

Heart of a Whistle-blower – Rules

Dr. Bo Brinkman

Materials needed:

1. A standard deck of playing cards
2. The deck of whistle-blower cards, provided at <http://www.derandomized.org/HeartsAndWhistles/>

Goal:

Each player attempts to score points by helping their **side** win, while avoiding getting **fired**. The losing side always has the chance to reverse the outcome, or make things even worse, by blowing the whistle at the end of the game.

Playing the game:

HoW requires a moderator to run the game. Rounds are relatively short: About 5-7 minutes. It is recommended to play at least 3-5 rounds, to give those that are never whistle-blowers a fair chance to win.

Multiple rounds:

If desired, players may take turns being the moderator, with the moderator being awarded 20 points in compensation. Each player should keep track of her own total score. Points scored in previous rounds can never be lost: Any card or rule that says “all points are lost” refers to a single round only. At the end of the game, the winner is the player with the most total points.

Setup:

Explain the following to the players: The players work at a company that makes a safety-critical car part. Some low-level workers think they have discovered a bug in the product that could lead to serious injury. The company must decide whether or not to recall the (possibly) defective parts. The Heart **side** wants the recall to happen, because they love safety. The Diamond **side** wants to prevent the recall, because the financial losses involved might damage the company.

Note: You may wish to replace this scenario with your own scenario. In that case, your scenario should pose a Yes/No choice, with the Heart **side** always being the “yes” side, and the Diamonds **side** always being the “no” side.

Order of play:

1. Divide the players into groups of 5-7. These are their **workgroups**.
2. Ask each workgroup to select a **boss**. The moderator may select the bosses, if desired.
3. Separate out only the red cards from a standard deck of playing cards. Randomly distribute one card to each player.
 - a. Inform the players that they may show the card to other players, but they do not have to.
 - b. Any player that receives a heart is on the **hearts side**, which supports the proposed action.

- c. Any player that receives a diamond is on the **diamonds side**, which opposes the proposed action.
4. Give the players 90 seconds to discuss how they will vote with their workgroups. Note that players may choose to vote against their **side** if they wish.
5. Give each boss the opportunity to **fire** any workers on their workgroup, up to a total of no more than half of their workgroup (rounding down). Example: A boss with 4-5 workers can fire at most 2, 6-7 workers at most 3.
6. Call on the bosses to vote, and tally their votes
7. Call on the workers to vote, and tally their votes
8. **“No confidence vote”** rule: Bosses whose workgroups did not support them (by voting a majority the same way as the boss) are fired. Example: If a boss votes for hearts, but 3 of her 5 workers vote diamonds, the boss is fired, and is out of the game.
9. Give each remaining boss the opportunity to fire more workers, though the total fired (with this step and step 5 combined) must still be no more than half the workgroup.
10. Picking a **whistle-blower**: Any worker that has not yet been fired, and whose card does not match the winning side, may choose to “blow the whistle.” For example, if hearts won, any player with a diamond card may blow the whistle, regardless of how they voted.
 - a. Inform the players that blowing the whistle can earn up to 60 points, but that on average the whistle blower will get around 20 points, the same as a risk-averse player.
 - b. If more than one player wishes to blow the whistle, the one with the highest card wins.
11. **Blowing the whistle**: The whistle-blower selects a **whistle-blowing card** at random. Follow the instructions on the card. These may alter point totals, reverse firings, or change the result of the vote on the recall.

Scoring:

1. Each player receives 10 points if her **side** won. (As determined by his/her card, independent of how he/she voted.)
2. Each player receives 20 points if she was not **fired**.
3. Point totals are modified by the whistle-blowing card, if there was a whistle-blower.

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