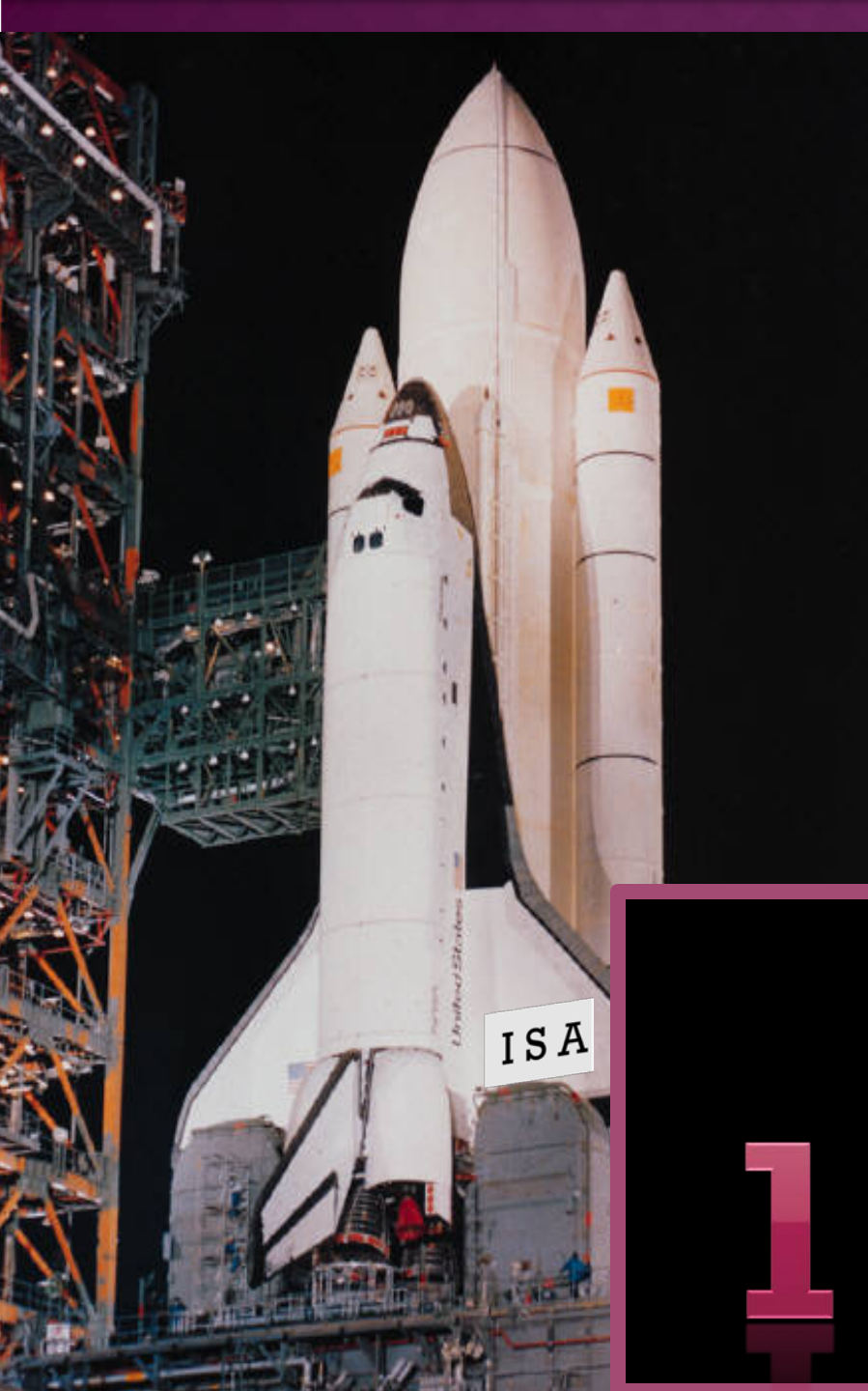
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Blast Off

DEBRIEF

- ◉ What happened?
- ◉ Did everyone share the same goals?
- ◉ Did you experience difficulty operating under the norms of your group's culture?
- ◉ What types of misunderstandings occurred between the groups?
- ◉ How well do you think you understood the other groups' norms and cultures? What do you think the other's norms were? Were you conscious of realizing what others' norms were as you participated in the simulation?

DEBRIEF

- ◉ Does this game remind you of any real life situations?
- ◉ What lessons from this simulation can you apply to future situations when you have to work with people from diverse backgrounds?
- ◉ What are strategies you can use to be successful at working and communicating with someone from a culture that is different than your own?

TAKEAWAYS

- ◉ Be aware of your own cultural preferences, work style, and communication style.
- ◉ Realize that others are operating from within their own culture – makes sense to them!
- ◉ Oftentimes in a multicultural setting, things that frustrate you can be attributed to cultural differences.
 - Try to see things from the other's perspective.
 - Observe instead of rushing to judgment.
- ◉ Need to take time to establish trust among group members, learn about each other.
- ◉ Recognize differences and establish ground rules, common objectives.

TIPS FOR FACILITATING

- ◉ Why it works
- ◉ Can go in many directions – have intended outcomes to guide discussion
- ◉ Need minimum group size (12)
- ◉ Set up of room
- ◉ Lots of prep
- ◉ Book, Power Point
- ◉ Participation challenges
 - Experience, background, attitude, developmental stage
 - Sticking to rules

IDEAS FOR USING BLASTOFF

Stand-alone activity (1-2 hours)

- Freshmen
- Team-building
- Intercultural campus programming (LINKS, I-House)
- Re-entry activity
- Senior capstone workshop

Comprehensive (3+ hours)

- Framework to discuss intercultural communication, elements of culture, etc.
- Need more time and supplemental handouts or resources
- More training required for facilitator