

## Garbled Message

a.k.a.  
“Just One Word”



*This activity is a mental challenge, perfect before a creative problem-solving activity or other initiative that requires the use of outside the box thinking.*

### MATERIALS:

- 11 separate cards or sheets of paper with the following individual printed letters: D, E, J, N, O, O, R, S, T, U, W (underline so it's not mistaken for an M!)

### EXPERIENCE:

1. Divide the group into small teams of 4-5 people.
2. Set the stage with the following story:
3. *You receive a garbled email transmission from a friend on vacation. You remember that they said they would send you a message containing just one word, so that you would know how their vacation was going.*
4. Give one set of the letter cards to each team and ask them to unscramble the message!  
Solution: The message is literally “*just one word*”!

### PROCESSING:

- *Was the explanation given sufficient for your group to solve the problem?*
- *Should the solution have been obvious from the start?*
- *What kept your group from seeing the obvious solution?*
- *Are there any other problems you've faced that turned out to be easier to solve than you first imagined?*

*Following page: Cut along lines to make one set of letters.*

