

Key to Fort Knox Facilitator's Guide



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ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS

The activities are in alphabetical order:

1. Alphabet Soup
2. Bull Ring
3. Chain of Command
4. Change Five
5. China Syndrome
6. Don't Touch Me
7. Get It Together
8. Group Juggling
9. Have You Ever?
10. Knot a Team
11. Knot or Not A Not
12. Learning Maze
13. Let Go My Ego
14. Orange Ball
15. Perfect Square
16. River Crossing
17. Search and Rescue
18. Supply Chain
19. Team Shackles
20. Tied In Knots
21. Traffic Jam
22. Trust Walk
23. Warp Speed
24. Who Are You?
25. Win Win Win

Alphabet Soup



Purpose

This event is designed to stimulate dialogue about how team members can work together to be more efficient and effective.

Insight is gained into how teams can work toward continual improvement. Participants will learn how to discover the best way for the team to get a job done.



Length of Exercise and Short Agenda

Total time needed is approximately 30 to 45 minutes and should not exceed 60 minutes. The duration depends largely upon how quickly your group accomplishes the task and how much discussion is generated.

- 5 Min. Introduce activity & cover ground rules (if any)
- 15 Min. Activity
- 20 Min. Group discussion
- 5 Min. Wrap up and set expectations – Miracle 10%

The discussion is the most important piece of this agenda as that is where the knowledge learned in the activity is transferred back to life, work, etc.



Safety Tips

Participants will be running much of the time, so be sure to:

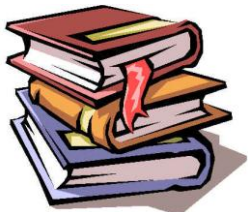
Make sure the area is safe to run and people who are running are physically able.

Clear any obstructions or be sure to tell participants to watch for anything that may trip them during the event.



Equipment You Will Need

- Enough open space for a 60 ft. webbing circle.
 - 60 ft. webbing circle
 - 26 Key Pads
 - One 15 ft piece of webbing
-



Storyline

Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to disarm the nuclear bomb so we can understand how it is constructed and find the producer of such a device. Everything we know about the bomb is as follows:

- The timer begins counting once we cross the start line.
- There are 15 minutes on the clock.
- When we come back across the start line the clock stops counting down.
- We must all take turns touching letters and only one of us may be on the giant keypad at one time.

- We may only touch one letter per entry into the circle.
- We may try as many times as possible before the 15 minutes expires.

Alternate Storyline:

On your first day of the job at a soup factory, your work group has been asked to perform a quality check on the alphabet soup line. There are many bowls of alphabet soup to check, so you'll need to work fast. Your group needs to determine if each letter is present as quickly as possible. For quality control reasons, you need to actually touch each letter in some way and only one quality technician from your workgroup is allowed in the area at a time.

The success of the factory is in your hands. Good Luck!



Setup

1. Before the group arrives, have the circle laid out in a clear open space with the letters randomly placed in the middle face up. The 15-foot webbing start/finish line should be at least 25 feet away.
2. Have team members gather some distance from the activity behind the 15-foot piece of webbing.
3. Explain the story and letter requirements.
4. Bomb exercise: spell "Leadership" or some other word.
5. Alphabet Soup: touch the keypads in order from A to Z.
6. Make sure to have more letters to touch than participants.
7. Only one person may be in the circle at a time.
8. Only one letter may be touched at a time.
9. After each letter is touched, the person must be completely out of the circle before another letter may

be touched. Participants are not to move the letters.

10. Time starts when the first person crosses the starting line.
11. Time stops when the last letter has been touched and all group members are back across the starting line.
12. Give the team some time to plan its strategy.
13. Allow the team three or four attempts to improve its time.
14. Have the team set a goal time and celebrate if they reach it.



Variations

- ✓ No talking once participants cross the start/finish line.
- ✓ Move some letters after each attempt.
- ✓ Have the team to set the time they need to successfully accomplish the task before they actually attempt it. They will usually think they can do it much more quickly than is possible.
- ✓ Allow the group five attempts to do it as fast as they can. See if they change their tactics or simply try to accomplish it the same way only faster.
- ✓ Take one or two of the letters out. This presents a huge obstacle since everyone knows the ABC's or how to spell common words and expects the letters to be there. This creates a great processing point for later in the debriefing.
- ✓ No two letters can be touched with the same body part. For example only one person can use their right hand, the next person must use a foot, a toe, their head, etc...



Dynamics to Watch For:



Questions for Group Discussion

- The way people get the group to vote or provide input about the next step.
- How the group spends time planning. Is it productive time?
- Level of commitment to one idea and whether they are closed to all other ideas after that?
- How well the group understands the plan and if they are committed to it as a group.

1. How different was your first attempt and last attempt?
2. What was the quality of communication and did it improve over time?
3. Were ideas shared, understood, and implemented?
4. What could you have done to improve your planning?
5. How is this activity <insert ideas from answers to questions above> similar to work?
6. In what ways can you apply what you have learned from this activity back to your daily life at work (or school, etc)?



Tips and Tricks from Our Professional Facilitators

For work settings:

- Manufacturing – the letters could represent a sequence in the manufacturing process or in the marketing/distribution channel.
- Administration – the letters could represent a workflow, or paper trail.
- Medical – the letters could represent steps in patient care.

Bull Ring



Purpose

The challenge of this event is to carry a small ball using a metal ring and rope, 'Bull Ring,' through a series of obstacles and place the ball into a goal.

Bull Ring utilizes physical movement and cooperation. It also takes coordination to keep the ball on the ring. This is a great early activity for new groups.



Length of Exercise and Short Agenda

Total time needed is approximately 30 to 45 minutes and should not exceed 60 minutes. The duration depends largely upon how quickly your group accomplishes the task and how much discussion is generated.

- 5 Min. Introduce activity & cover ground rules (if any)
- 15 Min. Activity
- 20 Min. Group discussion
- 5 Min. Wrap up and set expectations – Miracle 10%

The discussion is the most important piece of this agenda as that is where the knowledge learned in the activity is transferred back to life, work, etc.



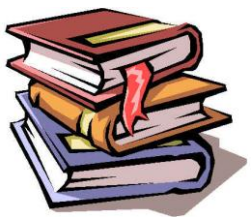
Safety Tips

- Do not allow participants to wrap the rope around their fingers, wrists, etc. Sudden rope movement may cause rope rash.
 - Be sure to tell the group of any obstructions that may cause them to trip or stumble.
-



Equipment You Will Need

- Metal and Plastic Ring
 - Several Balls
 - Six 20' lengths of Thin Rope
 - Two Mouse Pads with PVC insert
 - 12 Blindfolds
-



Storyline

Your company's newest manufacturing plant has experienced a severe problem and your team of specialists has been called in to fix the problem.

Upon arrival you see that some of the chemicals used in the manufacturing process have somehow interacted and created some solid masses.

You must transport these solid pieces to the containment center without dropping them in the plant.

Also, some protective eyewear may be necessary, as the chemicals have been known to cause damage to the eyes.

Alternative Storyline

The newest Mars probe returns to Earth with several

new rocks from our closest neighboring planet. The re-entry on Earth however, was a little bumpier than Mars, and a few of the precious stones end up bouncing around the salt flats of the western United States. Your team has been assembled to retrieve these stones, using a new prototype Bull Ring Retrieval System – Mark 1. First you must elevate the stone, and then carry this to the awaiting containment cylinder.



Setup

1. Place the first mouse pad where you want the group to start. Make sure it is in an open and easily accessible area.
2. Place the second pad in the goal destination noting the obstacles that are in the way.
3. You can create obstacles as well – If inside use tables, chairs, another room, down a flight of stairs, etc. If outside use gentle slopes, trees, gullies, etc. Just make sure you make the activity as difficult as you want BEFORE you start. You might want to err on the side of caution as you can always make it more difficult with the blindfolds.
4. Attach each rope to the selected ring so that there are 12 lines leading outward (knot the middle of the rope around the ring). Adjust if you have less than 12 participants.
5. Place the ring on the start pad and place a ball in the ring - the bigger and heavier the ball, the more difficult. If the group masters this activity quickly, you may want to have them try a more difficult ball or move the goal to a more difficult location or both.
6. Read the Storyline to the participants. They must try to carry the ball using the Bull Ring to the goal destination without dropping it.
7. Be prepared to let the participants struggle. Resist helping them with your own suggestions.
8. Think about whether you want to use the blindfolds with the group before the activity. This requires a

great deal more trust and some groups may not be ready. In addition, if you are using the blindfolds, think about the obstacles in the way and make sure everyone is safe.



Variations

- ✓ Set up only the start and finish and leave the rope and selected ball near the start. Make the group figure out how to put the ring together before they begin. Surprisingly, this creates some interesting discussion about how to put the props together to best transport the ball. If the group decides to tie the end of the ropes on the ring, there will only be six people holding the ropes. You might want to suddenly impose the rule below for larger groups.
- ✓ For larger groups – any person touching the rope must be blindfolded. This creates a coaching situation as well as complicates the overall communication and makes the activity that much more DIFFICULT and that much more FUN!
- ✓ Use these same props, but on a large table. Instead of transporting a single object, put several objects on the table and have them retrieve 'X' number of objects in a specified amount of time. Of course, you can simply give them 'X' number of objects and see how long it takes them to retrieve all of them. Ideas for items to use include crumpled paper, a pencil, a roll of tape, a book, etc.
- ✓ Create a small 'Golf Course' and have several 'Holes' that the group must navigate and accomplish in a certain amount of time. It is best if you let the group tell you how much time it will take them to complete the course and then see how they compare with their goal. With this variation, you can use the various balls on the different holes to change the level of difficulty.
- ✓ Create a writing tool using a rubber band and a large marker. Place the rubber band tightly around the marker. Run the strings through the rubber band and loop back. Have participants hold the strings and maneuver the marker instead of the ring. Make

sure the rubber band remains tight enough to move the marker.

Get a large sheet of butcher paper and have the group write the name of the department or organization. This is a VERY interesting variation that will challenge a group who may have mastered the original version. You can also give the group several markers and a paper with a large shape divided into specific areas. Have them color the marked areas with different colors.



Dynamics to Watch For:

- Teams trying the same bad idea over and over.
- Good ideas that are shot down before they are given a chance. How does the person respond to being shot down? Does anyone in the group speak up?



Questions for Group Discussion

1. Did the group have a single leader or was everyone part of the decision-making?
2. What techniques did you use to overcome the obstacles?
3. What would you do if the ball were replaced with a bowling ball?
4. What workplace situations exist to force your group to act as a team?
5. How can you apply what you learned through this exercise in everyday life?



Tips and Tricks from Our Professional Facilitators

- We find it is more fun if you run the participants through the activity a few times with increasing difficulty. Also, use the variations at random to keep changing the difficulty level.
 - If you have fewer than 12 participants, allow some to hold more than one rope.
 - The participants may need to shorten pieces of the rope to get through or around certain obstacles.
 - The lighter and larger balls are more difficult to transport as they fall off easily.
 - Try using an ice cube on a hot day outside. This creates an imposed time limit as well as some stressful fun!
 - Instead of putting the ball on the mouse pad, have the group put it into a bucket or into the small rope ring (provided) without bouncing out.
 - Blindfold all or some of the group. This changes the dynamic considerably and makes it very interesting.
 - Silence the first person to speak. Often times this is the group's leader.
 - Choose a leader at random before the event starts. This can lead to an interesting decision process.
 - Have two people from the team observe the group and take notes on what they see.
 - Transport the object around trees, tables, chairs, etc...
 - The most difficult spot for the goal is in a corner.
-

Chain of Command



Purpose

This event is designed to get the group interacting, having fun and is traditionally an icebreaker.

Although a great icebreaker, there are great insights that are possible in the areas of:

- leadership,
- trust,
- communication and
- changing perspectives.

Any of these can be touched upon during discussion and connected back to work.

To complete the tasks the team will need to use teamwork, cooperation and creativity.

This event is also great way to get people touching each other without feeling threatened.



Length of Exercise and Short Agenda

Total time is roughly 30 to 45 minutes and should not exceed 60 minutes. This depends largely upon how quickly your group accomplishes the task and how much discussion is generated.

- 5 Min. Introduce Activity & Cover Ground Rules, if any
- 15 Min. Activity
- 20 Min. Group Discussion
- 5 Min. Wrap up and Set Expectations – Miracle 10%

The discussion is the most important piece of this agenda as that is where the knowledge learned in the activity is transferred back to life, work, etc.



Safety Tips

- If you feel it is necessary, stand near the team in a spotting position.
 - Be sure participants don't hurt themselves or others trying to change positions.
 - By design, this activity creates close proximity among the participants to encourage a small amount of trust. Be sure your group is ready for this as some may feel discomfort.
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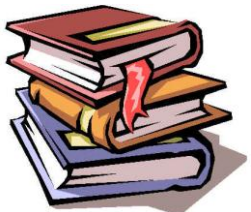
Equipment You Will Need

"Log" strip that is six inches wide by 15 feet long. You need roughly one foot of 'log' for each participant.

If you purchased materials from Repario, you will have received at least three strips of material that can Velcro together to create the 'log'.

Alternative Materials:

- Cut two pieces of masking tape six to eight inches apart to create the 'log'.
 - Buy a piece of carpet from Home Depot and cut it to the right size.
 - Use a crack in a sidewalk
-



Storyline

You are part of a top-secret spy team. You must be able to blend with any group to infiltrate secure areas without detection.

Your final training is to read the minds of fellow spies and obtain details about their personal lives. You must also prove you can do this in incredibly cramped quarters.

Read the minds of your teammates and position yourself in order of birthdays without talking, stepping off the carpet or looking behind you. Do this by reading minds. Good luck!



Setup

1. Have the entire stand on the “log” in random order, but all facing one end of the log. So each person should be looking at someone else’s back.
2. **Without turning around**, team members must arrange themselves by one of the following as quickly as possible:
 - Date of Birth, month and day, NOT AGE
 - Alphabetically by middle initial
 - Hair Length
 - Color of hair, darkest to lightest
 - Furthest distance ever traveled from this location
 - Place each person was born, either in alphabetical order or by distance
 - Alphabetical order of high school mascot
 - Distance from current location to where you graduated high school.

If someone steps off and touches the ground, everyone starts over.



Variations

- Blindfolds are always fun to mix it up. Make the blindfolding completely random and give them a temporary impairment that only you can take away. Blindfold and un-blindfold frequently to create a more chaotic activity that participants generally find more fun.
- Bring face masks used in hospitals and randomly silence some or all of the participants – works especially great in hospital settings.
- Another great physical impairment is to tell some or all of the participants they can now only stand on one leg. Take this away from some or all of them at will.
- If you have a large group, break them into two separate groups and have them run at the same time. Without even mentioning a ‘race’ or

competition, they will immediately compete. However, if they actually worked together, the groups could work together and help each other rearrange themselves much more quickly because you can see more looking at the group sideways than you can looking straight ahead.

- Time – creating time pressure always creates pressure and tension (in a good way) and will strengthen reactions from the participants.
 - One variation is to time them on the first try and use that time as the time to beat.

“Do you think you can do it faster?”

They will answer yes, of course, so then tell them you are changing how they need to reorder themselves – now instead of by hair length, by date of birth.

They will moan and/or groan, but tell them that business/life is always changing, customers/our family always want something different in the same amount of time and life is not fair!

- Another variation is to ask them how fast they think they can accomplish the task. Check their actual time against what they thought they could do and ask for explanations (they will always miss it by A LOT).



**Dynamics
to Watch
For:**

-
- Styles of communication and how they overcome your communication challenges.
 - Who shows up as the leader and how they include or exclude team members?
 - How much fun they are having and who is fueling the fun.
 - How the leadership of the group must change as the challenge changes.



Questions for Group Discussion

1. How much pre-planning did you use or need?
 2. Was a leader identified? If so, why?
 3. What strategies emerged that proved helpful?
 4. What new things did you learn through this activity?
 5. Do you see any similarity between this activity and your interactions at work?
 6. What new things did you learn through this activity?
 7. Do you see any similarity between this activity and your interactions at work?
-



Tips and Tricks from Our Professional Facilitators

This is an event that is supposed to be fun. Watch to make sure everyone is having fun. Occasionally, individuals feel uncomfortable in the beginning due to the close proximity of people they don't know. You may want to share any observations between the beginning and end of the activity.

Try and find something unique about your group to arrange themselves by. However, try to stay away from something that elevates others in the group like seniority or may alienate participants like age.

Use the rules as a guide and change them as necessary. It is obviously more difficult to do this task without talking but change that if it does not fit the group.

An Icebreaker:

This is a fantastic tool to get people to know a little bit more about each other than they previously knew. Use some of the more interesting personal methods to rearrange themselves.

This simple game helps humanize each individual in the room and many times sparks interesting conversations as people realize they were born near each other, etc.

The key is to start simple—i.e. hair length and then reorganize using more difficult and personal attributes.

A Communication Tool:

This is an impressive communication tool and can tell

the group a great deal about how they communicate.

At the beginning, if you tell everyone to line up facing a particular direction, the natural leader will go to the front and the least likely leader will be in the back. However, if you are in the front and CANNOT turn around, you are not able to lead!

Because everyone is in a linear line, it is very difficult to communicate with someone more than a few feet in front of you. So the group tends to break down into small groups of three or four to solve their little piece of the problem and the game is solved.

This is fine, except it was left to chance. What if revenue was simply left to chance? What would happen? You simply cannot leave important communication to chance.

Is the communication within the organization also organized in a linear fashion? If so and if the group communication was disorganized, chances are, communication is being left to evolve on it's own — not a good sign.

This kind of communicating is valuable and is a sign of organizational strength — everyone helps complete their piece with no need of a single leader.

However, this should be a chosen model of communication, not just happenstance.

A Trust Activity

Trust is inherent in the activity if you do not allow the participants to step off the 'log'.

This is because in order to accomplish the goal of the group, the participants will need to give up their personal space and allow others to touch them.

Allowing someone else into your personal space gives them a small amount of trust. This can be the beginning of trusting that person.

Touching is very taboo in business and this should be very carefully selected as an outcome for the activity. However, the benefits are difficult to measure when the group accomplishes this difficult task.

A Leadership Activity

As the group goes to stand on the log, all facing one direction, one person will be in the front and one person will be in the back.

The person(s) most wanting the leadership role will go to the front. That is where leaders go.

The person(s) wanting the leadership role the least will go to the back.

However, since participants cannot turn around, the person in the front can do nothing but follow.

And the person in the back has the best view of everyone and should lead. But whether they do, or if the group lets that person is something to discuss after the event.

Changing Perspectives

Regardless of whether you are using this as an icebreaker, trust activity, leadership activity or communication tool, each person's perspective will change throughout each attempt to reorganize.

How did the changing perspective affect the group's communication, the leadership, etc?

How did those changes affect the individuals? What leadership shared when needed?

Many times we may have a great perspective on something for a short time and then lose that perspective.

- Do you (did you) continue to try and force the group to follow your lead?
- Or did the group share the leadership to accomplish the group goal?

Change Five



Purpose

Are you ready for change?

This is a great game for helping people integrate change into their daily life and highlights the Fimage Factor (see Table of Contents) along with change.

After this activity the group will be able to identify some of the resistance to change we all share.

Use this as an icebreaker before a change discussion.



Length of Exercise and Short Agenda

Total time needed is approximately 20 to 30 minutes and should not exceed 45 minutes. The duration depends largely upon how quickly your group accomplishes the task and how much discussion is generated.

- 2 Min. Introduce activity & cover ground rules
- 10 Min. Activity
- 5 Min. Group discussion
- 5 Min. Wrap up and set expectations – Miracle 10%

The discussion is the most important piece of this agenda as that is where the knowledge learned in the activity is transferred back to life, work, etc.



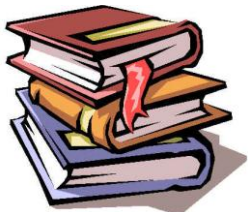
Safety Tips

- Make sure the participants do not make any physical changes that could hurt themselves or others.



Equipment You Will Need

- None – simply a good imagination.
- You will need an even number of people.



Storyline

We do not typically use a storyline with this activity and use it more as an icebreaker to get everyone up, having fun and laughing at each other and themselves.

Of course, the subject of change is the desired outcome for this 'silly' icebreaker and some great discussion can come from the participants.

You can also simply use it as an observation for everyone to keep in mind moving forward.



Setup

1. Have participants find a partner.
2. If they do not have a partner, have them raise their hands until they find a partner.
3. Position yourself so all the pairs can see you.
4. Give the group 15 seconds to look at their partner and remember as much detail about the way their partner looks as possible.
5. After 15 seconds is up, instruct them to stand back to back with their partner.
6. Give the group 30 seconds to change 5 things about their appearance with the backs to each other (take watch off, turn shirt around, switch shoes, etc)
7. After 30 seconds, have them turn around and tell

their partner the five things they changed. Instruct them not to change anything back yet.

8. Once they have found all five, repeat the process of having them stand back to back and changing five more things about their appearance for a total of 10 things changed.
 9. Continue with the process one last time so there are a total of 15 things changed.
 10. Discuss with the group what they noticed during this event. See Questions For The Group.
-



Variations

- ✓ Have them change more or less than five each time.
 - ✓ Make them keep changing items – up to 25. It becomes difficult for the pairs but really shows how much we can change.
 - ✓ Keep changing the same number of things about yourself as each group does so they can see what you look like at the end. Of course, you are going to look funny, which will give them 'permission' to stretch their Fimage (read about this at the end).
 - ✓ You can have them walk around and point out things their teammates have changed at the end. This can be fun and entertaining.
-



Dynamics to Watch For:

- People making half-hearted attempts.
 - Fimage issues
 - Especially creative changes.
 - How quickly they change back to their original clothes after the activity is over, even though you did not tell them to change back. See Tips and Tricks below.
-



Questions for Group Discussion

Be sure to look at the additional pages for more ideas on good questions to ask. Have this material in front of you when you are facilitating the debrief.

1. What did you notice in the group? Did you look around at other people?
 2. Did you think you had to take five things off or did you add anything to your outfit?
 3. Did you resist the changes? Why or why not?
 4. Did the changes get easier or harder? Why?
 5. Do you see this mentality or reality influencing other aspects of your life?
 6. How do these realities change or influence our lives?
 7. What can you do differently to be less resisting of change?
-



Tips and Tricks from Our Professional Facilitators

At the end of the activity and before the questions, pretend to end the activity, “Great job everyone, go ahead and take your seat again.” At this point, they will put everything back to the way it was before they began the activity.

Why? Why not keep your outfit like they are after the 15 changes?

This is because we naturally tend to gravitate toward what is comfortable. This is exactly what we do when faced with change. We gravitate toward what we already know.

At this point, you can keep your clothes with the 15 changes and continue to stand in front of the group. You will feel silly and people will begin to look at you funny, especially if you made extreme changes to your outfit. Why?

At the end of the discussion, make the observation that

everyone put their outfit back to the way it was before.

Discuss the above with them and challenge them to make a single small change during today's activities and work on that one change. Have them write down the change.

At this point, breaking the group into dyads to tell another person what the one change will be is a possibility. This will create buy-in for them. You only need a few short minutes to do this. If you do this as part of a larger program, be sure to come back to it at the end of the day and put the people back into dyads to check-in and see how they did throughout the day.

China Syndrome



Purpose

Creativity, group coordination, communication, leadership, perseverance, and determination are just some of the qualities that are put to the test during this activity.

In the beginning this event is often perceived as impossible and that causes stress for some participants. The power of the lesson learned is gained from pushing past that stress and realizing how important it is for teams to find different ways to look at situations and support each other even when there is no clear path and no one is the expert.



Length of Exercise and Short Agenda

Total time needed is approximately 30 to 45 minutes and should not exceed 60 minutes. The duration depends largely upon how quickly your group accomplishes the task and how much discussion is generated.

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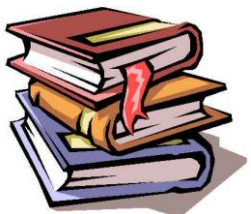
Safety Tips

- Be sure people do not grip the rope too tightly or cut off their circulation by wrapping it around their hand.
- No leaning or diving into the circle to try to pour the coolant.
- Be sure blindfolded people are kept in control and safe.



Equipment You Will Need

- One 60' rope circle
- Eight Blindfolds
- Eight, 10 foot pieces of rope
- Circular elastic (bungee cord)
- Two containers, both with a small amount of water



Storyline

There has been an accident in the nuclear lab. A melt down will occur unless you are able to mix coolant with the unstable material. You must not get any closer to the nuclear material than the safety boundary indicates and you must have eye protection (blindfolds) on if you are assigned to pour the coolant. You only have the limited supplies provided and you will lose the use of any supplies that touch the ground within the melt down area. Hurry!



Setup

1. Before the team arrives, lay out the 60 foot circle and place the containers in the middle (make sure the containers have water in them). This is the meltdown area. Have the other props nearby.
2. Place the elastic around one of the containers
3. Loop the ropes through the elastic to create a wagon wheel. (see variation as well)
4. Gather the entire team near the circle and the props.
5. Read the storyline and discuss the rules to be sure everyone understands:
 - They may only use the props you have given them.
 - No person may enter the circle.
 - If a person touches the ground within the circle, something bad will happen (i.e. lose their voice or the use of a body part).
 - Any prop that touches the ground in the circle is lost forever.
 - If a piece of rope extends into the circle, the person holding the rope must be blindfolded.
 - To stop the China Syndrome all the coolant must be transferred to the other container.
 - No person may touch the containers. If a container moves, the circle will move with it.



Variations

Give them a time limit of 20 – 30 minutes.

You may have each person assigned to helping a partner. This person is to coach only their blindfolded person when they are trying to stop the melt down.

You can have the strings tied to the bungee cord like a wagon wheel before they arrive or let them figure that out.

You may have all members able to see but no talking.

Add various amounts of water to the buckets to make it more, or less, difficult. The more water, the more

difficult.

Allow someone to be blindfolded for only 5 minutes at a time and then they must switch. This allows everyone to have the opportunity to be both coach and 'coachee'.



Dynamics to Watch For:

- Different styles of coaching
- What ideas are participants proposing?
- Time management. How does the team change when the plan is not working and time is running out?
- Team members who become disenfranchised. What is the cause for the disassociation?



Questions for Group Discussion

1. What qualities did you appreciate about your leader and could those qualities be effective in other areas of life? Give an example.
2. Was anyone frustrated during this activity? If so, what caused the frustration? Do similar situations occur at for the same reasons?
3. If you were blindfolded, what was it like?
4. Blindfolded people, is there anything you learned that you could apply in other areas of your life?
5. Are you surprised in any way with your results?
6. What might you change to get different results?
7. What are the similarities between this activity and work/life?
8. What have you learned from this activity that you could apply at work or in life?



Tips and Tricks from Our Professional Facilitators

- This activity is great because it requires all the necessary components of work – leadership, communication, cooperation, strategic planning, critical thinking, problem solving and, of course, teamwork.
 - The activity requires a number of supporting individuals at any given time. Keep changing the ‘playing field’ by changing the rules. This simulates what work is really like because SOMEONE is always changing the work – the customer, a new manager, etc. You might want to silence the natural leader and force someone else into the leadership role.
 - The activity also works extremely well with cross-functional teams for all the reasons above.
-

Emergency Bulletin

TO: N.E.T (Nuclear Emergency Technicians)

An early warning alarm has sounded at the world's largest nuclear plant. Computer screens in the control room indicate that the main reactor is undergoing what is commonly referred to as 'Meltdown'.

Your N.E.T. Team has been contacted to help stop this potentially cataclysmic disaster. Computers indicate that in 20 minutes meltdown will result if the proper coolant does not make it into the reactor.

The coolant required is contained in the apparatus with the toxic/other labels. In order to stop the meltdown, every drop of this coolant just be poured into the mouth of the reactor within the time limit. If any of the coolant spills over the sides, or misses the reactor, meltdown will occur.

No Go Zone: You will notice a large circle surrounding the crisis area. This radioactive zone may not be entered by anyone or any body part without serious injury. The zone extends straight up from the circle like a column. You must stay out of this area. Again, serious injury or deformities may result if this plane is broken.

Maintaining Proper Distance: The No Go Zone is designed to maintain a safe working distance between you and the reactor. Should you decide to move the reactor closer to you, the circle will be moved accordingly to maintain the proper distance. The reactor cannot come to the edge or out of the circle.

Materials: You have brought with you the only specially treated materials with which you may use (in mesh bag). If you should decide to extend any of these materials into the No Go Zone, whomever is touching that piece must wear protective eyewear (blindfolds).

Coaches and Technicians: You have come up with a plan to pair up blindfolded technician with a sighted technician to coach them. Once you extend any of the materials into the No Go Zone, the communication link is limited due to RFI (Radiation Frequency Interruption) caused by the No Go Zone. Therefore, from that point on, you may only communicate with your direct coach/technician. You may choose to strategize prior to extending materials to convey the plan to all involved. If the plan is not working, you must step away from the materials and regroup as a team. The clock is ticking...

PLEASE SAVE US!

Don't Touch Me



Purpose

Don't Touch Me will challenge the team to think outside the box and challenge the actual and implied rules.

Don't Touch Me also helps the participants see what is truly possible if you challenge your self.

Warning: this event can lead to major paradigm shift. Once a team discovers the self-imposed rules they will begin to see solutions.



Length of Exercise and Short Agenda

Total time needed is approximately 30 to 45 minutes and should not exceed 60 minutes. The duration depends largely upon how quickly your group accomplishes the task and how much discussion is generated.

- 5 Min. Introduce activity & cover ground rules (if any)
- 15 Min. Activity
- 20 Min. Group discussion
- 5 Min. Wrap up and set expectations – Miracle 10%

The discussion is the most important piece of this agenda as that is where the knowledge learned in the activity is transferred back to life, work, etc.



Safety Tips

- Be sure the area is safe for running and large enough to try different techniques.
- Make sure people are not agreeing to a solution that is not safe.



Equipment You Will Need

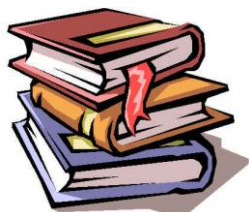
Don't Touch Me Pad

Materials that will work:

- ✓ Mouse pad – circle is better
- ✓ Coin
- ✓ Coaster
- ✓ CD or DVD – be careful it will not slip if someone steps on it.



Even something as small as a paper clip can be used and, in fact, may help the group realize it is placing restrictions upon itself.



Storyline

As systems experts, you are paid \$1,000,000 each year to look at systems and make them faster and better. The Don't Touch Me Pad factory needs you and your teams help designing a new production system.

Each step in the production of the Pad is critical. They need a system to get the Pad to each step in production faster without any collisions between departments.



Setup

1. Have the team form a circle in a large open space.
2. Place the Don't Touch Me Pad in the middle of the circle on the ground.
3. Have each person find a partner, preferably someone on the opposing side of the circle.
4. This is a timed event. You will need to be or choose a timer.
5. The object is for everyone to touch the Don't Touch Me Pad and switch positions with their partner as quickly as possible.
6. They may not cut the pad into small pieces.
7. Time will start when the team asks the timekeeper if

they are ready. Time Keeper will respond, "Timer ready, set, go!" Time will stop when everyone has touched the Don't Touch Me pad, switched positions with their partner and the team says stop.

8. Let the team try to decrease their time until they are satisfied.
9. **Answer any and all questions by simply repeating the instructions:**
 - ✓ "The rules are to touch the pad and
 - ✓ switch positions with your partner."
(FYI: a team of 20 can easily do this in under five seconds with several different solutions)



Variations

- ✓ You may have some people blindfolded.
- ✓ Silence some of the people.
- ✓ Silence the first person to speak, which is many times the leader of the group.
- ✓ Choosing a leader before the event starts can lead to interesting decision processes.
- ✓ Have two people from the team observe the group and take notes on what they see.
- ✓



Dynamics to Watch For:

- Teams trying the same bad idea over and over.
- Good ideas that are shot down before they are given a chance. How does the person respond to being shot down? Does anyone in the group speak up?
- Increasing levels of creativity.



Questions for Group Discussion

1. How did you come up with your solution? Not the solution itself, but what process did you use to arrive at it?
 2. Were some good ideas overlooked? Are there other areas in life where you think good ideas are being overlooked or not even considered?
 3. How do you feel about your final time compared to your first time, and what does it take for a team to improve so much?
 4. What implied rules kept you from finding the best solution? Are there other implied rules at work and in your home life that prevent you from being your best?
-



Tips and Tricks from Our Professional Facilitators

The team WILL ask you to give them direction and ask you for permission to do certain things. For example, “Do we have to stand in a circle?” DO NOT give any other direction other than the two rules. Make the group think outside the box on their own.

If they ask what is the fastest you have ever seen, tell them under 10 seconds with a group of 35. See if the group then measures themselves against that ‘record’ of 10 seconds. Who are they comparing themselves to and why?

If they come in under 10 seconds they will get very excited and claim to have set a new ‘World Record’. When you tell them that, while they have not set a new ‘World Record’, it is a new record for them. Why must they compare themselves to the entire world to be satisfied? This opens a whole area for dialogue should you wish to discuss it.

In fact, we have seen a group now do this in less than 1 second. A third grade elementary class, working within the parameters of the rules that realized the ‘switching positions’ did not have to mean ‘changing places’. See below.

How do groups do this so quickly?

The fastest solution is to have everyone hold the Don't Touch Me pad and simply change positions, i.e. thumbs up vs. thumbs down. If your partner is thumbs up, then you are thumbs down. Then 'switch positions' at the same time.

Another fast way to do it is to have the group stand in two lines facing each other. One person runs down the center holding the pad while everyone touches it as they run past. Then they change spots by stepping across to the other line. This can be done.



Get It Together



Purpose

The purpose of this exercise is to practice clear communication and learn to trust team members during challenging and confusing times. The keys to developing that trust will be uncovered.

In organizations, workers are often considered the students and administrators their coaches. This event will remind all participants what it feels like to be in the other role and should lend insight into how to improve the relationship between manager and employee.



Length of Exercise and Short Agenda

Total time needed is approximately 30 to 45 minutes and should not exceed 60 minutes. The duration depends largely upon how quickly your group accomplishes the task and how much discussion is generated.

- 5 Min. Introduce activity & cover ground rules (if any)
- 15 Min. Activity
- 20 Min. Group discussion
- 5 Min. Wrap up and set expectations – Miracle 10%

The discussion is the most important piece of this agenda as that is where the knowledge learned in the activity is transferred back to life, work, etc.



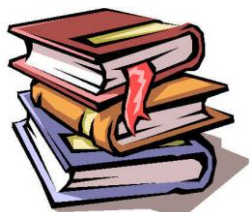
Safety Tips

Remind people to move slowly and carefully inside the circle and be aware of other moving bodies and any obstacles on the ground.



Equipment You Will Need

- One 60 foot circle
- 8 Blindfolds
- 8 colored rings with 8 matching colored balls.
- One stuff sack (container that will hold all eight balls)



Storyline

You have been chosen to handle the finances of a large multi-national conglomerate.

You must consult with your guiding investors and consolidate their resources to get a better understanding of everything they have.

Once consolidated, you must reallocate the resources to the appropriate locations. Make sure your resources do not collide in the process.



Setup

1. Set out the 60-foot circle and place the stuff sack in the center.
2. Place the eight colored rings within the 60-foot circle and put the matching ball in each colored ring.
3. Have the group partner off and blindfold one member of each pair.
4. Tell each sighted partner which ball his or her partner is being sent to retrieve. The further the ball, the more difficult the exercise.
5. Only blindfolded people may enter the circle.
6. First challenge: The sighted people will talk their

blindfolded partners into the circle, have them take their assigned ball out of the colored ring, place it in the stuff sack in the middle, and then exit the circle. They must do all of this without touching another person.

7. Second challenge: Once all the balls are in the stuff sack and all the people have left the circle, partners are to switch blindfolds and be guided into the circle. Blindfolded participants must remove a ball from the center circle and return it to the corresponding colored webbing loop. Participants will not know which color of ball they choose therefore they will not know where to head and must rely on their partners' directions.
8. Give the team 10 minutes to complete the two challenges.



Variations

Have each person place more than one ball.

Make the circle REALLY big by tying the circle from another activity and this event circle together.

Have each sighted person guide more than one blindfolded participant.

To make it more difficult, tell the sighted persons that their feet must remain planted and they may not move from their spot.

Play music in the background to increase the difficulty of communicating. The louder the music, the more difficult the task.

Competition: To create a competitive environment, tell the group that time ends when someone exits the circle.

Collaboration: Tell the group the goal is to get all of the balls into the bag and then taken out of the bag and back to the respective colored ring. They must do this as fast as they can. What inevitably happens is the pairs compete to be the first finished even though you

have made it clear that it is a collaborative goal and of course the clock does not stop until ALL people are out of the circle.

As pairs complete the task and sit back to watch others, suggest that if they use all the resources at their disposal the task will be finished quicker. Depending on your rules, the coaches may not be able to move but if he or she helped the person closest, everything would move much faster. The trick is to figure out how and when to take over communication from one another.

Small groups:

Have one person be the 'Manager' and blindfold the rest of the participants. The Manager must direct all of the people in the center of the circle. Change managers after the first task and then use some of the variations until all participants have had a chance to manage. This fosters awareness of how hard it is to manage many people at once.



Dynamics to Watch For:



-
- Noise level and tone of voice.
 - Frustration and commitment.
 - Different styles that each pair develops. What does work and what doesn't?

-
1. What do you think was the most critical element for success in this experience?
 2. What are some of the things that made this event challenging and how did you work around them?

Questions for Group Discussion



Tips and Tricks from Our Professional Facilitators

3. What did you learn from this event you feel could help you be a better team member or improve the team itself?
4. Do you see any correlations between this activity and what the group faces on a regular basis?

If you have a smaller group and want to significantly increase the difficulty tell the coaches they have five seconds to memorize the layout of the circle and then they must turn around.

This increases the difficulty of communication – As a coach, you now have to yell to be heard and you and your partner must interact more to keep in touch with where he or she is in relation to the colored balls.

Group Juggling



Purpose

Most of our jobs involve heavy amounts of juggling. We also come up against significant barriers, which must be broken through in order to increase performance. In this event participants will juggle as many items, as fast as possible, without dropping them.

This team building activity simulates a working environment where chaos rules, people are going many different directions, and lots of energy and resources are used to keep all the plates spinning.

Participants identify what is needed to break through self-imposed limitations, think creatively, and focus on the most efficient way to complete tasks.



Length of Exercise and Short Agenda

Total time needed is approximately 30 to 45 minutes and should not exceed 60 minutes. The duration depends largely upon how quickly your group accomplishes the task and how much discussion is generated.

- 5 Min. Introduce activity & cover ground rules (if any)
- 15 Min. Activity
- 20 Min. Group discussion
- 5 Min. Wrap up and set expectations – Miracle 10%

The discussion is the most important piece of this agenda as that is where the knowledge learned in the activity is transferred back to life, work, etc.



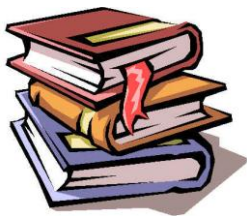
Safety Tips

- Make sure everyone tosses the ball underhand – look at your teammate when throwing and catching.
- Make sure all objects are soft (if you add any) and will not hurt someone if (when) contact is made.
- Encourage participants not to toss the object near the face of the receiver.



Equipment You Will Need

- 10 – 15 soft objects of different size, weight, and shape, such as:
 - Nerf balls
 - Koosh balls
 - Stuffed toys
 - Beach balls
 - Tape balls
 - Tennis balls
 - Footbags
 - Rubber chicken



Storyline

It is the end of the quarter and there are many things to be done before the end of the day. You have a number of projects that must be passed to other people in order to be completed. You have decided as a group to get together in one room and try to complete the tasks more efficiently.

Alternative

You have a mountain of paperwork that must be signed by your colleagues, supervisors, and manager. Your work group begins the traditional end-of-the-quarter crunch session and attempts to complete all the tasks before it in one tremendous, concentrated effort.



Setup

1. Have participants arrange themselves in a circle an arm's length apart.
2. Everyone puts up a hand and you throw the first object to a person across the circle from you. This person puts his or her hand down and then throws the object to another person in the circle. Each person continues to toss the object to another person who still has his or her hand up. Make sure the participants remember whom they threw the object to as the group is establishing a pattern to use for the rest of the exercise.
3. When the last person to have his or her hand up receives the object, he or she throws it back to you and the pattern is finalized.
4. Test the pattern one time to make certain everyone knows and remembers it.
5. Begin the pattern again, but add a couple of new objects and let the circle finish. Note how long it takes the group to complete the pattern.
6. Continue to add objects as you see fit. The quicker the group is able to keep up with the objects, the quicker you should add more objects. Once you have added all the objects you wish, tell the group you are going to time their effort.
7. After you time them once, tell the group to try and beat their record by 25%. Encourage them to brainstorm and strategize ways that might help them become faster.
 - i. If they beat their time by 25%, praise them and tell them to beat it by another 25%. If they did not beat their time, encourage them and ask them to try again.
 - ii. Either way, this time throw in the rubber chicken as the last item.
8. Sitting down on the floor, if possible, is a nice way to facilitate the debrief and finish the exercise.



Variations

- ✓ Have the participants bring gloves (medical gloves, mittens, ski gloves, knitted mittens, etc...) to use as throwing objects. Even the most athletic person will be humbled in the task.
 - ✓ Tell participants to use their non-dominant hand to throw and catch.
 - ✓ Have the participants say their name as they receive the object.
 - ✓ Have the participants say the name of the person they are passing the object to.
 - ✓ After establishing a pattern, reverse the order and see how it affects the process.
 - ✓ Continue to reverse the order of passing by yelling 'Switch!' during the middle of throwing and see how often the group can switch and still control the objects.
 - ✓ If you want to slow down the speed of the activity, use one or two beach balls.
 - ✓ Instead of throwing the objects, try bouncing them to the next person instead (Of course the objects you use must bounce!)
 - ✓ Substitute small water balloons on a hot summer day, outdoors. It is great fun!
 - ✓ Add a ball called a 'Rumor' that can go to anyone at anytime and usually at blinding speed. This is particularly fun if you are using a variation where people are calling out names.
-



Dynamics to Watch For:

- ✓ Watch for group frustration when there is no improvement.
- ✓ Watch the group and make sure the balls do not start flying around too wildly.
- ✓ Does the group only try to get faster, or do they stop to plan a little before beginning again?
- ✓ Does a leader emerge and is there space within the group plan for a leader?



Questions for Group Discussion

1. Which objects were easiest to catch?
2. Which items were dropped most often?
3. What is the maximum number of objects “projects” your team could handle at one time?
4. Was it easy to concentrate during this activity?
5. Were you pleased with the performance of the person tossing the objects to you?
6. What would have improved the efficiency of this task?
7. If you tried to switch, how difficult was it to change the pattern you were used to?
8. Were there any problems associated with switching?
9. Are there times at work when you are required to juggle many items?
10. What happens when someone drops the ball and a task you were responsible for is not completed?
11. When something strange, like the chicken, is thrown at you, how do you react? Why?
12. What can we learn from this exercise?
13. What is one idea you will take away from this exercise and apply at work or home?



Tips and Tricks from Our Professional Facilitators

Keep the chicken hidden until you throw it into the circle on the last round. This is really quite funny and the activity will end with everyone laughing. If they see it, it will ruin the surprise.

Remind participants to "Think Outside the Box". Tell the group to not place constraints on themselves that are not part of the juggling instructions.

There are an optimum number of balls a group can handle before productivity decreases (about one item for every three participants).

Focus on how individual increase overall productivity.

Encourage participants to practice and note how individual skill improvements increase productivity.

During debriefing, you may want to throw the chicken to whoever is talking to keep the discussion light.

If you need additional objects think about beanbags, plastic fruit, inflatable pool toys, pillows, and even rolled up socks.

You might want to consider the members of your group before attempting to juggle anything unusual, like a giant plastic spider, rubber snake, or other object that might be offensive.

Have You Ever?



Purpose

This event is designed to get the group interacting, having fun and is traditionally an icebreaker.

Great opportunity to notice similarities and commonalities.

Set tone for the rest of the day.



Length of Exercise and Short Agenda

Total time is roughly 10 to 15 minutes and should not exceed 25 minutes. This depends largely upon how quickly your group accomplishes the task and how much discussion is generated.

- 5 Min. Introduce Activity & Cover Ground Rules, if any
- 10 Min. Activity
- 5 Min. Group Discussion
- 5 Min. Wrap up and Set Expectations – Miracle 10%

The discussion is the most important piece of this agenda as that is where the knowledge learned in the activity is transferred back to life, work, etc.



Safety Tips

- Emphasize **NO RUNNING!!**
- Be sure participants don't hurt themselves or others trying to change positions.
- If using newspaper or construction paper (be conscious of slippage)
- Make sure the area is clear and aware of any possible obstacles or obstructions that are potential safety hazards.



Equipment You Will Need

“Stepping Stone” one for each participant. (Alternative material use: newspaper, construction paper, tape)

Place “stepping stones” in a large circle, with one “stepping stone” in the middle.

Each participant will stand on one stone (one person will start in the middle)

Alternative Materials:

- Newspaper
- Construction paper
- Tape (mark ‘X’ for each participant)



Setup

1. Have the entire team stand on a “stepping stone”, one per person, all facing the center. One person, usually the facilitator will stand on the “stepping stone” in the center referred to as the “hot stone”.
2. **Whoever is on the “Hot stone”** will ask the question to the rest of the team:
 - Have you ever gone sky diving?
 - Have you ever been to Niagara Falls?
 - Have you ever had a dog?
 - Have you ever swum in the ocean?
 - Have you ever rock climbed?
 - Have you ever ridden on a motorcycle?
 - Have you ever to the top of the Sears Tower in Chicago?

Make sure questions are appropriate for the group!!

If the answer is “yes” then you must step off your stone and find another stone.

Condition: You cannot go to the stone next to the stone previously stood on.

One person will end up on the “Hot stone”.
Repeat step 2.



Dynamics to Watch For:

- Notice the energy of the group.
 - Type of questions being asked (safe questions, out box questions, personal or impersonal)
 - The groups level sharing.
-



Questions for Group Discussion

1. What did you notice?
 2. What new things did you learn through this activity?
 3. Was anybody surprised by what you learned, Why?
 4. Do you see any similarity between this activity and your interactions at work?
-

Knot A Team



Purpose

This exercise will bring group members closer together as it involves close physical proximity as well as interdependence among participants.

Being physically close creates the setting for cohesiveness and teamwork and helps to break down the invisible walls people build around themselves.

The tools it will take to unravel the knot are the same tools the team will need to overcome the challenges they will face in work and life.



Length of Exercise and Short Agenda

Total time needed is approximately 30 to 45 minutes and should not exceed 60 minutes. The duration depends largely upon how quickly your group accomplishes the task and how much discussion is generated.

- 5 Min. Introduce activity & cover ground rules (if any)
- 15 Min. Activity
- 20 Min. Group discussion
- 5 Min. Wrap up and set expectations – Miracle 10%

The discussion is the most important piece of this agenda as that is where the knowledge learned in the activity is transferred back to life, work, etc.



Safety Tips

- Be sure the participants know they can adjust their grip without letting go. This will avoid twisted wrists and hurt ankles.
- You may need to spot the team if it looks like they are losing their balance.

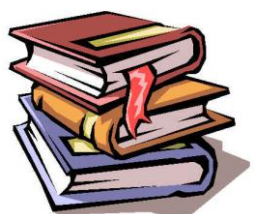


Equipment You Will Need

16 pieces of rope, 2-3 feet long if you purchased materials from Reparior.

Materials that work:

- ✓ 3/8" rope, purchased from a building supply store, cut into 2 to 3 foot sections; one for each person.
- ✓ You can use almost any kind of rope, but too thin or too large makes it more difficult. The thicker the rope, the longer the lengths should be.



Storyline

You and your group have been hand-selected to solve the company's latest problem <insert relevant problem>.

While you have no experience and we can allocate no resources to help you accomplish your task, the company has the utmost faith you can solve the problem before you leave for the weekend!



Setup

1. Have group members stand in a circle facing each other.
2. Give each person one piece of rope.
3. Instruct them to hold onto one end of the rope and give the other end to someone across from them. Make sure you do not give your rope to the person whose rope you are holding.
4. Without letting go of the ropes, have them untie the team knot. They may adjust their grip but they cannot let go of the rope.



Variations

- ✓ Have the team, work in small groups and progressively try the knot in larger teams.
- ✓ Try this event without the ropes, just holding hands.
- ✓ Try the exercise in silence; it may be easier.
- ✓ Place a time restriction on the group. The shorter the amount of time, the more stressful it will become. However, 10 minutes is a good timeframe.



Dynamics to Watch For:

- Frustration levels and the cause.
- Who emerges as the leader(s) and does the role change as the problem develops and changes.
- Are participants having fun or are some people not engaged?
- If you have two teams, are they helping each other or trying to sabotage the other team?



Questions for Group Discussion

1. What were some of the factors limiting your ability to help? Do you notice them in other areas of your life (or work)?
2. If you were frustrated, what caused it and how did you overcome it?
3. As the knot changed and you faced toward the group, or away from the group, did that change your participation? If so, why?
4. Did the team stop to plan any strategy before attempting the task? Why or why not? Would that have helped? Do you see this same pattern at work, where you jump in too quickly without planning?
5. What 'knot' exists at work that requires the entire group to work together to solve? Are you solving it?
6. What are three words that come to mind relating to this event? Why those words?



Tips and Tricks from Our Professional Facilitators

- To test to make sure the ropes are all going to a different person, start with one person and have them gently tug on one of the ropes they are holding with their left hand. If there is a complete circle, they will eventually receive a gentle tug on the other rope in their right hand.
- Placing restrictions on the group lessens the chance for overall success, but creates a much greater learning opportunity. Additionally, restrictions may be more realistic. This is certainly the case with time restrictions. When at work do we have plenty of time to do anything?
- If you do place a time restriction make sure you have an idea of how to debrief the failure to achieve the goal after the exercise is over. Another variation on this is to tell the group they will receive a 'bonus' if they can finish under 'X' minutes. Be sure to have some candy, or something as the bonus.

Knot or Not A Knot



Purpose

Most of our jobs involve a heavy amount of decision making. Many of us make decisions that affect one person to thousands of people everyday. As most of us make decisions we tend to decide based on our own personal perceptions.

This team building activity simulates how we make decisions when given time and when we are under a time crunch. This activity will challenge your group to make a decision and stand by it, understand and accept the decisions of others, and see the whole picture and not just the so called “critical information”.

Participants identify what is needed to break through self-imposed limitations, think creatively and focus on the most efficient way to come to a decision.



Length of Exercise and Short Agenda

Total time is roughly 30 to 45 minutes and should not exceed 60 minutes. This depends largely upon how quickly your group accomplishes the task and how much discussion is generated.

- 5 Min. Introduce Activity & Cover Ground Rules, if any
- 15 Min. Activity
- 20 Min. Group Discussion
- 5 Min. Wrap up and Set Expectations – Miracle 10%

The discussion is the most important piece of this agenda as that is where the knowledge learned in the activity is transferred back to life, work, etc.



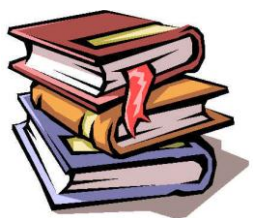
Safety Tips

- Make sure the participants do not jump over or touch the rope when it is being pulled.
 - This activity can be very intense so please be cautious of name calling, putdowns, and other forms of negative actions.
-



Equipment You Will Need

At least 40 feet of 8-12mm rope. It is important to use a thick rope that does not fray easily.



Storyline

You are at a very critical point in a major project and the group must come to decision. The decision will affect the organization as a whole from the very bottom all the way to the top. It is up to each individual to decide what is best for the organization.

Alternative

It is the end of the quarter and there are many critical projects that need to be done before the end of the day. You have decided as a group to get together in one room and try to decide which projects are the most important. A decision must be made quickly and efficiently.



Setup

1. You will need one other person to help pull the ends of the rope.
2. You need to pile up the rope in the middle of the floor with two feet of rope between the ends (of the rope) and the pile.
3. You will give the story line and then say this exact statement only once, "*The challenge for your group is to decide when the rope is pulled tight whether there will be a knot in the rope or whether there will be no knot*". **(Tell the group to listen up because you are only going to say this once).**
4. Ask them if they think there will be a knot in the rope when pulled tight to stand on one side of the rope and if they think there will not be a not to stand on the other side of the rope. Once the group is divided ask them, "Are you okay with your decision?" If not they can move to the other side at this time. Only give them a few seconds to do this.
5. Once everyone is happy you and the volunteer can begin to very slowly pull the ends of the rope out. While you are pulling the rope it is the job of each side to try and convince the other side that their decision is the right one.
6. When you have pulled about a 1/3 of the rope out you stop (this should take 2-3 minutes, so pull the rope slowly).
7. At this point ask the group members if based on the evidence, the current state of the rope, and the other side's argument if they have changed their minds and would like to switch sides. Give them a full minute to do this.

Once a full minute has gone by make sure that everyone is happy with their decisions. Next tell the group that for the next 30 seconds they can switch sides at will. During this time you will be pulling the rope out slowly. After 30 seconds is up everyone must stay on their side.

Finish pulling the rope tight and see if it is in knot or not a knot.

Look at the group discussion questions to provide meaning for this activity.



Variations

- After the first time pulling the rope (first 1/3) you can give the sides 3 minutes or so to come up with a presentation to the other group highlighting their points or reasons for their decision.
- You can make it so participants can only decide once at the very beginning. This will allow them to see the consequences of making a uniformed decision.
- You can make it so the participants can move freely from one side to the other throughout the activity, except for the last 1/3 of the rope.



Dynamics to Watch For:

Every now and again a group will catch that the challenge is for the “GROUP” to decide. Do not prevent this from happening or think that the group has “Got It” and the activity is over. Remember there are numerous chances for individuals to change their minds. If the group stays together the whole time be sure to congratulate them. You can follow up with the following questions:

1. What made you come to a decision as a group? If it was an individual who caught on to the word Group, ask the others why they followed that person.
2. Did anybody upon hearing the challenge think that the rope was going to turn out opposite from which the group decided? If so why did you go along with the group’s decision? Why did you not stand up for what you thought was right?
3. What does it mean to stick together as a group even when the outcome is negative? When the outcome is positive?
4. What can we as individuals take away from this activity? As a group?



Questions for Group Discussion

Be sure to look at the additional pages for more ideas on good questions to ask. Have this material in front of you when you are facilitating the debrief.

1. Who in the group feels they were successful in this activity? Why?
 2. This question must be asked first in order to bring out the point of the activity.
 3. Does anyone remember what the challenge for the group was?
 - Have a couple people give their interpretations of the challenge. Then tell the group that nobody was successful. They will all look at you in amazement and ask why? Repeat to the group the exact statement you made earlier *“the challenge for your group is to decide when the rope is pulled tight whether there will be a knot in the rope or whether there will be no knot”*.
 4. Would anyone like to clarify why no one was successful?
 5. Why did you automatically make the decision about the rope as an individual instead of making the decision as a group?
 6. How many of you switched sides? Why?
 7. How did it make you feel when the other side was trying to convince you that your decision is wrong?
 8. What do you think the point of this activity is?
 9. Does it matter when making a decision that you are right?
 10. What matters more when making a decision? Being right or Have group support.
 11. If you said having group support and you were right about the rope activity, then why did cheer upon your so called success?
 12. What does this activity mean to you?
 13. What does this activity mean to you and your view of group decision making?
-



Tips and Tricks from Our Professional Facilitators

- The key to this activity is in the statement *“the challenge for your group is to decide when the rope is pulled tight whether there will be a knot in the rope or whether there will be no knot”* Do not overstate or over-exaggerate this sentence.
 - Some participants will claim that you tricked them or mislead them. Ask them why they feel this way. As the facilitator what do you think about this?
 - Do not let the participants see you set the rope up!!!
 - When setting up the rope do not initially manipulate it so there is or is not a knot. It does not matter. Just make sure that the two ends are separated from the bundle and on opposite sides from one another.
 - This activity is a very hands off one for you as the facilitator. Let the group do what they need to do as long as it is within the scope of the activity.
-

Learning Maze



Purpose

The Learning Maze applies to every area of our lives and the lessons each group learns are always different.

The maze helps groups identify how the team treats mistakes (beeps) and who discovers when a mistake is made. This event requires teams to step into the unknown, which is a necessary process for growing and moving ahead, and the only question they can answer is how well they are doing in the process.

This is a superb event for uncovering team processes as well as discussing trust and support issues..



Length of Exercise and Short Agenda

Total time needed is approximately 30 to 45 minutes and should not exceed 60 minutes. The duration depends largely upon how quickly your group accomplishes the task and how much discussion is generated.

- 5 Min. Introduce activity & cover ground rules (if any)
- 15 Min. Activity
- 20 Min. Group discussion
- 5 Min. Wrap up and set expectations – Miracle 10%

The discussion is the most important piece of this agenda as that is where the knowledge learned in the activity is transferred back to life, work, etc



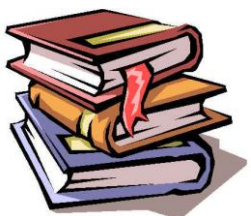
Safety Tips

If a person is going to fall, allow them to step off the stone and regain their balance.



Equipment You Will Need

- 48 Learning Maze stones
- Answer Grids
- Horn or your voice



Storyline

You have decided to join Indiana Jones on his quest for the Golden Goose. You have found the secret temple and you must now make your way across the magic Learning Maze.

To discover the correct path you must step onto a stone. If that stone makes a creaking sound you must quickly move back and someone new will try a stone. You may not skip over stones or mark the stones in any way.

Once you have found the path you will all make your way across to the temple and onto a life of luxury.



Setup

1. Before the team arrives, lay the stones down in six rows with eight stones in each row. Use the answer grid to guide you.
2. Participants must find the correct path through the Learning Maze. Have the team start at one end of the stones. By trial and error they must find the stones that do not beep and discover the correct path.
3. One person begins by stepping onto a stone. If there is no “beep”, that person continues stepping onto stones until a beep is found. Participants may only step on stones that are directly adjacent to the stone they are on – no skipping stones.
4. When a person steps on a stone that beeps, he or she must step back off the grid being careful to follow the same path.
5. If the person accidentally steps on a “beep” on the path back, he or she is frozen until the team sings them ‘happy birthday’ (or some other song). This unfreezes them and they can continue off the stones.
6. After one person has stepped on the grid, every person on the team must make an attempt before the rotation begins again.
7. Only one person may be touching the grid at a time.
8. When the correct path has been discovered then more than one person may be on the grid at a time.
9. Group members cannot use props or markers to help them remember the path.
10. The next stone on the path will always be one of the stones touching the last good stone. (It will not always be a forward step though!)
11. Give the group a time limit, but vary it with the size of the group.



Variations

- ✓ Give the team time to plan but then silence them.
- ✓ Have some of the members blindfolded.
- ✓ Divide the group into two teams and have them start at opposite ends of the grids and moving through the stones at the same time. You will need another facilitator helping you for this one.



Dynamics to Watch For:

- How do people decide which stone to step on next? Do they solicit help, does the group vote, etc...?
- Different ways that team members support the person on the Learning Maze and the trust that is developed.
- Perspective issues that may arise. Be aware of the way it influences the tone of the team.



Questions for Group Discussion

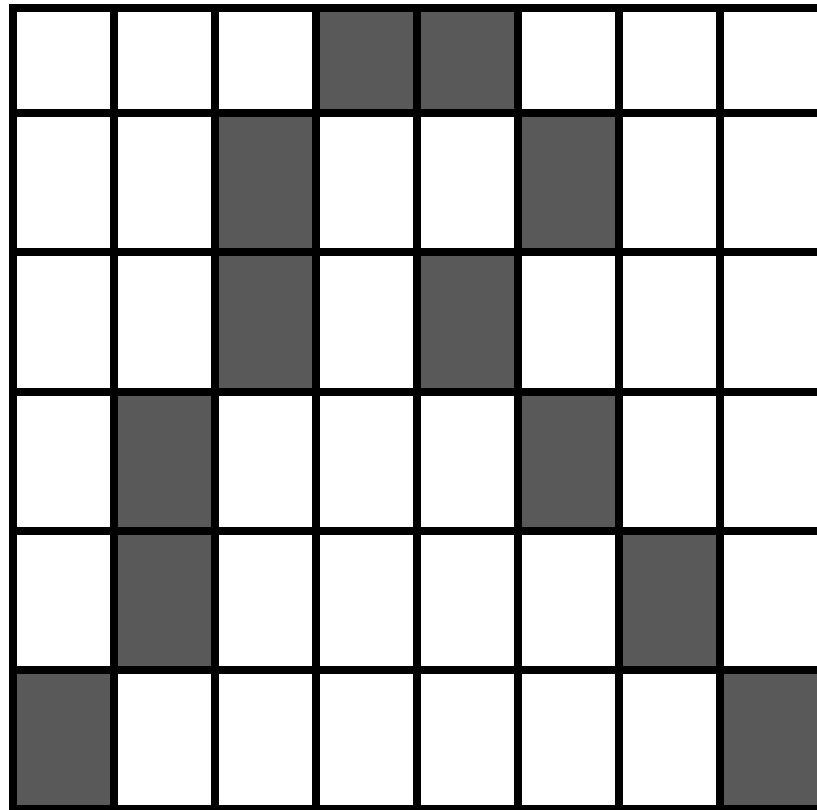
1. Why did you try to avoid the beeps when the beeps were what guided you to the correct path? In what other ways do we avoid the mistakes and potential learning opportunities?
2. What was more important, the process or the result? Explain.
3. What could the beeps represent in real life and who or what triggers them? Explain.
4. What is your view of the people who find beeps and those who make beeps?



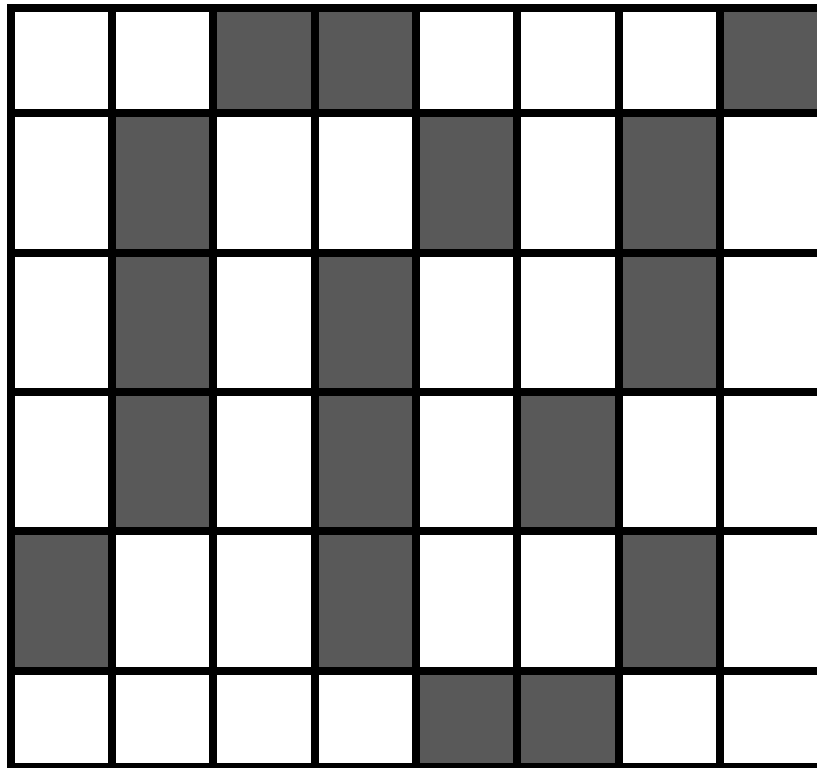
Tips and Tricks from Our Professional Facilitators

- Instead of mandating that a song be used to unfreeze a participant when they have stepped off the path while returning to the start, let the participant decide whether he or she wants the group to endure something or just take a time penalty instead. How far is the person/group willing to go to achieve the goal?
-

**Sample
Maps**



Sample Map 2



Magic Carpet



Purpose

The purpose of the exercise is to inspire team members' ownership and accountability for change. This is a great opportunity for team members to voice to the rest of the team, their commitment to change.

The challenge itself is simple, fun, and a great physical metaphor.

Use this as a fun and powerful event to do near the end of a program when participants are beginning to see the value of their own learning.



Length of Exercise and Short Agenda

Total time needed is approximately 30 to 45 minutes and should not exceed 60 minutes. The duration depends largely upon how quickly your group accomplishes the task and how much discussion is generated.

- 5 Min. Introduce activity & cover ground rules (if any)
- 15 Min. Activity
- 20 Min. Group discussion
- 5 Min. Wrap up and set expectations – Miracle 10%

The discussion is the most important piece of this agenda as that is where the knowledge learned in the activity is transferred back to life, work, etc.



Safety Tips

- You may have to spot if people pick each other up or lean out in precarious ways.
 - Remind everyone to be careful and go slowly!
-

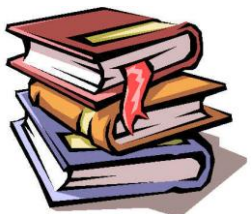


Equipment You Will Need

One or more 'Carpets' that are roughly 6' x 6' for a group of 15 participants.

Materials that will work:

- Canvas
 - Sheet – will most likely get ruined
 - Blanket – fleece blankets are nice
 - Tarp – be careful no one slips
 - Heavy outdoor fabric works well.
-



Storyline

Your team has been stranded on a desert island for three months. You have decided to make an attempt to sail for the mainland. The only floatation you can find is a giant Carpet.

You have discovered the Carpet will support you for 15 minutes. After 15 minutes, you must turn it over and it will float for another 15 minutes and so on.

None of your teammates can swim so you must stay on the Carpet during its rotation.



Setup

1. One at a time, have each team member state publicly how he or she is going to be different after today (at work, school, home, etc), and what he or she needs from the team to make the change. This is his or her new carpet. After the statement, the team member steps onto the big 'Carpet.' If necessary, model clapping and appreciation to encourage the team to celebrate each person's acknowledge of his or her new Carpet.
2. After everyone has spoken, congratulate every member for his or her declaration and remind the team members how powerful and exciting life can be when one "turns over the Magic Carpet"!
3. Tell the team they must turn over the Carpet they are standing on as a symbol of real-life change.
4. The team has 15 minutes. No one may step off the Carpet at any time or the task starts over. Go have fun and be safe.



Variations

- ✓ You may have more than one Carpet, so members can use other these other Carpets to help with the turning.
- ✓ You may choose to have members share their new Carpet after the event is complete.
- ✓ During the event, you may want to silence one or all of the members of the group.



Dynamics to Watch For:

- Is each person clear about his or her new Carpet?
- Leadership development and team frustration levels.
- Creativity. If you have more than one Carpet, do participants consider using other teams' Carpets?



Questions for Group Discussion

7. How did you feel at the beginning of the event in contrast with the end?
8. Who came up with the ideas to overcome the challenge?
9. Are there any solutions you see now that you did not see before?
10. What was the most difficult part about this event and how did you overcome it?
11. Is 'turning over the Magic Carpet', or making change TRULY possible? What would have to happen in order for the change to be permanent?
12. What quality from this activity could you use to help turn over your real life 'Carpet'?
13. What are some examples at work and in life where you have made drastic change and stuck with it?



Tips and Tricks from Our Professional Facilitators

- Be sure to encourage the team to celebrate each person's declaration.
 - Follow the event with an action plan on how each individual and team will change. Action plans typically include follow-up and measurable goals. If you decide to do this, be sure to allow enough time.
 - This event is fun and simple, but the real learning and discovery is in the dialogue afterwards. Be sure to allow enough time to let everyone discuss change in their own lives and how it affects them.
-

Let Go My Ego



Purpose

The power that each person has to influence success is made perfectly clear in this activity.

Participants must overcome frustration and resist the temptation to blame each other in order to accomplish the task. They learn that in the face of challenge it is often easier to sacrifice integrity and end up behaving opposite of their intention. This exercise reveals this tendency in a profound manner and helps participants choose healthier ways of reacting.

The team members must work through frustrations and differences of opinions to solve this magically difficult event. Have fun and don't blame it on My Ego!



Length of Exercise and Short Agenda

Total time needed is approximately 30 to 45 minutes and should not exceed 60 minutes. The duration depends largely upon how quickly your group accomplishes the task and how much discussion is generated.

- 5 Min. Introduce activity & cover ground rules (if any)
- 15 Min. Activity
- 20 Min. Group discussion
- 5 Min. Wrap up and set expectations – Miracle 10%

The discussion is the most important piece of this agenda as that is where the knowledge learned in the activity is transferred back to life, work, etc



Safety Tips

- Be careful when placing the bar down on participants' fingers and be sure you do not hit anyone in the head or eye.
- The bar may go up VERY quickly with some groups. Be prepared to grab it so it does not fall on anyone.
- Emotional safety is paramount. Step in if tempers rise and things get ugly. This rarely happens, but the activity is designed to get people to try to blame others for not accomplishing the task.



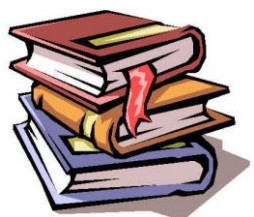
Equipment You Will Need

One 'magic' Ego bar or any lightweight rod, 12 to 20 feet long.

Materials that will work:

- Almost any tent pole will work well and folds up nicely for transport.
- Purchase a wooden dowel from a building supply store. It must be at least one foot long per person, so with a larger group (10+) you will run into transporting problems

The ONLY time the bar will not go up is if you use a bar that is too heavy. For example, you cannot use a solid wood shower curtain rod for a group of 5 people. The bar will NOT go up.



Storyline

It is up to your team to transport a plutonium and helium mixed bar to a safe place. The bar is stabilized by the energy from your bodies. It will remain stable as long as every member is in contact with the bar. If you hold the bar or restrain it with anything more than gravity, it could overheat and explode. It is safest to transport the bar at waist height then lower it from there to the holding place. If the bar rises, it becomes unstable and could explode.



Setup

1. Have the participants (10-20) stand in two rows facing each other. With their index fingers pointing straight across to the person on the other side, have them tell that other person he or she is “Awesome!”
2. Explain the objective of the exercise: The team will transport the magical bar to a designated place on, or just above, the ground. You can use a chair, block, shoe, etc... for a target above the ground.
3. Have participants hold out their index finger at waist height.
4. These are the rules:
 - Each person’s finger must remain in contact with the bar at all times.
 - Only gravity can be used to keep the bar in contact with the fingers.
 - Finger must stay UNDER the bar.
5. When the instructions are clear, place the bar on top of the participants’ outstretched fingers.



Variations

- Blindfold some or all of the participants.
- Silence some of the louder voices.
- Have some of the team observe and switch.
- Once the team has restarted several times, tell them to stop restarting and simply try to drop the bar



Dynamics to Watch For:

- People breaking social rules, cursing, insulting one another, yelling mean things.
- What are people saying and are they listening to each other?
- Level of frustration and what is causing it.
- People blaming each other.
- The changing energy level of the team.
- Cheating. Be sure all participants are in contact with the bar.



Questions for Group Discussion

1. What was your first thought about this event and what do you think about it now?
2. If you were frustrated, what caused it and how did you overcome it?
3. How does what happened relate back to your life at work?
4. Did the team stop to plan any strategy before attempting the task? Why or why not? Would that have helped? Do you see this same pattern at work, where you jump in too quickly without planning?



Tips and Tricks from Our Professional Facilitators

- You may want to stop the group if the yelling and poor communication gets out of hand. Have a short discussion about what constitutes good communication and let them try again.

- Another setup option is to lull the participants into thinking they already have a good handle on communication.

To do this, simply sit them down before the exercise with a sheet of paper and something to write with. Have each participant draw a line down the middle of the piece of paper. Tell them to individually write down all the necessary components for good communication on one half of the sheet. Give them 60 to 90 seconds.

Next, in small groups have them share their lists. If they hear something not on their list already, have them write it on the other side of the paper. Give them 5 minutes to accomplish this.

Have each group read off its master list. Again, if the other groups do not have one of the components of communication on their list, have them write it down.

Now every participant should have the EXACT same list on his or her sheet of paper. Take a minute to discuss whether this is absolutely everything necessary. If the entire group comes up with something new, write it down.

At this point, everyone should be feeling very good about what is necessary for good communication and thinking, “I already know this stuff!”

Start right into the Let Go My Ego exercise and watch the communication breakdown. This will produce a dramatic and memorable effect as well as lots of material for discussion after the event is over.

- If you see someone cheating, you may or may not

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want to broach the subject of integrity. This can be dangerous and should never be directed at ONE individual. Use neutral statements addressed to the entire group. See the facilitative tools below.

- Someone will ask you why the event is so difficult. There are two parts to the answer:

The goal of lowering the bar is difficult because each individual is trying to stay connected to the bar with his or her finger. If one person moves slightly faster than another, the slower person will become disconnected. They then bring their finger back up to the bar, which makes someone else disconnect. The cycle continues until the bar is above everyone's head.

What compounds the difficulty and creates the frustration is that each individual is fulfilling his or her responsibility. Everyone is trying to lower the bar and stay connected at the same time. The danger in this is the thought that, "If I am doing my job, it MUST be someone else's fault!" This is what leads to the blaming and negative communication cycle.

Have fun and don't blame it on My Ego!

Orange Ball Race



Purpose

This exercise shows the necessity of each person's role and responsibility in order for the team to succeed.

Additionally, the team will see the benefit of efficiency and how each person is a 'link in the chain'.



Length of Exercise and Short Agenda

Total time is roughly 30 to 45 minutes and should not exceed 60 minutes.

5 Min. Introduce Activity and Cover Ground Rules, if any

15 Min. Activity

20 Min. Group Discussion

10 Min. Wrap up and Set Expectations – Miracle 10%

20 Min. Group Discussion



Equipment You Will Need

Use the items in the Group Juggling Kit.

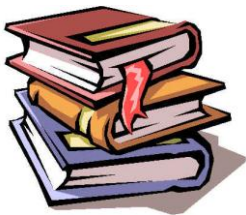
Alternatively:

20 oranges per team (or enough oranges for each person). We like to use oranges because then you can eat them if you want and dropping them will not bruise them too badly in the short term.



Safety Tips

Watch that teams don't throw the oranges or balls in a dangerous way.



Storyline

The earth is about to be hit by the next asteroid and destroyed. Only one ship will be able to take off before the asteroid hits.

You must load your items (oranges) into your ship as fast as possible. If you drop any of your items you must start over.

The first team to load their items successfully will survive.



Setup

1. 10-20 participants on each team.
 2. Each team has 20 oranges that must end up in the team's orange box at the end of the line.
 3. Each person must touch the orange.
 4. If an orange is dropped, it must start over with the first person.
 5. The 3rd person on your team must pass the orange over their left shoulder to the 4th person.
 6. The 5th and 6th persons must use his/her left hand only.
 7. Teams will have will have five minutes to strategize and plan.
 8. Winning team survives and wins a prize!
-



Variations

- Blindfold some or all of the people.
- Silence some of the louder voices, or potentially all of them. This will make strategizing very difficult.
- Give each person a small piece of paper that has his or her role and responsibility on it. They must accomplish their tasks without telling the rest of the team what their person 'agenda' is and/or how it will affect the team.
- Hand each team a sheet of paper that lists the requirements for each team as above and let them



Dynamics to Watch For:

- How the team deals with the different needs and responsibilities.
- How the team sets up their strategy. Do they make a line, circle? Do both teams set up the same way or different?
- Cheating. Don't worry about stopping the team, just note it for later and ask the team about it.



Questions for Group Discussion

1. What was your first thought about this event and what do you think about it now?
2. How did the team deal with the differing responsibilities of each member?
3. How was the planning different for this 'game' versus planning at work?
4. How does what happened relate back to your life at work?



Tips and Tricks from Our Own Facilitation

The more excited and dramatic you are about the prize, the more the group will strive to attain it. This will allow them to let go of their inhibitions and have more fun.

Be sure to give the same prize to both teams.

If you see someone cheating, you may or may not want to breach the subject of integrity. This can be dangerous and should never be directed at ONE individual, but use neutral statements to the entire group. See the facilitative tools below.

Be sure not to make it TOO hard. Generally, the harder it is, the more fun, but we have seen this taken to the extreme.

Many times, when a member of the group is silenced, that person will withdraw and not participate in the strategy discussion. Watch to see if this happens. If so, share your observation with the group and ask how the silenced person felt as they were left out. Back at work, do silent people have a chance to be heard? Does anyone pay attention to him or her?

Perfect Square



Purpose

The Perfect Square is an easy event to facilitate but it is very powerful.

The focus is on leadership skills and the degree of group participation and the exercise will always reveal interesting dynamics and insights that allow participants to learn from one another.

This activity clearly demonstrates interdependence among team members while highlighting how difficult, but important, reaching consensus can be.



Length of Exercise and Short Agenda

Total time needed is approximately 30 to 45 minutes and should not exceed 60 minutes. The duration depends largely upon how quickly your group accomplishes the task and how much discussion is generated.

- 5 Min. Introduce activity & cover ground rules (if any)
- 15 Min. Activity
- 20 Min. Group discussion
- 5 Min. Wrap up and set expectations – Miracle 10%

The discussion is the most important piece of this agenda as that is where the knowledge learned in the activity is transferred back to life, work, etc.



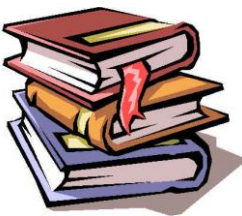
Safety Tips

- Remind people to be careful when picking up the rope so they don't bump heads.
- Watch out for holes in the grass or other items that participants can trip over.



Equipment You Will Need

- 60-foot rope tied together at the ends to form a continuous loop
- Blindfolds for all members of the team
- A flat open space where it is safe for people to move around and form a large square.



Storyline

You are stranded on a desert island. A person on your team has found a magic rope in one of the ancient ruins on the island. When the entire rope is put into the shape of a perfect square and all the members of the team are holding the rope it sends a beam of light into the sky.

In the middle of the night you are awakened by the sound of an airplane flying over. You have no fire to attract the pilots so you hurry to the magic rope and attempt to form the perfect square to create the beam of light and be rescued.

Hurry, the plane will be gone soon.



Setup

1. Place the rope in a pile on the ground and have participants make a circle around it.
2. Instruct everyone to put on a blindfold.
3. Tell the team members the story and have them form a perfect square while holding the rope.
4. Let them they have no time limit to complete the task.
5. When the entire team feels they have completed the task have them place the rope on the ground.
6. Now have them remove their blindfolds and see how they did.



Variations

Have one person remain sighted but he or she cannot touch the rope.

Have the group attempt different shapes.

Have the group step inside the circle, put the rope on the small of their back and step backward until the rope is tight. Then have them put their blindfolds on. This makes the activity slightly easier but is also a bit safer.

Place a time restriction on them. This will help simulate the atmosphere at work – accomplish a difficult task or goal without all the resources (eyesight) available and without the time to strategize the best way to do it. If you do this, allow them to try the event several times and see if they strategize and/or leave their blindfolds off to strategize.



Dynamics to Watch For:

- How the group reacts toward each other if they event takes more time than expected.
- People starting to play or be distracting in some way.
- The quality of the results and how the group comes to an agreement about ending the exercise.
- Many groups find this difficult because all non-verbal communication cues are taken away with the blindfolds. Watch the frustration levels and/or individuals who may be withdrawing from participating.



Questions for Group Discussion

1. What was the quality of your experience and what would have improved it?
2. Was it clear at any point what the strategy was and how did you decide to take action?
3. Are there situations at work similar to the Perfect Square?
4. How can we take what we learned and apply it in everyday life?



Tips and Tricks from Our Professional Facilitators

Do not specify that they have to use the entire rope or that everyone must be involved. Clever groups may tie the rope in a smaller circle to make the task easier.

Most groups do not take off their blindfolds to strategize even though you did not say they couldn't – they assume they should leave them on although it would be much easier to talk without them on. If they do this ask in the debrief, 'What other assumptions do you make that hinder your performance?'

Let them try several times to see if they improve.

River Crossing



Purpose

This is a complex activity that has many different purposes and reveals many behavior patterns.

- It develops support (emotional, content and physical) within the group.
- It helps clarify communication and decision making skills.
- It helps groups to examine how and why leadership shifts during planning and completion of task
- It shows how balancing planning activities with execution helps groups solve problems.

The exercise is a very good metaphor for a 'goal'. At the beginning, each person has the same perspective of the goal – get to the other side. As the participants move into the river their perspective changes dramatically as they may not be able to see an obstacle in the way, or even figure out how to move forward. The way to get to the goal changes, as there are many bumps in the way and groups that persevere, plan, communicate, and support each other are the most successful.



Length of Exercise and Short Agenda

Total time needed is approximately 30 to 45 minutes and should not exceed 60 minutes. The duration depends largely upon how quickly your group accomplishes the task and how much discussion is generated.

- 5 Min. Introduce activity & cover ground rules (if any)
- 15 Min. Activity
- 20 Min. Group discussion
- 5 Min. Wrap up and set expectations – Miracle 10%

The discussion is the most important piece of this agenda as that is where the knowledge learned in the activity is transferred back to life, work, etc.



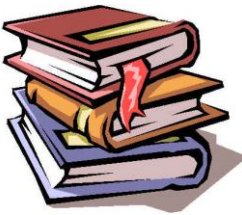
Safety Tips

- If anyone is blindfolded, be sure the team is taking care of that person and coaching him or her while moving.



Equipment You Will Need

- Three Planks: two 4' and one 5' in length
- 10 Mouse Pad 'Rocks'
- Two 20' lengths of rope
- Several Blindfolds



Storyline

You have managed to guide your group through a treacherous swamp and have one last fast-moving river to cross. You can see a few rocks in the river on which you can balance some planks of wood you found. It appears that if you are careful, you just might be able to make it across. If you fall off the planks, you might be able to be rescued, but surely not without injury. To make matters worse, you just heard something in the swamp behind you – you had better get across the river fast!

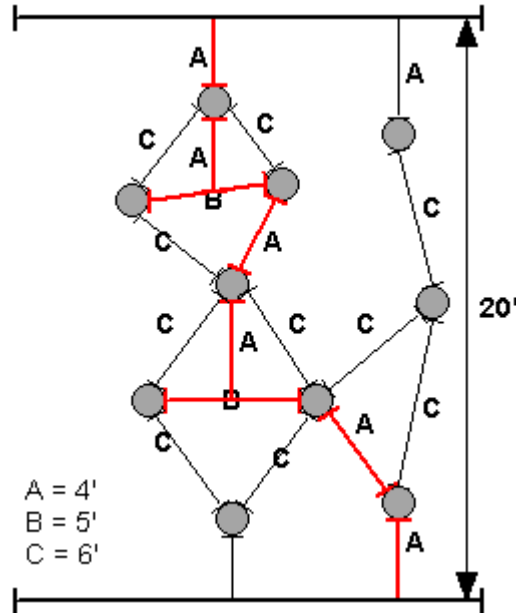
Alternative

Your group was on an overnight retreat; camping on several small islands next to the ocean. In the night, the tide came in and stranded some group members on the different islands. You look around and find a few planks of wood on the main island where most of you slept. It looks like the tide is still rising so you had better hurry or you will be swimming!



Setup

1. Be very careful about the setup of this activity and be sure to do it before the group arrives.
2. Place the 20' ropes at either end of the playing field, 20' apart. This is the river. Set up the mouse pads (rocks) according to the diagram below. If you change the setup, be sure the activity is solvable and that there is only one solution.



3. The red lines in the diagram illustrate the solution.
4. Tell participants to start balancing the planks on the rocks. There is such a small difference in length that it will not be obvious to them which plank to use and which way to go.

The entire group must cross the river at once, which means that the participants must take the planks with them as they go.

During the event, the participants will discover that it is not possible to reach some rocks directly from others (see the third and fifth moves).

Make sure you set up the rocks correctly to ensure this occurs.



Variations

Blindfold and/or silence participants who fall into the river as well as make the group start over. Blindfolding creates an entirely new aspect to the activity, as each blindfolded person must be led across the planks.

For larger groups you can place one member on each one of the 'rocks' and they must be rescued along the way. Use the alternative storyline if you like this variation. Expect this to take longer.

Anyone who steps off the plank and into the river can no longer be used as a resource and is silenced.



Dynamics to Watch For:

Too much time planning and not enough executing.

Does the group realize that their perspective changes as soon as they step onto the 'plank' and into the river?

Watch to see how the group communicates before they begin and how that changes in the middle of the river. Compare the structure and how that affects communication, leadership, etc. In the beginning did they plan in a circle? How did things change when they were lined up on the planks?



Questions for Group Discussion

1. What was the biggest problem experienced during this event?
 2. What did you first think of the exercise and what do you think about it now?
 3. What kind of support did you find was helpful during the activity?
 4. If you were blindfolded, how difficult was it for you to participate? Did you feel supported?
 5. Do you find you need similar support at work or at home?
 6. How can you apply what you learned during this activity on a daily basis?
-



Tips and Tricks from Our Professional Facilitators

The 'planks' come rolled up. Put them in the sun for a few minutes before the activity to help them lay flat and look more like 'planks'.

This activity is fairly complex. Use one or two easier activities before beginning. Also, do not begin this activity late in the program unless you are certain you have time to finish.

Each 'plank' is good for roughly 5 people. If you only have 10 people, only use one 4' and one 5' plank.

Do not allow the group to 'ferry' people from one shore to the other. Make them move into the river together. You may have to emphasize that they may only stay on the shore for a very short time and give them a time limit of 3 minutes. This will also force them to balance strategy with action.

Be very careful about the set up and make sure the 'rocks' are the correct distances. You will need roughly 10 minutes to set up, so the activity is perfect to run after a break.

Search and Rescue



Purpose

The art of cooperation is something we are taught as children but as adults we still have a hard time applying it.

The goal here is to have the entire team demonstrate the power of teamwork and illustrate the interdependence that team members experience.

You may use many variations of this activity to achieve different outcomes.



Length of Exercise and Short Agenda

Total time needed is approximately 30 to 45 minutes and should not exceed 60 minutes. The duration depends largely upon how quickly your group accomplishes the task and how much discussion is generated.

- 5 Min. Introduce activity & cover ground rules (if any)
- 15 Min. Activity
- 20 Min. Group discussion
- 5 Min. Wrap up and set expectations – Miracle 10%

The discussion is the most important piece of this agenda as that is where the knowledge learned in the activity is transferred back to life, work, etc.



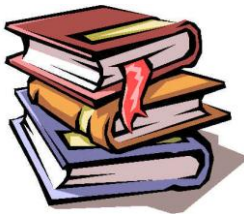
Safety Tips

Be sure people do not grip the rope too tightly or cut off their circulation by wrapping it around their hand.



Equipment You Will Need

- Three 20 foot ropes
- Four Landing Pads
- One ring and hook
- One customized airplane
- One 60 foot circle



Storyline

You are on a rescue mission to the North Pole. There has been an accident and a fishing boat has overturned in the frigid waters of the North Atlantic.

Many of the fishermen have climbed onto the icebergs in the area and are freezing to death.

You must land your rescue plane on each of the icebergs and load the survivors. Ice storms, white outs and extreme winds are common in this area.



Setup

1. Before the team arrives:
 - Layout the 60-foot circle.
 - Thread the three ropes through the ring.
 - Place the ring in the center of the circle with the rope ends extending out in a wagon wheel shape.
 - Attach the plane to the center ring.
 - Spread the landing pads out within the circle
2. Have the team approach the circle and spread out around it.
3. When the team is around the circle, but not spread evenly around yell, "freeze!!"
4. The position of the team members greatly affects the

difficulty of the event.

5. From this moment on, participants cannot move their feet.
6. Instruct the people closest to the ropes extending from the center ring to pick them up.
7. Inform the team they need to lift the airplane and place it on all of the landing pads.
8. They must unhook and re-hook the plane at each of the pads (You may want a time limit).
9. The event is completed when the airplane has been placed on all of the landing pads and returned to the starting position.



Variations

- ✓ You may have more strings going through the ring. This will confuse the system, but include more people at one time.
- ✓ Blindfolding or silencing people creates a new challenge
- ✓ Have the group choose one person to be the leader; however, the leader may not touch any of the props.
- ✓ Give the group a time limit to strategize and complete the task. Start with 10 minutes. In that time they need to rescue as many people as they can. Give each one of the landing pads a different value (# of people) depending upon how difficult it is to land on. The closer the landing pad is to the center, the more difficult it is to land the plane. Time pressure forces the group to choose between the high risk/high reward option (rescuing the most people from the most difficult site) and the low risk/low reward option (rescuing fewer people from easier sites). With a short time frame you can allow the group to run this more than once. Also, the shorter time frame simulates how little time we have to strategize, solve problems, and execute solutions in real life.
- ✓ If you have a larger group, blindfold those participants who are using the ropes to guide the plane. This greatly increases the difficulty of the

activity by adding extra communication stumbling blocks. Be careful when using this variation in combination with the time variation above. You do not want to make it TOO difficult – allow more time if you choose to use both variations together.



Dynamics to Watch For:

- People feeling like they cannot contribute because they do not hold a rope or are not positioned in a key place.
- Frustration levels of the people who are coaching or waiting for the team to make a hookup.
- How the participants respond to changes you make in the game or extra challenges you throw in.
- The different communication styles that are exhibited.



Questions for Group Discussion

1. Find a partner and share with him or her your first reaction to this event and how that reaction influenced the way you participated.
2. What was the one moment during this event that stands out the most? What lesson can we learn from your experience in that moment?
3. How did the quality of your communication affect the outcome and how could it have been improved?
4. (To the individuals not positioned well) How did it feel being in a difficult position?
5. Are there situations at work/life that are similar to Search and Rescue?
6. How can we apply what we learned here in everyday life?



Tips and Tricks from Our Professional Facilitators

- Increase the difficulty by freezing the group while they are in odd positions.
 - Have a pad of paper handy and write down some of the key statements people make during the activity. Share these statements with the group during the debrief to help stimulate discussion. Do not reveal who said what.
-

Supply Chain



Purpose

The purpose of this exercise is to physically demonstrate the metaphor that every member of a team or group is an important “link in the chain”.

This event is also a good way to examine individual team member’s sense of value and accountability to their team.



Length of Exercise and Short Agenda

Total time is roughly 30 to 45 minutes and should not exceed 60 minutes. This depends largely upon how quickly your group accomplishes the task and how much discussion is generated.

- 5 Min. Introduce Activity & Cover Ground Rules, if any
- 15 Min. Activity
- 20 Min. Group Discussion
- 5 Min. Wrap up and Set Expectations – Miracle 10%

The discussion is the most important piece of this agenda as that is where the knowledge learned in the activity is transferred back to life, work, etc.



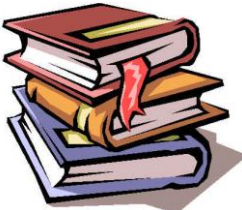
Safety Tips

No sword-fighting!



Equipment You Will Need

- 16 Supply Chains
- 6 Small marbles
- 2 Marble receptacles



Storyline

You are all workers in a gumball factory. If you are going to meet the holiday rush and get your Christmas bonus, you need to cut our production time.

Each step in gumball production is important and can not be eliminated. You must move the gumballs from the loading dock (receptacle) through the stages of production (Supply Chain) and to the other loading dock as quickly as possible.

If a gumball falls and touches the floor, it cannot be sold – return it to the loading dock.

If any person touches a gumball, it is contaminated and cannot be sold.

After a short staff meeting to discuss production, start the gumball production.



Setup

1. Place the receptacles 15 – 30 feet apart and put the six marbles in one receptacle. Place the Supply Chain on the ground in a pile for the team to use when it is ready.
2. The group must transport the marbles from one receptacle to the other, using only the Supply Chain, and without physically touching the marbles.
3. Each member of the team must be responsible for a link and each ball must pass through each person's link before it can be placed in the end receptacle.
4. People cannot move their feet if a marble is touching

their track.

5. If the marble touches the ground or anything other than the link in the process (including bouncing out of the second receptacle), the ball must be returned to the original receptacle.
6. The team will have 15 minutes.



Variations

1. For a more difficult version, don't allow the Supply Chain to touch together when transferring the marbles.
2. Allow each participant to use only one hand.
3. Use a lighter object (bead, bean, etc.) or heavier object (small steel ball).
4. Have them share a track with a partner.
5. Put the team on silence or blindfold one or more of the members.
6. Put the tracks very close together. Surprisingly, this can make the task more difficult as everyone is bunched together.
7. You have two choices:
8. How quickly can you produce 6 "gumballs"?, or
9. How many can you produce in 15 minutes?
10. We prefer the second because it allows you to ask the group to set a goal before they begin. They almost always over-estimate how many they can produce.
11. A last fun test would be to see how quickly the group can move one marble through the entire production and time it to see if they can improve. Continue to make the process as fast as possible without skipping any steps – great for any process oriented company like manufacturing.



Dynamics to Watch For:

- How the group takes an idea and puts into action.
- Is each person following the rules, or are they cheating in small ways to not stop production?
- Some group norms that are getting in the way of them reaching maximum production and enjoyment.
- Watch for frustration levels and some team members becoming disassociated with the process.
- Watch to see how the group responds to a dropped marble.



Questions for Group Discussion

1. What qualities do you feel your team needed to be successful and where could you use those same qualities?
2. Did you agree on a start to finish detailed plan? If so, did you follow it?
3. Did it the plan work? If not, what was at fault when it did not work?
4. What did you do to compensate?
5. Was communication excellent, good, okay, or bad? Could it have been better? If so, how?
6. How did it feel when someone dropped a ball and what did you notice about the team's reaction to a drop?
7. Do you see any correlations between this activity and what the group faces on a regular basis?



Tips and Tricks from

- Comparing the different structures the group uses (circles, lines, etc) to work and asking them if they see any similarities is always interesting.
- This activity is great to help participants be creative within a structured system. How can we make our process, with all the necessary steps, better or faster or more streamlined, etc.

Our Professional Facilitators

Team Shackles



Purpose

The purpose of this exercise is to challenge a team's belief that something is impossible.

It is also a great way to explore people's willingness to ask for help or give help if it will benefit the whole team.

Paradigm shift may result. It is a great leverage point to come back to if other paradigm shifts need to happen with the group.



Length of Exercise and Short Agenda

Total time needed is approximately 30 to 45 minutes and should not exceed 60 minutes. The duration depends largely upon how quickly your group accomplishes the task and how much discussion is generated.

- 5 Min. Introduce activity & cover ground rules (if any)
- 15 Min. Activity
- 20 Min. Group discussion
- 5 Min. Wrap up and set expectations – Miracle 10%

The discussion is the most important piece of this agenda as that is where the knowledge learned in the activity is transferred back to life, work, etc.



Safety Tips

- Remind pairs to move slowly and be aware of their surroundings so they don't trip and fall when they are twisting/stepping around with each other.
- It does not need to hurt. Be sure the pairs are not doing something that may be hurting or endangering them in ANY way



Equipment You Will Need

Up to 32 Strings with loops on each end, one for each person. These form the "handcuffs."

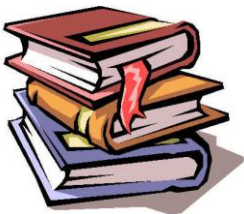
Purchase a long piece of 1/8" rope from a fabric or building store.

Cut the rope into four foot pieces or longer. The longer the rope (handcuff), the more difficult it is.

Make a loop at each end of the rope with a granny knot, making sure there is enough room for a hand to fit through each loop. A slip-knot will also work but watch to see if the participants tighten the loop around their wrist. This will make the task MUCH harder to figure out!

You typically use one foot of rope for each loop so the handcuff will be roughly two feet long after the loops are tied.

TIP: To make it more difficult, you can make the handcuffs longer. To do that, simply cut the string into five or six-foot pieces before tying the loops.



Storyline

You are hostages who have been left unsupervised with only the Team Shackles to restrain you.

If you can manage to free the two of you, you will be able to escape to freedom!



Setup

1. Have the group break into pairs and distribute the handcuffs. Each person receives one handcuff, or rope with two loops on the end.
2. Handcuff the partners together:
 - ✓ Have Partner A put one loop on each wrist. (The rope should be hanging from the wrists.)
 - ✓ Have Partner B put one loop on one wrist and pass the remaining loop around (under and over) Partner A's rope and onto his or her own wrist.
 - ✓ If the partners pull back gently from each other there should be a 'V' created by their ropes.
 - ✓ You may need to demonstrate how to put them on.
 - ✓ Make sure everyone is ready before you move on. This should only take a minute or two depending upon the size of your group.
3. The goal is for the pairs to separate as quickly as possible.
4. The rules are simple.
 - Participants may not take the loops off their wrists at any time.
 - Participants may not cut the string or untie the knot.
 - Participants may talk to one another. (See variations)
5. The whole team must be free in 15 minutes.
6. The solution is not obvious, so you may need to give hints and remind people to help other pairs once they have found a solution themselves.

Solution: (Call us if you don't get it)

- Take the center of your partner's string with your left hand.

- Pass the string forward – under your wrist -- through the loop on your right hand -- **towards your fingers.**

This will create a loop in your partner's string. Be careful not to twist the loop. Bring this loop over your hand.

Pull back gently and make sure the strings are not wrapped around each other

- You should be free!



Variations

- ✓ After they figure out the problem in pairs, put participants in larger groups and connect them.
- ✓ Have some people be coaches
- ✓ Show some people how to solve the problem. Give them specific instructions not to touch any of the other team members' strings.
- ✓ Do not tell the participants they can talk to each other unless they ask.
- ✓ Simply tell the participants that "you" need to be unhandcuffed in XX minutes, NOT that the entire team must become free. Then note how they define "you". Did that mean you as a pair, or you as a team? This shows unconscious beliefs about the 'team'. If you use this variation, see questions, tips and tricks below.



Dynamics to Watch For:



Questions for Group Discussion

- Pairs that hide from the rest of the group.
 - Teams asking for help and at what point do they finally decide to work with other pairs.
 - Pairs that are not having fun or have given up because they are convinced it is impossible.
-

1. What was your first thought about this event and what do you think about it now?
 2. Did you find yourself doing the same thing over and over expecting different results? Do you do that in other areas of your life?
 3. What did you notice about yourself during this challenge? Did you ask for help? Did you want to do it yourself? Were you competing with the other pairs?
 4. Did you notice pairs that did not help or did not ask for help? How many times at work have you had information that would have benefited someone else, but you simply did not give it? Why?
 5. How many times at work, or in life, have you needed help but not asked for it?
-

Tied In Knots



Purpose

This is a very simple exercise designed help the group practice consensus building and decision-making. Everyone can participate and it is a great precursor to more complex problem solving exercises or workshops.

This exercise can be run equally well inside or outside. It has been designed to run on a conference room table or in any small room and is a great event to start off a meeting in which the group will have to make a decision together or solve a problem.



Length of Exercise and Short Agenda

Total time needed is approximately 30 to 45 minutes and should not exceed 60 minutes. If this is a warm-up exercise, you can choose to use a 15 minute version. The duration depends largely upon how quickly your group accomplishes the task and how much discussion is generated.

- 5 Min. Introduce activity & cover ground rules (if any)
- 15 Min. Activity
- 20 Min. Group discussion
- 5 Min. Wrap up and set expectations – Miracle 10%

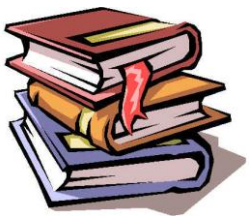
The discussion is the most important piece of this agenda as that is where the knowledge learned in the activity is transferred back to life, work, etc.



Safety Tips



Equipment You Will Need



Storyline

Play safe!

-
- 21 Pieces of webbing
 - 7 of one color
 - 7 striped
 - 7 various other colors
 - 1 miniature sample – a metal ring with 4 loops of colored string. This is a demonstration sample showing that the ring connects all four loops together.
-

You and your team of bomb experts have been called in once again to save the day.

This is a bomb unlike any you have ever seen. The connecting wires are a confusing mess, but you know there is one wire you can cut that will separate the connecting wires and defuse the bomb. Since you will all die if you fail, you **MUST** make this decision as a team.

Once you have identified the correct wire, tell your bomb squad leader (facilitator) which wire to cut. Oh, and if you touch any of the wires, the bomb goes off.

Note: When the group incorrectly identifies which rope to cut say, 'BOOM!' and you can either stop the exercise or let them continue, depending upon how it is

going.



Setup

1. In the grab bag are 21 independent ropes tied into loops. Decide your level of difficulty and select the appropriate color and number of rope loops.

Difficulty Levels:

- a. 5 ropes all different colors (easiest)
- b. 5 ropes all same color (moderate)
- c. 5 ropes all striped (hard)

Increase the number of ropes to increase the difficulty at any level.

2. You will need to untie one of the knots, slide the end of the rope through the others and retie the knot. (Duplicate the sample but use one of the ropes instead of the metal ring.)
3. Make sure only one rope connects the rest of the independent loops.
4. Lay the ropes down before the group is in the room. You can make this easy or hard, depending upon how messy you lay down the ropes.
5. Gauge the difficulty by trying it yourself before the group arrives.
6. When the group arrives, read the storyline and show them the metal ring prop as an example to make sure everyone understands how the ropes are attached.



Variations

Give the team 60 seconds to make a decision. This will completely change the dynamics of the decision making even for experienced teams.

Have each individual decide for him or herself which is the right rope before opening up the decision to discussion.

Tie additional knots in the ropes to confuse the situation even more.



Dynamics to Watch For:

Ideas and comments that are discarded by the group without acknowledgement.

Watch to see how the group plans a strategy, or if they plan one at all. Make a note and share the observation in the debrief. Ask the group if their strategy or lack thereof, helped or hindered them.



Questions for Group Discussion

1. Did you stop to plan any strategy before attempting the task? Why or why not? Would that have helped? Do you see this same pattern at work, where you jump in too quickly without planning?
 2. If you were frustrated, what caused it and how did you overcome it?
 3. Were you able to decide on your own which rope was the right one?
 4. What was your first thought about this event and what do you think about it now?
 5. How does what happened in this exercise relate back to your life at work?
 6. What do the ropes represent to you (each person)?
-

Traffic Jam



Purpose

Practice cycle time reduction.

To explore leadership issues within the group/team.

Communication difficulties inherent in how groups are structured (in a line).

Get group/team to think "in process."

Sensitize the team/group to communication challenges beyond simply structure.



Length of Exercise and Short Agenda

Total time needed is approximately 30 to 45 minutes and should not exceed 60 minutes. The duration depends largely upon how quickly your group accomplishes the task and how much discussion is generated.

- 5 Min. Introduce activity & cover ground rules (if any)
- 15 Min. Activity
- 20 Min. Group discussion
- 5 Min. Wrap up and set expectations – Miracle 10%

The discussion is the most important piece of this agenda as that is where the knowledge learned in the activity is transferred back to life, work, etc.

- Be sure the blindfolded



Safety Tips



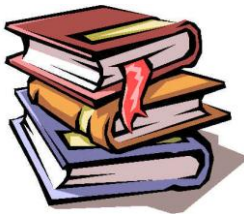
Equipment You Will Need

Grab mouse pads from River Crossing and use them for each person to stand upon, one for each person and an empty

If you need more than 10, you can use masking tape to create spots on the floor.

Alternatively, you can use:

1. Chairs, one for each individual and one extra.
2. Use the duct tape (or masking tape) to make a starting pattern on the floor. A big 'X' for each spot works just fine. The pattern must be enough squares for each person, plus one additional square on the floor.
3. No tape? You can use pieces of paper, business cards, quarters almost anything to designate a spot.



Storyline

There is no real story line for this activity. We set it up as a group challenge or simulation.



Setup

1. Have the participants stand in the boxes of the pattern: half of the group faces right, half of the group faces left. So the two groups are facing one another
2. Explain the task: Using only legal rules, people on the left side must end up on the right side and the people on the right must end up on the left.
3. After the task is completed, ask the team/group if they can complete it again in half the time.

Legal Moves:

- Only one person on each spot.
- A person may only move into in empty space in front of them.
- You may only move past one person into an open spot.

Illegal Moves:

- No moving backward, or turning around.
- Move around someone facing the same way you are.
- Make any move that involves two people moving at once.

If you no legal moves are left, start over.

Solution on the last page of activity information.



Variations

Competition / Collaboration Variation

If you have enough people for two activities, you are presented with a unique competition / collaboration experience.

Split the group into two subgroups. Emphasize they are NOT in competition and very clearly state they can share information about how to best accomplish the task.

Regardless of your encouragement, the teams will compete.

Behavior changes depending upon the makeup of the group. However, the first group to finish will usually gladly share their solution while the struggling group refuses the help, wanting to figure it out on their own.

Watch behavior very carefully as you may be able to

use it in the debrief to illustrate how easy it is to not collaborate – for whatever reason!

A Second Time Through

If the team is particularly adept at this exercise and has successfully completed the task, ask them to complete the task while holding their breath. Allow them to appoint a coach who may breathe while assisting the team.

Learning Points:

- Teamwork and communication are essential to understanding complex processes.
- Teams can make significant process improvements in a short period of time by drawing on the expertise of all the team members.



**Dynamics
to Watch
For:**

The group attempting the same idea over and over without really trying anything new.

Groups will begin unorganized with no plan and will communicate poorly, but eventually a player will lead the team to the solution. Many times, this is not the 'leader', or manager, in the group. Asking how and why that occurred may be important during the debrief – shared leadership?

Stay out of the critical thinking process, unless the team has no cooperation or direction.

Make note of similarities between the planning and execution compared to scenarios that typically occurs for the group.



Questions for Group Discussion

1. What was your first thought about this event and what do you think about it now?
 2. What was the problem? How did you break it down?
 3. How effective was the team at solving this problem? Why or why not?
 4. What kind of leadership emerged?
 5. If you were frustrated, what caused it and how did you overcome it?
 6. Did the team stop to plan any strategy before attempting the task? Why or why not? Would that have helped? Do you see this same pattern at work, where we jump in too quickly without planning?
 7. How does what happened relate back to your life at work?
-



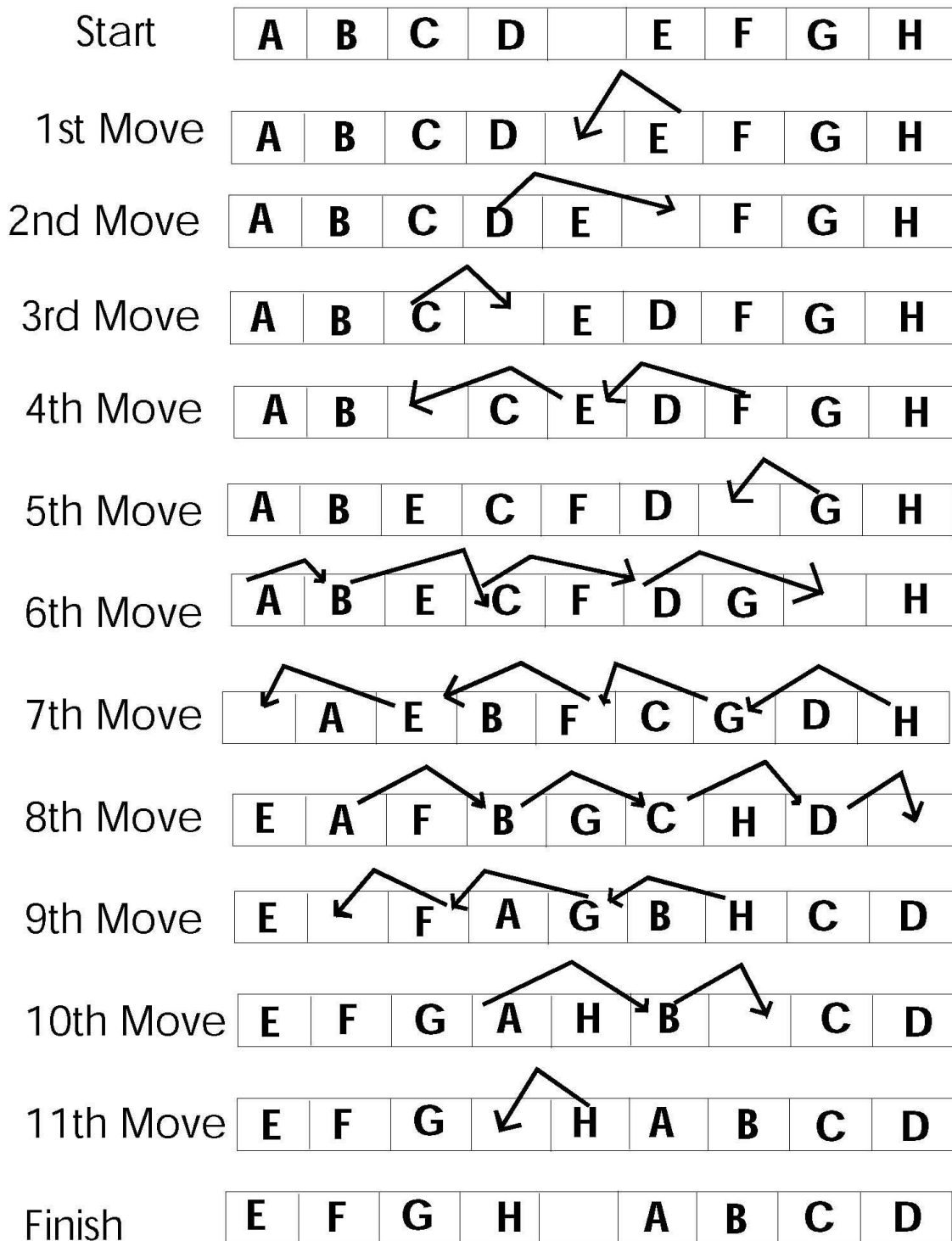
Tips and Tricks from Our Professional Facilitators

From time to time, a group will have an incredibly hard time 'getting' this exercise. Depending upon time constraints, you may want to let them go and see measure their level of commitment, or you can give them hints on how to solve it.

Notice the pattern L side- 1 move , R side-2 moves, L side-3 moves, R side 4 moves, L side 4 moves, R side 4 moves, L side 3 moves, R side 2 moves, L side 1 move.

If there is less than eight players to a group, use an inanimate object in the game to represent a player.

TRAFFIC JAM ANSWER KEY



Trust Walk



Purpose

This is one of the most powerful and, ironically, one of the simplest events we offer. The Trust Walk is about leading, following and communication. Many leadership styles emerge during this event. Some find it difficult to be responsible for another person's safety and others find it exhilarating.

To trust or give up control can be very hard for some people. Whatever the experience, the Trust Walk is a powerful learning opportunity.



Length of Exercise and Short Agenda

Total time is roughly 30 to 45 minutes and should not exceed 60 minutes. This depends largely upon how quickly your group accomplishes the task and how much discussion is generated.

- 5 Min. Introduce Activity & Cover Ground Rules, if any
- 15 Min. Activity
- 20 Min. Group Discussion
- 5 Min. Wrap up and Set Expectations – Miracle 10%

The discussion is the most important piece of this agenda as that is where the knowledge learned in the activity is transferred back to life, work, etc.

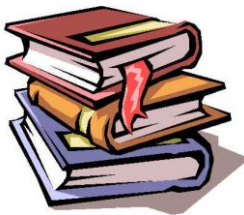


Safety Tips

- Make sure a sighted person is leading a blindfolded person.
- Look for dangerous obstacles, holes, etc.
- Warn the leaders of potential hazards.
- It may be necessary for you to “spot” at certain times.
- Point out poison oak/ivy.
- Be sure you feel good about each leader's ability to take care of their partner
- No climbing.



Equipment You Will Need



Storyline



Setup

Enough blindfolds for half the group.

You have lost your sight in a plane crash. It is up to one of your fellow passengers to lead you to safety.

The problem is your fellow partner has lost their speech and hearing.

You must find other ways to communicate if either of you are to survive.

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1. Describe the boundaries to all members of the team.
 2. Have them find a partner.
 3. One partner should put a blindfold on the other (this may not be the person they will lead).
 4. **STRESS THE IMPORTANCE OF SAFETY AND CARE FOR THE PERSON BLINDFOLDED.** Remind team members it is their choice at what level they participate, and their choice will be positively supported. Specifically state that they may choose not to participate.
 5. Create a mood of seriousness and have them take a deep breath. After the deep breath, there is to be no more talking.
 6. Encourage them to resist the temptation to speak.
 7. Challenge them to create a powerful level of communication without using their voices.
 8. The sighted leader should give the blindfolded

- person as many different experiences as possible (a new touch, sound, smell, feeling, taste, etc).
9. Encourage safe creativity.
 10. At this point, have the leaders circle around the blindfolded people. Have them rotate around the group clockwise. When you say, 'Stop', they are to take one of the blindfolded people and begin leading them around.
 11. The experience should be at least five minutes long and can be as long as 30 minutes per person.
 12. Silently gather them back together and have the leaders remove the blindfolds at the same time. Give them one minute to talk about the experience together and have a short group debrief.
 13. Switch the blindfolds.
 14. After the second group goes, bring everyone back together and have a final debrief of the entire experience.
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Variations

- ✓ Have most of the team members blindfolded and only one person leading.
 - ✓ You may have the entire team choose a destination and try to get to it with all of them blindfolded. You will need to be the safety for the blind blob.
 - ✓ Do not allow touching. This will ensure more verbal communication versus leading them around by the arm.
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Dynamics to Watch For:

- Creative ways of leading and following. Be sure to share your observations of the creativity in the debrief, if you see any. If you do not, you may want to ask if anyone saw or experienced some creative leading and following.
 - People who are reluctant to trust.
 - Careless or insensitive people.
 - Unsafe activity.
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Questions for Group Discussion

1. Ask each person to share something they appreciated about the person they led or the person leading them.
2. How did you overcome the challenges you encountered and did you reach a level of complete trust?
3. How did it feel being a leader or a follower?
4. What can you learn from this experience?
5. Are there times (at work) when you must absolutely trust, put blind faith, in someone else? How does that feel?
6. How can we take what we have learned back to work and our daily lives?

Be sure to let everyone carry the discussion. Once someone makes a statement, there may be silence. If this happens, ask if anyone else agrees with the statement and/or ask for feedback on the statement.



Tips and Tricks from Our Professional Facilitators

As A Communication Activity:

These focus more on communication than leadership, but communication is a large part of the type of leader each person is, so it may fit very well into your plans. Also, this allows you to use the exercise more than once.

These Variations are best used after you have already run the original Trust Walk, although it is not absolutely necessary.

Let them speak, but set up an obstacle course that they must guide their partner through, around, under, etc. Combine this with not allowing them to speak and you have a very interesting activity.

For a loud, fun yet powerful event, create a circle and have the obstacle course inside the circle. If you are in a room, instruct the non-blindfolded partner that they must be touching a wall at all times. This will create a

good space.

The partner is allowed to communicate from outside the circle while the blindfolded partner goes into the center.

If you send all pairs into the circle at the same time, you create absolute mayhem! The pairs do not strategize how to recognize instructions from the partner – everyone is yelling into the center.

This is very fun! However, be sure to let them choose to participate after you have told them what they will be doing.

Make sure everyone is safe!

Warp Speed



Purpose

One of the best initiatives we offer. Can be used indoors or out, works as well early or later in a training session.

Requires successive levels of thinking "outside of the box" for success.



Length of Exercise and Short Agenda

Total time needed is approximately 30 to 45 minutes and should not exceed 60 minutes. The duration depends largely upon how quickly your group accomplishes the task and how much discussion is generated.

- 5 Min. Introduce activity & cover ground rules (if any)
- 15 Min. Activity
- 20 Min. Group discussion
- 5 Min. Wrap up and set expectations – Miracle 10%

The discussion is the most important piece of this agenda as that is where the knowledge learned in the activity is transferred back to life, work, etc.

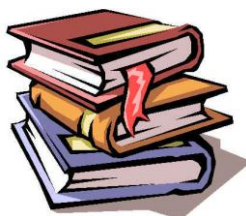


Safety Tips

- Watch levels of physical touching between members. While this is not an issue in this activity, it is important all participants are comfortable.
- Make sure the ball is not thrown with force to anyone. Underhanded tosses only, if they decide to throw the item.



Equipment You Will Need



Storyline



Setup

1. One of the balls from Group Juggling. Alternatively, a tennis ball or some other soft, throwable item. A ball is best.
2. A timing device – stopwatch or other similar.

As employees of the Ball Factory, each one of you must touch the ball as part of your job.

You have been told of massive layoffs unless you can increase production beyond current levels. If you can lower the production time enough, you just might be able to stay in business! If the ball is dropped, it must start over and production time continues.

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1. [If this is a follow-up to Group Juggle, skip to step 6]
 2. Ask your group to form a circle. Make sure the circle is small enough so an underhanded toss will be the ball to each person. Have participants arrange themselves in a circle an arm's length apart.
 3. Everyone puts up a hand and you throw the first object to a person across the circle from you. This person puts his or her hand down and then throws the object to another person in the circle. Each person continues to toss the object to another person who still has his or her hand up. Make sure the participants remember whom they threw the object to as the group is establishing a pattern to use for the rest of the exercise.
 4. When the last person to have his or her hand up receives the object, he or she throws it back to you and the pattern is finalized.

5. Test the pattern one time to make certain everyone knows and remembers it.
6. Explain: "We are now going to see how quickly we can send this one ball from start to finish through the system.

Remember, the ball must pass through the system in the same order that we have already established and each person must touch it once. [Use these instructions exactly as how you state them will define the boundaries for how this task can be accomplished.]

If the ball touches the floor, it must start at the beginning and time will continue.

I will start time as soon as the ball leaves the first person, and I will stop time when it returns to them. You may begin when ready."

7. Applaud their first attempt, no matter what it is (one second per participant or longer is quite normal). And prompt them with "Can you do it faster?" Allow for planning, additional attempts and more planning.
8. At some point the group will ask you how fast this can be done or how fast you've seen it done or what the ultimate goal is. DO NOT ANSWER them. The goal is for the group's best, NOT what another group has done. (Most groups of 20 people or less = less than one second.)
9. If the group quits early on, challenge them by saying "Would it surprise you to know that groups this size have accomplished it in half your time?' It does not matter what their time actually is, you simply want to challenge them to do better.
10. Continue until the group attains the elusive "warp speed" or ceases to be actively engaged in trying to reach it.
11. Process the activity.



Variations

Let the group set the Challenge:

- Challenge the group to see how fast it can juggle one ball around the whole group. Time the group, and ask them to "tender" for how fast they think they can really do it.
- Explain that the tender is like a business tender - they must put in a really good bid, but they must be able to deliver.
- Allow time for discussion and planning.
- Then ask them what their tender is & then ask them to deliver it.
- If they make it, then ask them to think again, because they undersold themselves. Ask them to come up with a new tender which better reflects their capabilities as a group.
- If they don't make it, then ask them to discuss what went wrong, and say you'll give them a second chance to make their tender.



Dynamics to Watch For:

- Watch for breakthrough moments versus incremental improvements in the time. Both are important and parallels can be drawn to how the group operates back in their normal environment.
- Teams trying the same bad idea over and over.
- Good ideas that are shot down before they are given a chance. How does the person respond to being shot down? Does anyone in the group speak up?
- Increasing levels of creativity.
- Arrogance in the group – 'We cannot get any better than this!'
- Ideas and participants that are not listened to by the

group.



Questions for Group Discussion

1. How did you come up with your solution? Not the solution itself, but what process did you use to arrive at it?
2. How do you feel about your final time compared to your first time? What does it take for the team to improve so much?
3. What good ideas were overlooked? Are there other areas in life where you think good ideas are being overlooked or not even considered?
4. How did you feel when a person dropped the ball and you had to start over? Dropping the ball is an inevitability – it WILL happen. How did we treat each other (or the person) when the ball was dropped? Follow this line of discussion if appropriate – high levels of frustration, conflict, etc.
5. What implied rules (or assumptions) kept you from finding the best solution?
6. What are the implied rules or assumptions at work (and/or in your home life) that prevent you from being your best?



Tips and Tricks from Our Professional Facilitators

1. Once the group learns of the goal that they are trying to reach, expect responses like "no way" and "are you kidding?" Remember this moment for the debrief later and ask them how it parallels with scenarios at work.
2. Fundamental changes that the group should progress through include movement (e.g., moving closer together, changing the position of the participants in the circle, moving out of a circle to a line or some other shape), changing how the ball moves through the system (e.g., from a toss to a hand off to a roll across hands or along the ground).
3. How creatively you allow the group to interpret its objective and the stipulation is a function of your assessment of the group and your learning goal. We

have had groups ask if they just put the ball on the ground and then touch it in succession, does this satisfies the objective? [Does it? Pause here and reflect ...] Our response in this case is usually to ask the group to answer its own question. Does the ball actually pass through the system in the correct order? Most groups usually choose to continue to seek another solution, and we applaud their "thinking outside of the box" even if it didn't exactly provide the solution - it shows movement in the right direction.

4. Help the group in the process. If they forget who is next in the pattern, for example, do not hesitate to ask them. However, do not take over leadership in the group.
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Who Are You?



Purpose

This activity is designed to help participants experience the different levels of communication.

The experience, while simplistic on paper, is incredibly powerful as the participants move through the levels of communication.

Do not be fooled by the seemingly childish aspects to this. This is an incredibly powerful activity that we use in many large conference settings to great effect.

Using this in the beginning is best.



Length of Exercise and Short Agenda

Total time is roughly 10 to 15 minutes and should not exceed 25 minutes. This depends largely upon how quickly your group accomplishes the task and how much discussion is generated.

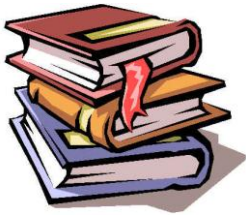
- 5 Min. Introduce Activity & Cover Ground Rules
- 10 Min. Activity
- 5 Min. Group Discussion
- 5 Min. Wrap up and Set Expectations – Miracle 10%

The discussion is important here. Open up the discussion to everyone and let the group hear what the experience is like.



No real safety issues here as there is no movement to speak of.

Safety Tips



None

Storyline



Setup

It is important to set this up correctly by telling the group what you will be doing. You will be moving from surface level communication to communicating about values and beliefs.

Here are the three levels:

Level 1 – What I Do

Level 2 – Who I Am

Level 3 – What I Believe

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Pair people up.
2. Level 1 communication – describe what level 1 communication is.

Level 1 – What I Do

In level 1 communication we define who we are in terms of the external world. It is shaped by what is tangible to us and others. It's like a resume, outlining what we do; our titles,

roles, etc.

For instance, “I am a parent”.

Now, as they are paired up,

- a. Person A asks the person B “Who are you?”
- b. Person B answers.
- c. The question is then asked and answered over and over again until the round of 60 seconds is over.
- d. Person A is only allowed to ask “Who are you?” They DO NOT discuss the answer!
- e. The pairs then switch roles and repeat the process

3. Level 2 communication – describe Level 2 communication to the group:

When engaged in level 2 communication we engage more in terms of our internal world. It describes behaviors and actions we take when engaged in our titles, roles, etc.

For instance, “I am a patient parent”.

- a. Facilitator describes the difference between level 1 communication and level 2 communication
- b. Find new pairs.
- c. Repeat 60 second round. No roles or titles (parent, business owner, clerk, father, mother...)

4. Level 3 communication – describe Level 3 communication to the group:

At level 3 communication we describe ourselves with only intangibles. We speak about values and belief systems we hold that motivate us to behave in certain ways when engaged in our roles.

For instance, “I am a parent who believes every child should go to college”.

- a. Facilitator describes the difference between level 2 communication and level 3 communication
- b. Find new pairs.

- c. Repeat 60 second rounds. None of the answers you've previously given



Variations

Front-Load the Activity

One common variation is to front-load the event. Using this, you will tell the group that within 10 minutes, they will be telling a complete stranger more about your values and beliefs than you have told most of your friends. They will not believe you and yet, at the end, if you remind them about what you said, the group will agree and understand the power of this activity.

Explain the Three Levels at the Start

Sometimes this is necessary to get buy-in with a difficult group. They need to know that the activity is going somewhere. The Level 1 communication is very superficial and that is how these groups may perceive the activity. Explaining the three levels up front may help them understand where they are going and get their participation in the beginning.



Dynamics to Watch For:

- Notice the energy of the group.
- Type of answers from each of the different levels – write down examples.
- Watch for people not following instructions and not really participating. If this is pervasive throughout the group, stop them and explain the three levels – look at variations above.



Questions for Group Discussion

1. What did you think about this activity and what do you think about it now?
 2. What were some of the topics covered?
 3. How did you feel during Level Three Communication?
 4. How often do you engage in Level Three communication in your daily life?
 5. What would happen if you spoke with your <insert here, i.e., customers, children> using Level Three communication on a more regular basis?
 6. What can you do to remind yourself to engage in more Level Three Communication?
-

Win Win Win



Purpose

This event demonstrates the effects of competition within groups and the power of collaboration.

Unless the groups identify a common goal, they will compete against each other and ultimately fail as a group.

If the teams all collaborate instead of compete, they will be able to achieve the highest score possible each round (a full house).



Length of Exercise and Short Agenda

Total time is roughly 30 to 45 minutes and should not exceed 60 minutes. This depends largely upon how quickly your group accomplishes the task and how much discussion is generated.

- 5 Min. Introduce Activity & Cover Ground Rules, if any
- 15 Min. Activity – 3 minutes per round, including scoring
- 20 Min. Group Discussion
- 5 Min. Wrap up and Set Expectations – Miracle 10%

The discussion is the most important piece of this agenda as that is where the knowledge learned in the activity is transferred back to life, work, etc.



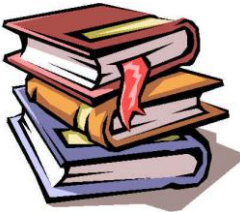
Safety Tips

- People will tend to run in the beginning. Warn participants that this is a walking game only.
- Sometimes people will bend down to take ball from the buckets at the same time and make contact with their heads – especially at the center circle. Simply warn them of the possibility and it reduces the probability if it happening.



Equipment You Will Need

- ✓ 5 balls per team (25 balls total), three of one color and two of another (i.e. three blue, two red)
- ✓ 5 loops of rope as a 'team base'
- ✓ Center loop of rope to put the balls in between each round
- ✓ Stopwatch



Storyline

You have all been approached by the CEO/Executive Director of the organization (insert names here if possible) and have been told that you must maximize your profits over the next quarter.

Each team will have several chances to maximize profits (rounds).



Setup

1. Split the group into five teams. Feel free to rename the groups to reflect your organization -- administration, sales, operations, IT, etc.
2. Put the large loop in the center of the room and give a smaller loop to each team.
3. Arrange the five teams in a circle around the large loop.
4. Put the balls into the center loop of rope.
5. Give the teams the Rules and Profit sheet and explain the rules clearly so everyone understands. Answer questions by referring to the Win Win Win Handout.
6. Begin.

Rules:

Be absolutely clear about the rules and answer any questions they may have. If they ask if they can work together, simply tell them that is up to the group and then start the game immediately. DO NOT give them

time to strategize.

1. The activity consists of 5 rounds. Each round lasts for 90 seconds. The facilitator will start and end the round with a verbal signal.
2. During each round, balls may be collected by any member of the team, but one member of the team must stay at the team 'base' at all times.
3. Balls may be collected from the center loop or from ANY other team, but you can only collect one ball at a time.
4. After you take a single ball from the center loop or another team, you must return to your base and place the ball in your loop.
5. No one is allowed to obstruct a ball collector in any way. Balls must be accessible to other collectors at all times.
6. ALL balls must be included in score determination.
7. In the event of a dispute, the facilitator's decision is final.
8. Any violation of these rules will result in the team being disqualified for the round and an automatic penalty of -3.

Put the scoring and the table below on a flipchart so everyone can see how points are scored and how many points each team has scored.

Scoring:

Maximize profits by scoring points.

Full House – 3 balls one color, 2 another color	+ 3
Four plus one – 4 of one color, one another	+ 3
Straight – 4 different colored balls	+ 2
Four of a kind – 4 of one color	+ 1
Three of a kind – 3 of one color	-- 1
Small straight – 3 different colored balls	-- 2
Any combination not listed	0

Be **VERY** clear about the scoring. ANY other combination besides the ones above is zero.

For example, an enterprising team may get two full houses and think they receive 6 points. NO! That is a different combination than what is above.

	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4	Round 5
Team 1					
Team 2					
Team 3					
Team 4					
Team 5					



Variations

- Changing the story to make it more meaningful to the individuals tends to create a better response during the debrief and discussion after the event.
- If it is possible to run this outside, place the groups 15-20 yards away from each other to make the strategy more difficult and make it more of a running exercise.
- Use a bucket for the center repository for the balls so the participants cannot see which balls are in it.



Dynamics to Watch For:

- Safety of the individuals.
- Cheating. People will keep the balls in their hands during scoring or even during the round. Don't worry about stopping the team, just note it for later and ask the team about it.
- Teams will interpret the rules creatively, be sure to watch carefully for the interpretations and between rounds ask the rest of the groups if that interpretation is allowed.



Questions for Group Discussion

1. Ask for observations from the group. What was happening during the exercise?
2. What was the goal of the activity?
3. There were 4 teams, but you all work for the same organizations (in the same department) right? So let's add these scores together.
4. How do you feel about the score for the entire group?
5. How would the CEO/Executive Director (name if possible) feel if these were the real profits for your organization (department, division, etc)?
6. The goal was to maximize profit, so what was the total potential profit?
7. What would happen if you received these results on a continual basis?
8. Why did this happen?
9. Common goal was missing (this is what they will tell you)
10. Diverse goals brings these kinds of results EVERY time.
11. Do we have a common goal?
12. Where is this happening in our organization right now? Are there projects right now that would benefit from more collaboration?



Tips and Tricks from Our Professional Facilitators

1. DO NOT give them too much time for planning before the event or between rounds in Rounds, 1, 2 and 3. If you do, they may figure it out early. Keeping the time pressure on them is more like work as well.

If you want to be sure they experience the collaboration, between rounds 3 and 4, ask them why they are in the room together. Is it because they are 5 separate groups, or part of ABC Company and then immediately begin Round 4.

Alternatively, one or two of the participants may have tried to bring the group together in the early rounds but were ignored. Ask them what they were trying to say and then immediately begin round 4.

Between Rounds 4 and 5 ask them the question again, but this time give them the opportunity to plan and discuss how they can all win. Make sure the 'get' it before you being the 5th round. It will take them roughly 15 seconds to complete the task and every group will have scored the maximum amount of points. MAKE THEM WAIT for the next 45 seconds. This will provide a sharp contrast between the 1st and 5th rounds. In the 1st early rounds, they were running around like mad, but had a TON of spare time in the 5th.

Ask: *"What could you have done with 300% more time at work?"* Many times the respondents find that the chaos was, although unproductive, was more fun. Is that happening at work? Probably.

2. If you want to have fewer teams, take away a Full House per team you want to take away.

Also, if you want to add teams, simply add a Full House, but make sure you add the exact same kinds of balls. You can find them at toy stores and are called 'Intex Fun Ballz'.

Win Win Win Handout

Give each team a copy of the information below:

Rules:

1. The activity consists of 5 rounds. Each round lasts for 90 seconds. The facilitator will start and end the round with a verbal signal.
2. During each round, balls may be collected by any member of the team, but one member of the team must stay at the team 'base' at all times.
3. Balls may be collected from the center loop or from ANY other team, but you can only collect one ball at a time.
4. After you take a single ball from the center loop or another team, you must return to your base and place the ball in your loop.
5. No one is allowed to obstruct a ball collector in any way. Balls must be accessible to other collectors at all times.
6. ALL balls must be included in score determination.
7. In the event of a dispute, the facilitator's decision is final.
8. Any violation of these rules will result in the team being disqualified for the round and an automatic penalty of -3.

Scoring:

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Four of a kind – 4 of one color	+ 1
Three of a kind – 3 of one color	-- 1
Small straight – 3 different colored balls	-- 2
Any combination not listed	0

	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4	Round 5
Team 1					
Team 2					
Team 3					
Team 4					
Team 5					

Notes:

At the end of each round, each team will report their score to the facilitator and it will be recorded. Please have one team member from each team bring the balls back to the center loop for the next round.

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