

The National Space Centre



On January 28, 1986, the seven crew members of the space shuttle Challenger set out on a mission to broaden educational horizons and promote the advance of scientific knowledge. In the aftermath of the Challenger accident, the crew's families came together, still grieving from loss, but firmly committed to the belief that they must carry on the spirit of their loved ones by continuing the Challenger crew's educational mission.

The Challenger Learning Centre is a unique facility that vividly demonstrates the importance of teamwork and communication on the journey to success. Opened in Leicester in December 1999, our Centre is the only one of its kind outside North America, where Challenger Learning Centres have been revolutionising education since 1986.

Using realistic simulations and hands-on activities, a Challenger mission creates an exciting, fun, team environment, which exposes participants to the demands of cooperation, problem solving, communication and decision-making. The experience also provides a marvellous opportunity for developing a collaborative spirit between colleagues. It works excellently as part of an existing in-house staff development programme. Use it to:

- give an accelerated start to a programme for new staff
- help to create a project team brought together from different parts of the organisation
- overcome barriers between departments
- create a close working relationship with new clients
- motivate an under-performing team.

How does a mission work?

Each mission is co-ordinated by two of our specially trained Flight Directors. During the mock flight, participants assume the roles of astronauts in a simulated spacecraft and mission controllers on the ground. Crews are split into smaller teams, each of which has different responsibilities, ranging from navigation to medical and life support.

How long does a mission take?

A full mission lasts 3 hours, including briefings. This allows everybody to experience a role in Mission Control and in Spacecraft. The Centre is well equipped with audio-visual equipment, and we will be happy to let you use the centre for your own discussions and debriefings before and after your mission. Just let us know your needs when you book.

How many people can take part?

For the best possible experience, a group of 8 - 30 people can take part.