

# Case Study: Ice Cream Delivery

## An Ice Cream Company Used Random Entry to Solve a Problem with Their Direct Store Delivery

### The Story:

A prominent company specializing in premium ice cream was having a problem with its delivery. Because of the ice cream's high fat content, keeping it at precisely the right temperature was critical; otherwise, the cream and oil would separate, ruining the ice cream.

The ice cream changed hands several times from the factory to the grocers' freezers, and the company needed to monitor and control the temperature carefully at every stage. Across most of the nation, this was not a problem. In New York City, however, the traffic congestion prevented delivery trucks from pulling up to the smaller convenience stores and unloading quickly and efficiently. All too often, the ice cream thawed and spoiled.

To deal with this challenge, the owners of the ice cream company called in the owners of the trucking company to discuss better ways to handle direct delivery in New York City. The ice cream company asked Certified de Bono Instructor Susan Blouch from the Computer Sciences Corporation to facilitate the meeting.

Susan wanted the group to come up with an entirely new concept—one that would completely eliminate the delivery dilemma. She separated the group into pairs and gave them the Random Entry: hobby. She told the pairs to ask themselves, “What is it about my own hobby that might help to solve this distribution problem?”

After a few minutes of discussion, one pair was especially excited to share an idea. A participant said, “My favorite hobby is boating, so we started thinking about boats. If a boat is too big to reach the shore, the person will get off the big boat and get into a smaller boat and row to the shore.” The group was unsure where the pair was headed with their simple, yet strange observation. “So we wondered... why couldn't we send bigger delivery trucks to the outskirts of a busy place like New York City, and then have smaller vehicles of some kind come off those bigger trucks so they could easily maneuver and transport ice cream into the heavily congested areas?” Everyone in the group laughed. But their laughter was followed with looks that said, “Why not?”

The group then explored the boat idea more fully in a Green Hat session. Some people suggested that golf carts or bikes with freezers attached to them could be the “little boats” in the scenario. The larger semitrailers could be stocked with golf carts or bikes, just like the boat analogy.

By the end of the day, the group had discussed a number of potential solutions and intriguing ideas but had not reached a definite conclusion. Several months later, however, Susan learned that they had implemented and perfected a plan deriving from the boat suggestion.



#### Summary:

An ice cream company used Random Entry to solve a problem with their direct store delivery

#### Challenge:

Keep ice cream the same temperature from the time it is made until it is put on the shelves of small convenience stores

#### Method:

Use Random Entry during a meeting to find a totally new approach to the delivery problem

#### Result:

The direct store delivery system is customized to the geographical needs of New York City