

# THE TEAM BUILDING *Activity Book*



**30** EASY-TO-TEACH  
TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITIES



Venture Team Building

# **The Team Building Activity Book**

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**30 EASY-TO-TEACH TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITIES**



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First Edition: August 2015

Second Edition: June 2016

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# Introduction

Thank you for purchasing *The Team Building Activity Book*! We've designed it to be a reference guide to equip those working with groups with a wide range of tried and tested activities that encourage teamwork and personal development.

Although there are many books available that go into great detail on the theory of team building, team development and experiential learning, there are only a few books that actually provide you with the tools you need to deliver your own team building experience. This book is meant to be an easy-to-use practical guide.

The challenger briefs in the book will provide you with a quick and easy way of running team building activities without the need of a specialist facilitator. Simply gather the required equipment, select a location, print off the challenger brief and hand it to your group to begin the activity.

We have strived to make this guide as simple as possible and provide flexibility and options throughout, as well as explain how to use each activity. We are confident you will be able to take the materials and modify them to meet your own specific needs.

Nothing about any activity or challenge in this book is set in stone. If necessary, do adapt the content and the way the activity is delivered to suit the team you are working with and their event objectives.

Most activities in this book come with an estimated time. Feel free to adapt that time frame as you see fit. We have also tried to supply you with an optimal group size. Often, we suggest fifteen as an upper limit because we think that one facilitator for fifteen participants is the best size for interaction and participation. That said, if you have a larger group then perhaps you can get a colleague to support you. You will know what is best for your group and your own comfort level.

Though you'll be able to pluck many activities right off the page and insert them into your own learning programme, we challenge you to make these activities uniquely your own whenever you can. The result will be an activity that has even more relevance to you, your company, and your classroom. But most important, the result will be an activity that is more *fun*!

Read the book, build on our ideas, and make each team building and training workshop truly your own!

We hope you find *The Team Building Activity Book* informative and practical, and we wish you every success in teaching your next workshop. If you are unsure about anything in this book or you require further clarification, feel free to email us at [web@ventureteambuilding.co.uk](mailto:web@ventureteambuilding.co.uk).

# PART ONE

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## Getting Started

"Start where you are.  
Use what you have.  
Do what you can."

*Arthur Ashe*

# Team Building Resources

With every activity or team challenge listed in the book, we have included a list of resources required. For the majority of these activities, you can get away with very little equipment. However, to complement this activity book, it is recommended to have the following items kept as a “team building pack”, readily available and at your fingertips when the time comes to inspire and motivate your team.

This pack can be purchased for less than \$250 and includes everything you need to deliver all of the team building activities and ice breaker games in the book.

- Rope: a selection of ropes of varying lengths
- Balls of string
- Sports marker cones
- Buckets
- Tarpaulin
- Blindfolds
- Bungee Cord
- Carpet tiles or milk crates (carpet tiles are easier to store)
- Balls: mixture of type and sizes e.g. tennis balls, ping pong balls, golf balls, juggling balls and bean bags
- Playing cards
- Tent pole
- Shoe Laces
- Marbles
- Balloons and water balloons
- Newspapers
- Scrap: a selection of cardboard
- Post-It notes in a variety of colours
- Paper and cards in a variety of colours and sizes
- Flipchart paper
- Pens in a range of colours
- Blue-tack or similar
- Coloured sweets
- Sellotape and masking tape
- Stopwatch/timer (alternatively use a watch)
- 1 x Helmet (purchase from eBay for less than \$25)
- Bamboo Canes
- Plastic Fencing Stakes

If you have trouble sourcing any of these items, just email [web@ventureteambuilding.co.uk](mailto:web@ventureteambuilding.co.uk) and we will provide you with links to examples and item descriptions. Check out eBay and your local discount shop for most of these items.



# How to Deliver a Team Building Activity

## ***Step 1. Before: Select challenges appropriate to your group***

- Understand the purpose of the team building activity (what are you hoping to achieve?) and identify learning objective/s.
- Review group information: consider the age, ability and any physical limitations of your group.
- Select a number activities using the challenge learning matrix that will help you achieve your learning objectives.

## ***Step 2. Before: Prepare for your team building activity***

- Read through the activity notes several times.
- Print off the challenger brief and any support information.
- Gather any equipment or learning materials.
- Practice presenting the challenge to gain a better understanding and identify potential problems.
- Set up your activity location and identify and remove any hazards or potential safety issues.

## ***Step 3. During: Introduction and explanation***

- Introduce yourself to the group. Discuss teamwork and activity learning objectives.
- Introduce the challenge activity, and outline rules and safety (or hand the group the challenger brief to read).
- Check the group understands how the activity will work and clarify instructions.
- Provide the group with the equipment to begin the challenge.

## ***Step 5. During: Run the activity***

- Encourage and support the group.
- Throughout the activity, observe and note anything that you can use later during the review.
- If the activity is timed, watch the clock, and give a “time check” occasionally. If you’re working on time management skills, skip this and use it as a review point.
- Don’t stop the activity unless the group is running into serious issues. If you are working with kids, offer help occasionally to guide them in the right direction.

## ***Step 6. After: Debrief the activity***

- Ask the review questions as outlined in the activity notes.
- Try not to call on anyone by name unless you have to. Be comfortable with silence.
- Watch for head nodding, smiles, and other indications they agree with what is being said by others.

- If anyone gives an off-the-wall response, or one that is just plain wrong, ask the team how they feel about it rather than correcting someone.
- Even if the activity did not go as well as planned, most participants probably learned something.
- Try to use a mix of reviewing methods, reflection and questions to engage the group and draw out key learning outcomes.

***Step 7. After: Reinforce the learning***

- Display in the workplace or classroom anything the team created during the activity.
- Refer to the activity and the lessons learned often when you are coaching, giving feedback, or conducting meetings.
- Watch for examples of how the participants used what was learned in the activity.
- Follow up a couple of days later and ask participants to share what impact the activity has had on them.

# Team Building Learning Outcomes

With every team building workshop you run, you should have at least a couple of learning outcomes or aims that you expect participants to achieve.

Learning outcomes are statements that describe what a participant will be able to do as a result of the activity. Clearly stated learning outcomes help team members understand what is expected of them and help you focus on precisely what you want your participants to achieve by the end of the programme.

When you create your programme, design it with the end in mind. The best way to approach this is to start by writing learning outcomes specific to your group.

For example, if you are working with a new project management group, the learning outcomes might be to improve 'planning' and 'communication'. You should then select team challenges which help you achieve these outcomes and provide you with an opportunity to focus on these learning outcomes when reviewing and debriefing at the end of the activity.

A list (certainly not definitive) of learning outcomes you might use are:

- Problem solving
- Creative thinking
- Decision making
- Goal setting
- Leadership
- Communication skills
- Cooperation
- Trust and support
- Time management

Once learning outcomes have been established, adequate learning opportunities must be presented to the group to allow them to practice and achieve the desired outcome.

The matrix on the next page has been created to provide a quick, easy reference to challenges for the development of a specific outcome. Simply use the matrix to look for a challenge that matches your specific learning outcome and review the activity notes to ensure suitability for your group.

## Challenge Learning Outcome Matrix

Challenge Name	Goal setting	Communication	Cooperation	Creative Thinking	Decision Making	Leadership	Problem Solving	Resilience/ Failure	Time management	Trust
All Adrift		✓			✓		✓		✓	
Cane Tower		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	
Electric Fence		✓	✓			✓	✓			✓
Hover Ball	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			
Lava Flow		✓	✓			✓	✓			
Leaky Pipe		✓	✓			✓	✓			
Marble Motion	✓		✓	✓					✓	
Marble Tube		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		
Minefield		✓			✓		✓	✓		
Missile Launch	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	
Radio Play		✓	✓	✓					✓	
Scrapheap Challenge			✓	✓			✓		✓	
Scrap Tower	✓		✓	✓			✓		✓	
Spider's Web		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓
Traffic Jam		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		
Blindfold Retriever		✓	✓	✓		✓				✓
Blind Shapes		✓	✓				✓			✓
Blindfold Maze		✓			✓	✓				✓
Night Trail		✓	✓			✓				✓
Sheep and Shepherd		✓				✓	✓	✓		✓
Trust Walk		✓		✓		✓				✓
All Aboard	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			
Bungee Exercises	✓	✓	✓			✓				
Hole Tarp		✓	✓				✓			
Human Knot			✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	
Magic Cane	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		
Photo Finish		✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	

# The Problem Solving Model

The problem solving model is a simple cycle used to solve problems and challenges. The aim of the model is to provide a simple and clear strategy for tackling problem solving situations. Introducing this model will provide participants with an easy-to-use and transferable method of solving problems in any situation.

The problem solving model uses a 5-step process:

- Identify: What is the problem and your end goal?
- Plan: Discuss ideas and generate possible solutions to the problem.
- Do: Select the best possible solution and try to solve the problem.
- Review: Did the solution solve the problem? If not, why not? Discuss and rethink your plan.
- Adapt: Either make changes or introduce a new plan. Try again, and then review and adapt (if necessary).

## Stage 1 - Identifying the problem

Ensure the team understands the problem and has identified any blind spots that may prevent them from seeing the whole problem. Problems can be both simple and extremely complex. Sometimes we have more than one problem we are dealing with and any action the team takes may result in further problems arising.

The key at this stage is to identify the principle problem and understand the end goal or result.

## Stage 2 - Plan

Having correctly identified the problem, participants should now be taught the importance of taking 'time out' in order to think about the whole problem and the consequences of the different possible solutions.

Once you have done this, allow time for them to listen, discuss ideas and work as part of a team. Teamwork is vital to success and participants soon learn that success is built on cooperation not confrontation.

*"By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail." Benjamin Franklin*

Planning minimizes poor performance and team members will learn the necessity of setting realistic achievable goals. Participants need to manage their time effectively and recognise the value of the time spent thinking and planning in the success of the whole operation.

This is the decision-making step of the problem solving process. It's important the team formulate a plan or solution to the problem before taking action.

### **Stage 3 - DO**

*Actions speak louder than words.*

When it is time to put the plan into operation, the whole team needs to pool together their skills to ensure a successful outcome. Added pressure is created by time restrictions and participants are made aware of the effect of positive and negative peer influence. No team will experience 100% success, so learning how to cope with setbacks and failure is an important part of the process.

### **Stage 4 - Review**

In addition to learning how to evaluate their own performance as part of a team, participants also need to appreciate the contribution of others. Once the task is complete, participants should take time to reflect on the results of their actions. How would they use this knowledge if they had to repeat the task? If their chosen plan was not successful, can the team re-evaluate the situation?

### **Stage 5 - Adapt**

Through experience, participants should have gained knowledge and a better understanding of the problem. If they failed, what new ideas did they generate during the reviewing stage? Can these new ideas be used when attempting the challenge again?

# PART TWO

---

## Team Building Activities

"We cannot solve our problems with the same  
thinking we used when we created them."

*Albert Einstein*

# ALL ADrift

## (aka LOST AT SEA)

### ACTIVITY NOTES

#### Overview

While sailing in the Caribbean, your yacht has an accident in the engine room causing the boat to set fire, with just enough time to grab a few items at hand. You and the others on board must quickly decide which items are the most important as you only have room for 10. Working together, the team has to decide which 10 of the 15 items to take.

#### Resources:

- 2 x team briefs and item lists
- 2 x score sheets
- Team ranking form (one per person)
- Pen (one per person)

**Space Required:** Small Indoors or Outdoors.

**Group Size:** 8 to 24

**Total Time:** 40 minutes

- 5 minutes to brief and setup
- 25 minutes to rank and discuss
- 10 minutes to review and debrief

#### Delivering the Activity

- Give one *Team Brief & Ranking Form* to each person participating to review.
- After 5-10 mins each person will need to rank the items in the order of most important to least important. space marked *Individual Ranking*. Give them enough time to complete this.
- Divide the participants into teams of 8-24 and give them 20 minutes to discuss and agree on their teams ranking priority for each of the items. Give enough time so that the team can come to an agreement on their team rankings.
- Now grade your individual and team rankings against the Grading Sheet. Then each team can discuss the scores and decisions made and what they did well and what they learned.

The complete list of items ranked by priority per United States Coast Guard (USCG) is as follows:

- Water - (fresh) maintain life
- Case of MRE Rations- food to sustain group
- Mirror - can be used to signal for help
- Plastic Sheet - protection from elements/collect rain water
- Blanket - for warmth and to be used under the plastic sheet
- Rope - to secure people or items together on life boat
- 10 chocolate bars - food to sustain group



- Cell Phone - Used for sending light signals at night
- Fishing Tackle - Used to catch fish to eat
- Knife - Can clean fish
- First Aid Kit - could be used to treat minor cuts
- Chart & Compass - to assess position and drift
- Radio - to listen to reports of search, weather and help morale
- Whisky - to treat and cleanse wounds

### **Suggested Learning Outcomes**

- Communication
- Decision making
- Problem Solving
- Time management

### **Activity Guidance and Notes**

This is an exercise in group decision-making. It has two objectives:

- First comparing how the individuals vs teams scored with their decision making.
- Second give an opportunity for teams to practice making decisions in a difficult scenario that can simulate real life situations working with others.

Often there is general thought that a team working together will outperform an individual. Based on this activity it is very likely that you will have some individual participants that out score their teams. This is a great opportunity to discuss why this might be. Could they have more knowledge or experience in certain areas that allow them to do this? Another thought that can be discussed is why those individuals didn't have more influence within the team and help the team to score higher.

This type of activity can reflect what often happens in teams that work on projects together. Key highlights: Let everyone share, Listen to each team member and their rationale for their thoughts. This is when the best decisions can be made as a team.

### **De-Brief Review**

Suggested questions to ask:

Did the results surprise you? Why?

Is there anything that frustrated you?

How did you feel when trying to rank items as an individual?

What did your team do well when you discussed the ranking?

Did everyone agree with the ranking? How did you resolve any disagreements?

How well did you work as a team? Is there anything you could have done better?

Did your team listen to your opinion? Did everyone share?

What is one thing you learned from this activity?

# ALL ADRIFT

## (aka LOST AT SEA)

### Grading Sheet

	RANKING POSITION CHOSEN									
ITEM	1 <sup>st</sup>	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
water	15	12	10	8	6	4	2	0	0	0
case of MRE rations	12	14	11	9	7	5	3	1	0	0
mirror	10	11	13	10	8	6	4	2	0	0
plastic sheet	8	9	10	12	9	7	5	3	1	0
blanket	6	7	8	9	11	8	6	4	2	0
rope	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	5	3	1
10 chocolate bars	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	4	2
cell phone	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	5	3
fishing tackle	0	0	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	4
knife	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	4	5
first aid kit	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
chart & compass	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
radio	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
whisky	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

**Maximum Score Possible is 100**

75 and over = Excellent!

50 to 74 = Good Job

30 to 49 = Disappointing

<29 = Try again

# ALL ADrift

## (aka LOST AT SEA)

### CHALLENGER BRIEF

<h4>SCENARIO</h4>
-------------------

You and a group of friends are on vacation sailing in a large yacht on an extended trip. Following a fuel hose failure in the engine room, the boat catches fire and you have to abandon ship. Everyone quickly grabs a life jacket. The captain tried to send an SOS message giving your current position but never got a response. Unfortunately, you are not sure if the message will get through as fire has already reached some of the equipment.

The weather is clear with a strong wind blowing at about 12 knots. The fire spreads quickly and you launch a small, open lifeboat big enough to take you and your friends.

Here is what you were able to collect in the time you had before the fire got out of control and you had to leave the ship.

- Fishing Tackle (line and hook)
- Mirror
- Plastic Sheet (large)
- Case of MRE Rations
- Bucket
- Gallon of Water
- Knife
- Chart & Compass
- Rope
- Radio
- First Aid Kit
- Bottle of Whisky
- Cell Phone
- Blanket

You must decide which **ten** items you will take with you by listing them in order of most important to least important items.

# ALL ADrift

## ACTIVITY RANKING FORM

First make your own list of the top 10 items you'd take and then compare in the next column to your team's.

	Individual Ranking	Team Ranking
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		

# CANE TOWER

## ACTIVITY NOTES

### Overview

The team is lost in a bamboo forest, and the only chance of survival is to catch the attention of the people in the nearest village before nightfall. To get their attention, the teams must build two freestanding structures, each 6m high.

### Resources:

- 40 x canes (exactly)
- 10 x spare canes (do not give out with the task)
- 4 x large balls of string
- Pens and paper
- Articles of clothing

**Space Required:** Medium. Indoors or Outdoors.

**Group Size:** 8 to 15 ideally.

**Total Time:** 55 minutes

- 5 minutes to brief and setup
- 45 minutes to complete challenge
- 5 minutes to review and debrief

### Running the Activity

- Introduce the challenge: Your team is lost in a bamboo forest, and the only real hope is to catch the attention of people in the nearest village before nightfall. To be seen from the village, articles of clothing must be hoisted exactly 6 metres on two separate structures. Night is falling; there is limited time.
- Introduce the rules of the challenge and key safety points.
- Provide teams with equipment for the challenge and then let them begin.

### Rules

- Teams have just 45 minutes to build the two structures.
- They can only use the equipment provided.
- The structure/s must be freestanding (it cannot be stuck into the ground, held up by hand or tied to something else).
- Canes cannot be snapped.
- String cannot be cut.
- The structures must be exactly 6 metres high.

### Safety

- Warn participants against throwing and swinging canes.
- Make them aware of the danger from the cane ends, especially to eyes.

### **Suggested Learning Outcomes**

- Communication
- Cooperation
- Creative thinking
- Leadership
- Problem solving
- Time management

### **Activity Guidance and Notes**

There is no right or wrong way to construct the tower, although it is best to include a firm base such as a tripod.

To measure the height of their towers, the team can find out if anyone in the team knows their height. Use the string to measure themselves, then transfer the measurement to the cane tower when laid down on the floor.

### **Review**

Suggested questions to ask:

Did you come up with a plan before building your structures? How did you do this?

Was everyone involved in the planning and decision making?

Did you have a leader for this challenge? What are the key qualities of a leader?

How did you organise your group? Did you delegate responsibilities?

What did you find frustrating about the challenge?

Was there a time when things didn't go according to plan? How did you overcome this?

How did you manage your time effectively?

How did you ensure the structures measured the height requirement?

# CANE TOWER

## CHALLENGER BRIEF

### SCENARIO

Your team is lost in a bamboo forest. The only real hope you have is to catch the attention of people in the nearest village before nightfall.

To be seen from the village, articles of clothing must be hoisted exactly 6m on two separate structures.

Night is falling, there is limited time...Do you have something bright to be seen more easily?

### RULES

- You have just 45 minutes to build your towers.
- You can only use the equipment provided (40 canes and 4 balls of string).
- The structure/s must be freestanding (they cannot be stuck into the ground, held up by hand or tied to something else).
- Canes cannot be snapped.
- String cannot be cut.
- The structures must be exactly 6 metres high.

### SAFETY

- Do not throw or swing the canes.
- Please be aware of the danger from the cane ends, especially to eyes.

# ELECTRIC FENCE

## ACTIVITY NOTES

### Overview

The aim of the challenge is for the entire team to cross from one side of the fence to the other without touching the fence line. There are two variations of this challenge: a basic version and a more advanced one. Both are great for developing teamwork and trust.

### Resources:

Basic: Rope, shoelaces or tent pole (bamboo cane can also be used)

Advanced: 2 x ropes, 12 x milk crates (or 2 x plastic drums), 4 x plastic fencing stakes and a ladder (or wooden planks)

**Space Required:** Small. Indoors or outdoors

**Group Size:** 6 to 15 ideally

**Total Time:** 40 minutes

- 5 minutes to brief and setup
- 30 minutes to complete the challenge
- 5 minutes to review and debrief

### Setup

Before you start the activity, tie a rope 5-10ft in length between two trees. This will be your electric fence line. You can also use a pole and balance it between two objects such as tables or chairs (just make sure you weigh it down to prevent it from rolling off when knocked).

The rope should be tied tightly. The height should be the same as the tallest participant in your group. The higher the rope, the harder the challenge, so adapt the height to suit the age and ability of your group.

### Running the Activity

- Get the group to stand on one side of the rope.
- Introduce the electric fence and explain that all team members are required to cross the fence without touching it. If they do touch the fence, the entire team will restart the challenge and return back to the start point.
- They must also remain connected as a team throughout the challenge (regardless of which side of the fence they are on), if anyone breaks the connection, they will again have to restart the challenge

### Rules

- Teams must only cross the fence and not go under or around.
- Diving or jumping the fence is not permitted.
- No person must touch the fence. If the fence is touched, the challenge is restarted.
- Once across the fence, team members cannot return.



## **Safety**

Emphasise the importance of spotting and taking care when crossing the fence. Be available to spot the first two team members crossing and the very last one over the fence. The rest of time, it is up to the team to spot their fellow team members and monitor safety.

Here are the key safety points to tell the group:

- Active spotting must be used when crossing the fence.
- Only one participant is allowed to cross at one time.
- Spotters should continue to support the active participant until they are completely over the fence and on the ground safely.
- When crossing the fence, heads and shoulders must remain above feet. Spotters must take care to protect the head and shoulders at all times.

## **Suggested Learning Outcomes**

- Cooperation
- Communication
- Leadership
- Problem Solving
- Trust

## **Variations**

Instead of getting the group to remain connected with each other, provide a longer rope (around 20ft) which will act a lifeline. In order to complete the challenge, they are required to stay connected to the lifeline throughout the challenge.

You can also split the team into two and get them to start on opposite sides. They must then work together to switch sides and end up on the opposite side of the fence to where they started.

## **Electric Fence (Advanced)**

To complete the advanced version of this challenge, it is recommended that you have a larger space and run the challenge outside. This version is a more physically challenging activity, so it is only recommended for adults.

Instead of setting the electric fence between trees, use 4 plastic fencing stakes (or wooden poles) and use these to setup two separate electric fences with a 1m gap between them. In order to complete the challenge, teams are required to cross both fences and bring all equipment with them.

Unlike the basic version of the challenge, team members aren't required to stay connected during the exercise.

To complete the challenge, provide the team with either 12 milk crates or 2 x plastic drums and a ladder (you can also use 2 planks of wood).

Here are differences from the basic version:

- Take care when using the ladder or planks and be aware of these springing up after use and hitting participants in the face.

- Team members and equipment are not allowed to touch any part of the electric fence. If they do, then the entire team must restart the challenge. The entire team and any equipment they use must cross the electric fence.
- Increase the time allocated to complete the team building activity from 30 to 50 minutes.

### **Activity Guidance and Notes**

You can change the level of difficulty by raising or lowering the height of the electric fence. The taller the fence, the harder the challenge.

You can also blindfold and mute participants during the challenge, especially when trying to get quieter members to lead and step up.

To help indicate when an active participant has touched the rope, add small bells to the electric fence.

### **Review**

Suggested questions to ask:

What was the most important part of the activity?

How did you manage the problem?

Why was planning important? How did you come up with the plan?

Did everyone agree with the plan? If no, did you discuss this with your team?

Is there anything you found particularly difficult?

Did you allocate a leader for the challenge?

How did you support each other during the challenge?

How important was it to manage safety?

Was trust important?

Looking back, what do you feel you learned from the activity?

# ELECTRIC FENCE

## CHALLENGER BRIEF

### SCENARIO

On your journey, your team has come across an electric fence. There are no other routes available, so you have no option but to attempt to cross the fence.

To complete the challenge, all team members must cross the fence, while remaining connected at all times. If anyone touches the fence, the challenge will be restarted.

### RULES

- You must cross the fence and not go under or around.
- Diving or jumping the fence is not permitted.
- Nobody is allowed to touch the fence. If the fence is touched, the activity is restarted.
- Once across the fence you cannot return to the other side.

### SAFETY

- Active spotting must be used when crossing the fence (this will be demonstrated by your leader).
- Only one participant is allowed to cross at one time.
- Spotters should continue to support travelling team member until they are completely over the fence and safely on the ground.
- When lifting a team member who is crossing the fence, heads and shoulders must remain above feet. Spotters must take care to protect the head and shoulders at all times.

# HOVER BALL

## ACTIVITY NOTES

### Overview

The team has to transport a radioactive bomb through a series of obstacles and place it in a 'safe' zone. Teamwork, communication and strong leadership are essential for this challenge.

### Resources:

- 1 x marker cones
- 1 x small football (soccer ball)
- 12 x tracer ropes (string can be used) to attach to the cone
- 8 x blindfolds

**Space Required:** Large. Indoors or outdoors.

**Group Size:** 8 to 15 ideally. For larger groups, you might want to consider another Hover Ball.

**Total Time:** 50 minutes

- 10 minutes to brief and setup
- 30 minutes to achieve outcome
- 10 minutes to review and debrief

### Running the Activity

- Before the activity, set up the hover ball course and remove any safety hazards from the area. Ensure that the cone (cradle) has enough rope strands for one per person (for larger groups allow them to share).
- Introduce the challenge to the group: The team is in a simulation in which they have to transport a radioactive bomb through a range of obstacles to a safe zone. The bomb can only be handled with the cradle provided.
- Give the group enough time to discuss the challenge and allocate roles.
- When they are ready, place the ball (bomb) on the cone (cradle) and begin the challenge.

### Rules

- Only use the equipment provided.
- No one can touch the 'bomb'.
- All team members must pass through each obstacle.
- If the bomb is dropped, the team must restart the challenge.
- The ropes on the cradle must be held at the ends, and cannot be shortened.

## Safety

- Beware of the obstacles especially if blindfolded.
- If indoors (wet weather), you will need to improvise a course with chairs, desks and corridors as available

## Suggested Learning Outcomes

- Communication
- Cooperation
- Goal setting
- Leadership
- Planning
- Problem Solving

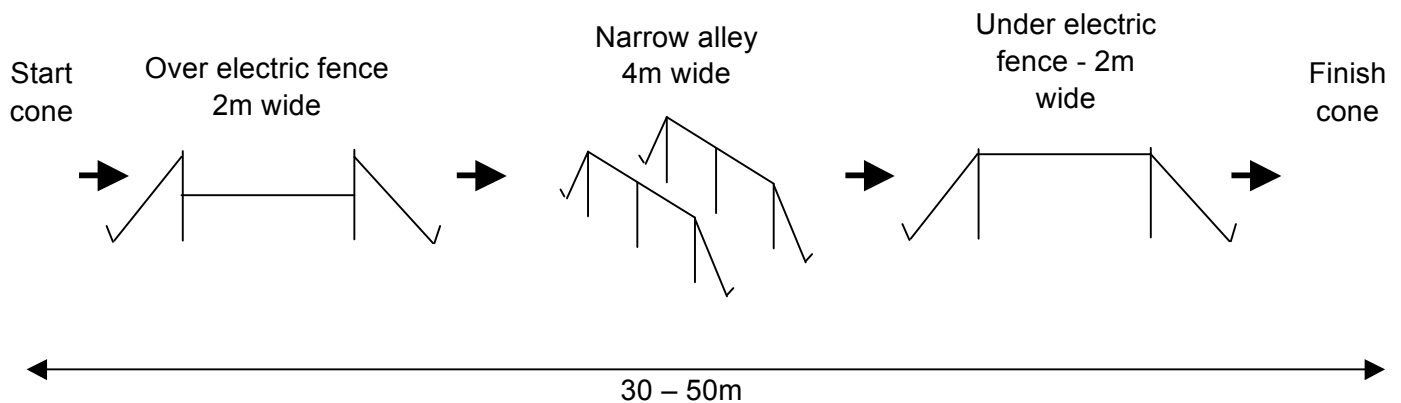
## Activity Guidance and Notes

In principle it is easy. The team must get from the start point to the finish point without dropping the ball. Along the way they must navigate through a series of obstacles and challenges. If limited with equipment, instead use tables and chairs as obstacles.

Resources for outdoor course:

- 10 x temporary fencing stakes
- 2 x 7m ropes (to build narrow alley to walk down)
- 2 x 4m ropes (to build under and over obstacles)

See illustration below:



To make the activity more difficult, try the following:

- Blindfold members of the team.
- Add a time limit for completion before the bomb explodes.
- Limit the number of team members that can speak.

### Creating a Hover Ball

- The marker cone you have will act as a cradle and hold the ball while the team transports it to the safe zone. To transport the ball, each member of the team will be holding a rope strand attached to the cradle and will work with the rest of the group to navigate the ball in the right direction.
- For a group of twelve, you will require twelve ropes to be attached to the cradle. To do this, simply create twelve holes evenly spread around the marker by using either scissors or a drill. Next, attach twelve lengths of thin tracer rope (various lengths) to the cradle by sliding the rope through the hole created and tying a simple knot on the inside of the cone. This will stop the rope from passing back through the hole (you can also use string instead of tracer rope).

### **Review**

Suggested questions to ask:

What problems did you encounter during the challenge?

How did you solve these problems?

Did you define a plan at the start of the activity? Did you need to adapt this at any point?

How important was communication during the exercise?

How would you rate your communication as a team?

Is there anything you would do differently next time?

How did you support others in the group?

Why was leadership important during the challenge?

Do you feel you worked well as a team?

# HOVER BALL

## CHALLENGER BRIEF

### SCENARIO

Your team is in a simulation in which you are required to transport a radioactive bomb through a series of obstacles from the start point to the safe zone, using only the cradle provided.

### RULES

- The bomb can only be handled with the cradle provided.
- No one can touch the 'bomb'.
- All team members must pass through each obstacle.
- If the bomb is dropped, your team must restart the challenge.
- The ropes on the cradle must be held at the ends, and cannot be shortened.

### SAFETY

- Beware of obstacles especially if blindfolded.

# LAVA FLOW

## ACTIVITY NOTES

### Overview

The objective of the activity is to get all team members safely across the lava flow. Participants cannot touch the lava and therefore must use platforms provided to cross to safety.

### Resources:

- Platforms: Either a tire, milk crate, carpet square or rubber baseball base per person – you can also substitute for 8.5" x 11" (A4) pieces of paper.
- To mark off the activity area, use 2 pieces of rope (or 4 cones)
- Blindfolds (optional)

**Space Required:** Medium. Indoors or outdoors.

**Group Size:** 8 to 12 ideally, but can be done with 6 to 15 participants. For larger groups. split them into teams and get them to race against each other.

**Total Time:** 25-30 minutes

- 5 minutes to brief and setup
- 15-20 minutes to achieve outcome
- 5 minutes to review and debrief

### Running the Activity

Create the lava flow by marking two river banks with the rope. Make the lava flow wide enough to be a challenge for the group to get from one side to the other (aim for 5 – 8 meters). Distribute the platforms – one per person.

Introduce the resources to the team/s and explain that the objective of the activity is to get all team members safely across the lava flow.

Give them a total of fifteen to twenty minutes to complete the challenge. If you have a larger group and opt for two teams instead of one, then the team that crosses the river the quickest wins the challenge.

### Rules

- Participants cannot touch the lava (floor/grass) and therefore must use the platforms provided (tires or bases) to cross.
- Everyone must be on the lava flow before anyone can get off to safety.
- If a team member falls or steps off a platform, the whole team must restart the challenge.
- Platforms must remain in contact with participants at all times or they will be swept away with the lava. Once the activity has started, the leader is responsible for observing and removing platforms when the team breaks this rule.
- You are only allowed to step between platforms and not allowed to jump.



## **Safety**

- Remain vigilant as participants may slide the platforms. This can be a safety issue and it emphasises individual work versus teamwork.

## **Suggested Learning Outcomes**

- Communication
- Cooperation
- Leadership
- Problem Solving

## **Activity Guidance and Notes**

If the group finds the challenge too easy, reduce the number of platforms available. You can also blindfold a few participants and emphasise the need to work together. Additionally, add the rule that all participants must be connected during the challenge (e.g. touching hands, feet on feet etc).

To add a twist to the activity, theme the challenge so the group has to retrieve an item and return it to the start point or make them carry an object throughout the challenge. If they drop it, then they must start again.

This activity can also be called 'River Crossing'. So instead of lava, the team is required to cross from one river bank to the other. As before, if they lose contact with a tire or crate it will be swept away but this time by the water current.

## **Review**

Suggested questions to ask:

Did you plan in advance? If yes, how did you decide the strategy you would use?

Did everyone have input?

What worked? What didn't work and hindered your progress?

What problems did you encounter during the challenge?

Did you identify a leader?

What leadership was demonstrated during the challenge?

What were the individual roles people played? Was everyone comfortable with their role?

How well did you communicate during the challenge?

What did you learn from the challenge?

# LAVA FLOW

## CHALLENGER BRIEF

### SCENARIO

Your team has come across a lava river, and the only way to survive is to cross the river to safety. To complete the challenge, you will be provided with several platforms to use.

If anyone steps on the hot lava, you will have to restart the challenge. Can you transport your whole team to safety and survive the lava flow?

### RULES

- You must remain in contact with your platforms at all times. If you lose contact, then the platform will be swept away by the lava and removed by the leader – leaving you with less platforms to use to complete your crossing.
- Everyone must be on the lava flow before anyone can get off to safety.
- Your whole team must cross the lava river. If anyone slips off a platform and touches the hot lava, everyone must start the challenge over again.
- Once you cross the start line, the challenge begins.
- To complete the challenge, every team member must cross the end line.

### SAFETY

- You are not allowed to jump between platforms.
- Take care when passing the platforms down the line.
- Make sure your platform is secure before stepping on it.
- Take care when sharing platforms with others.
- No more than three team members are allowed on a platform at once.
- If you fail to follow the rules above, you will be asked to restart the challenge.

# LEAKY PIPE

## ACTIVITY NOTES

### Overview

Teams race against the clock to try and retrieve a ping pong ball placed at the bottom of a leaky pipe. To do this, they are provided with a bucket of water and several cups. Teams are required to use good teamwork and problem solving skills to complete the challenge.

**Resources:** 2 buckets of water, 2 ping pong balls, cups, 2 pipes drilled with holes (can be purchased from plumbing specialist store)

**Space Required:** Medium. Outdoors only.

**Group Size:** 8 to 12 ideally, but can be done with 6 to 15 participants.

**Total Time:** 30 minutes

- 5 minutes to brief and setup
- 20 minutes to achieve outcome
- 5 minutes to review and debrief

### Running the Activity

- Split the group into smaller teams (or keep as one large group and challenge them to fill two pipes instead of one).
- Introduce the pipes to the team/s and explain they will need to try and retrieve the ping pong ball placed inside. To complete the challenge, each team will receive a bucket of water (which is placed 10 metres away from the pipe) and several cups. They must work together to fill the pipe with water and collect the ball from the top of the pipe.
- Give them a total of twenty minutes to complete the challenge. If you opt for two teams, then the team that retrieves the ball the quickest wins the challenge.

### Rules

- Teams cannot tip the pipe upside down.
- The bucket of water cannot be moved. The only way to transport the water is through the cups provided.

### Suggested Learning Outcomes

- Communication
- Cooperation
- Leadership
- Problem Solving

### **Activity Guidance and Notes**

Participants will need to work together, using the cups to carry water from the bucket to the pipe, fill it and float the table tennis ball to the top. The pipe has holes drilled in it, so they will have to plug the holes as the water gets higher.

If the group finds it difficult, cover the holes with tape. If they find the challenge too easy, then mute a few participants and introduce the rule that they can only retrieve water in relay form.

### **Review**

Suggested questions to ask:

What problems did you encounter during the challenge? How did you overcome these?

Did you identify a plan before starting the challenge?

Did everyone share their ideas and offer solutions?

How important was teamwork for this challenge? Do you feel you could do this challenge alone?

What are the key elements to a good team?

Did you support each other? How did you do this?

How well did you communicate during the exercise?

Did you have to adapt your plan at any time? If yes, what did you do?

# LEAKY PIPE

## CHALLENGER BRIEF

### SCENARIO

Your challenge is to retrieve a ping pong ball at the bottom of the leaky pipe as quickly as possible. To complete the challenge, you will be provided with a bucket of water and several plastic cups.

Sound easy?

The catch is each drain pipe has holes drilled into the sides and your bucket cannot be moved.

The team that retrieves the ball the quickest wins the challenge.

### RULES

- You cannot tip over or reach into the pipe to retrieve the ball.
- The bucket of water cannot be moved. The only way to transport the water is through the cups provided.
- You cannot steal water from the other teams.
- You cannot sabotage the other teams in any way.
- Failure to follow the rules above will result in starting the challenge over again.

# MARBLE MOTION

## ACTIVITY NOTES

### Overview

Each team is provided with two pieces of flipchart paper and a roll of sellotape and are tasked with creating two marble movers to keep a marble rolling as long as possible. After creating their builds, all teams come together to test their marble movers. The team that has the longest combined time wins the challenge.

**Resources:** 2 x flip chart paper (per team), scissors, sellotape and marbles.

**Space Required:** Small. Indoors or Outdoors

**Group Size:** Up to 48, split into teams smaller teams of 8-12

**Total Time:** 75 minutes

- 5-10 minutes to brief and setup
- 50 minutes to build marble movers
- 10 minutes for testing
- 5 minutes to review and debrief

### Running the Activity

- Split the group into smaller teams of between 8-12 participants. Designate an area for each team to use for the rest of the activity (ideally away from other teams).
- Introduce the activity: Working in your teams, you are required to design and build two marble movers. The aim of the marble mover is to keep a marble rolling for as long as possible. Once your marble movers have been built, you will then compete against the other teams. The team with the longest combined time wins the challenge. To create your marble mover, you will be provided with 2 pieces of flip chart paper and a roll of sellotape.
- Give the equipment to the group and let them start creating their marble movers. Allow groups to use a marble for testing.
- At the end of the 50 minutes, stop the group and bring all teams together for final testing.
- Time each marble mover one at a time. Start timing once the marble is on the mover and begins rolling and stop timing when the marble stops rolling.
- Allow just one person from each group to launch/place the marble onto their marble mover. Keep track of the times and then add up the times for a combined score for each team.
- Once you have tested all teams' marble movers, review and debrief the activity before letting the teams know the results.

## **Rules**

- Teams have just 50 minutes to create your marble movers and be ready for final testing.
- They can only use the resources provided.
- All marble movers must be freestanding.

## **Suggested Learning Outcomes**

- Cooperation
- Creative thinking
- Goal setting
- Time management

## **Activity Guidance and Notes**

To emphasise the importance of effective planning, explain that teams must spend a minimum of five to ten minutes at the start of the activity to discuss ideas before building their marble movers.

Instead of using flipchart paper to build their movers, you can just provide teams with 10 sheets of A4 paper or even a couple of newspapers. Feel free to add other resources such as paper clips, rubber bands, straws, etc. to see how creative the team can be.

Each team will try and spy on each other and take ideas from their builds. To prevent this from happening, allocate a room or separate space away from the other groups. This adds mystery and improves the level of competition.

When working with young people, you will need to give them the occasional time check prompt to keep them on track. For adults, use time management as a discussion point during the review and debrief.

This is an excellent assessment task, as it allows you to sit back and observe participants without having the need to lead them through a task or challenge. You are simply there to ensure they follow the rules.

## **Review**

Suggested questions to ask:

How did you come up with the design for your marble movers?

Did everyone have an opportunity to share their ideas?

Who had what responsibility?

Did you have enough time? How did you manage your time?

What was your motivation for the challenge?

Was everyone involved?

Did each sub-team support each other? How did you do this?

Reflecting back on the experience, is there anything you would do differently?

What can you learn from the activity?

# MARBLE MOTION

## CHALLENGER BRIEF

### SCENARIO

Working in your teams, you are required to design and build two marble movers.

The aim of the marble mover is to keep a marble rolling for as long as possible. Once your marble movers have been built, you will then compete against the other teams.

The team that scores the longest combined rolling time (both marble movers) wins the challenge.

### RESOURCES

To create your marble movers, you will be provided with:

- 2 pieces of flip chart paper
- Roll of sellotape
- Scissors

### RULES

- You have just 50 minutes to create your marble movers and be ready for final testing.
- You can only use the resources provided.
- Your marble mover must be freestanding.
- You may not borrow (or steal) resources from the other teams.
- You cannot sabotage any of the others teams marble movers.
- Failure to follow the above rules will result in disqualification from the competition.



# MARBLE TUBE

## ACTIVITY NOTES

### Overview

Participants have to work together to get the marble(s) from the start to the finish line without touching the floor or exposing them to daylight using the piping provided.

The activity can be set up with or without a course consisting of obstacles.

**Resources:** 14 x 40cm lengths of tubing, 10 x large marbles (in a bag)

**For course (optional):** 6 x temporary fencing stakes, 6 x 4m lengths of rope, 12 x wooden pegs, 4 x traffic cones

**Space Required:** Medium. Indoors or Outdoors.

**Group Size:** 8-15 people depending on the size of the area used.

**Total Time:** 35 minutes

- 5 minutes to brief and setup
- 20 minutes to achieve outcome
- 10 minutes to review and debrief

### Running the Activity

- Introduce the activity to the group: Your team is on an archaeological expedition. You have been tasked with recovering precious marbles from an ancient burial chamber to a protected area. Using the tubing provided, you are required to transport these marbles from the start point through to the end of the course.
- Allow some time for the group to discuss a plan for the activity. Once they are ready, provide the equipment and let them start the challenge.

### Rules

- Marbles should not be exposed to daylight and cannot be touched for fear of damage and contamination.
- Teams can only use the equipment provided.
- Only the leader can touch the marbles.
- Marbles cannot be thrown.
- Marbles cannot touch the floor.
- Team members cannot move their feet if holding a marble in their tube.
- If a marble is dropped or touched, the team must start over again.

### Suggested Learning Outcomes

- Communication
- Cooperation
- Leadership

- Problem solving
- Resilience and mental toughness

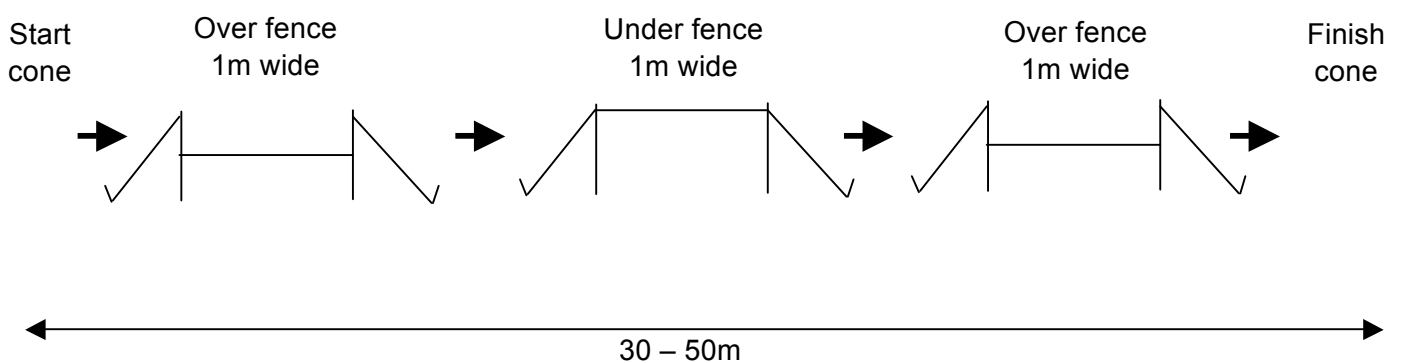
### Activity Guidance and Notes

#### Setup Notes:

The traffic cones are placed 20m apart to mark the start and finish of the task.

#### Course Setup (Optional)

Three 'hurdles' are set up using rope and stakes. The middle hurdle is an equal distance between the start and finish, and the others three metres either side of middle hurdle.



#### Challenge Variations:

- Blindfold half the team
- Pass the marbles up an incline (stairs if inside)
- Only hold the tube in the middle
- Each team member can only use one hand (hardest variation)
- How many marbles can the team move in a given amount of time?

#### Review

Suggested questions to ask:

How important was it to plan your strategy?

How did you come up with different ideas? Did everyone have an input?

Did you nominate a leader before the challenge? If yes, why was this important?

How well did you communicate as a team? Is there anything you could improve on?

How did you feel when your team dropped the marble?

What did you do when you initially failed the challenge? How did you overcome these failures? Did you review your strategy and adapt your plan?

Why is failure sometimes important? What does it teach us?

# MARBLE TUBE

## CHALLENGER BRIEF

### SCENARIO

Your team is on an archaeological expedition, tasked with removing precious marbles from an ancient burial chamber to a protected area.

The marbles should not be exposed to daylight and cannot be touched for fear of danger and contamination.

### RULES

- Only use the equipment provided.
- Only the team leader can touch the marbles.
- Marbles cannot be thrown.
- Marbles cannot touch the floor.
- Each team member has one tube, which cannot be handled by anyone else.
- Team members cannot move their feet while the marble is in their tube.
- If a marble is dropped or touched, the team must start again.

### SAFETY

- The marbles are not to be thrown.
- Take care when passing over obstacles.

# MINEFIELD

## ACTIVITY NOTES

### Overview

The team has come to a battlefield that has been laid with mines. One person at a time must attempt to cross the battlefield without stepping on a mine. Once a team member steps on a mine, they must return back to the start position and the next person must try to navigate their way across the minefield.

**Resources:** Minefield (8 x 8 squares) set out on a giant chess/checkers mat, tarpaulin (with taped squares) or carpet tiles and route card/s

**Space Required:** Small. Indoors or Outdoors.

**Group Size:** 2-20 people. Works better with larger groups.

**Total Time:** 60 minutes

- 5 minutes to brief and setup
- 35-45 minutes to achieve outcome
- 10 minutes to review and debrief

### Running the Activity

- Lay out your Minefield on a flat area with plenty of space.
- Organise the group and brief them on the task: The team has come to a battlefield that has been laid with mines. The entire team must cross the minefield without stepping on a mine.

### Rules

- Only one person is allowed on the Minefield at any time.
- Every person in the team must attempt to cross. If unsuccessful, they must go to the back of the line and the next person must try to cross.
- Once a participant is on the minefield, the rest of the team must be silent.
- Active participants can only move one square at a time. A move can be in any direction.
- Only the facilitator knows which squares are safe and will indicate appropriately (use the route cards provided in this guide).

### Suggested Learning Outcomes

- Communication
- Cooperation
- Decision making
- Memory chunking
- Problem Solving

## Activity Guidance and Notes

There is no solution as such for the challenge; participants are required to work together and use collective memory chunking – breaking large problems down into more manageable pieces.

The group is likely to be working as individuals and not as part of a team. This means that every person is trying to memorise the whole board. If the large problem is broken down into smaller pieces (i.e. instead of trying to remember the whole board individuals just remember one row), the task becomes a lot more achievable. The rules also state that no talking is allowed once a person is on the minefield. This still allows the group to create another form of communication i.e. clapping to prevent the same mistake reoccurring.

## Variations

Blindfold the challenger who is on the Minefield with the rest of the team guiding them through the maze without using speech e.g. by clapping or making animal noises. To achieve success, the team will need to work together to agree and remember a code (e.g. 1 clap = forward, 2 claps = turn 90 degrees left etc)

For a switched-on group, and to focus on communication, 'pen' the team in an area that is around 10 meters away from the Minefield, so they do not have full view on the challenge. As each participant comes off the Minefield, they must try to communicate their route effectively to the next person.

## Coaching points












































Large problems are best tackled by breaking them up into smaller pieces. By correctly **identifying the problem** (in this case memorising the board and communicating with each other), you can then pool your resources and **plan** how to cross the minefield.

## Review

Suggested questions to ask:

- What was the problem? How did you solve this?
- How did you feel when you failed?
- Why was failure important for this challenge?
- Did you use teamwork for completing the exercise? If yes, how?
- Why was teamwork important?
- How did you plan a strategy for completing the challenge?
- What surprised you about the exercise?
- What learning lessons can you take away from the activity?








































ROUTE 1  
START

FINISH


































ROUTE 2

START

FINISH

ROUTE 3  
START


































							
							
							
							
							
							
							
							

FINISH



ROUTE 4

START

FINISH

# MINEFIELD

## CHALLENGER BRIEF

### SCENARIO

Your team has come to a battlefield that has been laid with mines. The entire team must cross the minefield following strict rules for their own safety.

### RULES

- There can only be one person in the minefield at any time.
- The team must take it in turns to cross. If unsuccessful in their attempt to cross, the team member must go to the back of the line.
- Once a team member steps into the minefield, the rest of the team cannot talk.
- Each move must be one square at a time.
- A move can be in any direction.
- Only the facilitator knows which squares are safe and will indicate appropriately.
- Once a team member steps on a mine, they must return back to the start.

### SAFETY

- Please be careful if the minefield is wet/muddy as it becomes slippery.

# MISSILE LAUNCH

## ACTIVITY NOTES

### Overview

The group has to construct two missile launchers that can launch a missile over a target 10 metres away. After 30 minutes, the teams are allowed two practice shots (using golf balls) after which they can review their designs before they make their final shot with an egg.

**Resources:** 20 x 2m bamboo canes, 10 x 1.2m canes, tracer cord, string, old rope (various lengths), 2 x golf balls, eggs, metre ruler and cones.

**Space Required:** Large. Outdoors only.

**Group Size:** 12 to 20 ideally.

**Total Time:** 70 minutes

- 5 minutes to brief and setup
- 10 minutes planning time
- 40 minutes to build
- 10 minutes to test
- 5 minutes to review and debrief

### Running the Activity

- Set out a launch area using cones.
- Introduce the challenge: Your team has to design and build a target and two devices that can launch a missile. The devices are required to launch the missile over the target which will be set 10 metres away from the launch point. 30 minutes into the activity, you will be allowed to take two practice shots using a golf ball. The final shot will be made using an egg.

### Rules

The designs must meet the following criteria:

- The first 10 minutes **MUST** be spent on planning – **NO BUILDING**.
- They must be freestanding (not requiring any support from any person or object).
- It must be portable.
- When being fired, it cannot be secured to the ground artificially. The only pressure applied must be to the firing mechanism.
- You may use a maximum of 10 canes for each construction.

### How to Score

Points are awarded according to performance (teamwork, communication and design quality):

- 100 points for a target that meets the criteria.
- 200 points for each device that successfully shoots over the target.

- A bonus of 100 points for the launcher that shoots the greatest distance.

### **Safety**

- Take care when handling the bamboo canes.
- Missiles cannot be launched without the leader's permission.

### **Suggested Learning Outcomes**

- Cooperation
- Creative thinking
- Goal setting
- Leadership
- Problem solving
- Time management

### **Activity Guidance and Notes**

Groups need to identify the main problem, which is control at the point of release of the missile. If groups do not spend enough time planning and discussing, this will become evident during the practice shot. At this time the groups will have a short time (10 minutes) to correct any mistakes.

### **Review**

Suggested questions to ask:

How did you design your missile launchers? Did everyone have some input?  
 Did you designate a leader for this task?  
 Did everyone have a role within the team? Were you satisfied with your role?  
 If you did the challenge again, is there anything you would like to do differently?  
 How happy are you with your designs?  
 How important were the practice shots? What did you do following these?  
 Did you adapt your plan or your design after reviewing your build?  
 How important is learning from experience?

# MISSILE LAUNCH

## CHALLENGER BRIEF

### SCENARIO

Your team must design and build:

- Two devices that can launch a missile (golf ball/egg) over a target that is 10m away.
- Create a target that is at least 2m high and located 10m away from your launcher.

### RULES

The designs must meet the following criteria:

- The first 10 minutes **MUST** be spent on planning – **NO BUILDING**.
- They must be freestanding (not requiring any support from any person or object).
- It must be portable.
- When being fired, it cannot be secured to the ground artificially. The only pressure applied must be to the firing mechanism.
- You may use a maximum of 10 canes for each construction.
- You may use other resources as you see fit.
- 30 minutes into the activity, you will be allowed to take two practice shots using a golf ball.
- The final shot will be made using an egg.

### SAFETY

- Take care when handling bamboo canes.
- Missiles cannot be launched without permission from the group leader

### POINTS

You will be awarded points according to your performance:

- 100 points for a target that meets the criteria.
- 200 points for each device that successfully shoots over the target.
- A bonus of 100 points for the launcher that shoots the greatest distance.

# RADIO PLAY

## ACTIVITY NOTES

### Overview

Participants must work together in smaller teams to create and perform their own radio play – this means no acting is necessary. Once they have planned and prepared their play, they must then perform it in front of the other teams.

**Resources:** Paper, pens and a box of props to create a variety of sounds

**Space Required:** Very Low. Indoors or Outdoors.

**Group Size:** From 6 to 48. Working groups of 6 to 12.

**Total Time:** 90 minutes

- 5 minutes to brief and setup
- 60 minutes to plan, prepare and practice radio play
- 15 minutes to perform plays
- 10 minutes to review and debrief

### Running the Activity

- Gather the group and explain the next challenge they will be doing is called 'Radio Play'. Discuss what a radio play is and give a few examples such as The Archers (on Radio 2 UK).
- The group can work as one big group or be divided into smaller working teams depending on the number of people. Six is the minimum number for this to be effective (the more participants in the group, the harder the challenge becomes).
- Give the group five random words that must be included e.g. a shark, marmalade, a nun, sheep and a pirate ship. Or you could start by giving them one item and asking for suggestions for the other four – this allows them to develop creativity and also bring in items that are 'in jokes' for the group.
- Give the group the props box/bag and a place to rehearse. Leave them on their own as much as possible though some guidance may be needed, especially if working with younger children. Check on progression periodically and give them countdowns at the 30 minute, 15 minute and 5 minute marks.
- When it is time for them to perform their plays, select a group to go first and either blindfold or ask the audience (other group members) to face the opposite direction.

### Rules:

- Each team performance will be no longer than five minutes.
- Teams will have an hour to design and rehearse their play.
- Each member of the group must have a role in the performance, whether speaking or operating props.

## **Suggested Learning Outcomes**

- Communication
- Cooperation
- Creative thinking
- Time management

## **Activity Guidance and Notes**

If you can gather a small audience for the performance, this will help the atmosphere and sense of occasion.

Sixty minutes may seem like a lot of time but this goes by extremely quickly and your teams will be asking you (or begging you) for more time at the end. If you have spare time available, give them an extra ten minutes – if not, they should be able to still produce something.

Timings for the activity can be adapted to suit your allowance, just adjust accordingly by lowering the planning and performance time and knocking 5 minutes off the review time at the end of the activity.

## **Review**

Suggested questions to ask:

Who did what within the team and how did you decide those roles?

How did you come up with the idea for your radio play?

Did you have enough time? How did you manage your time?

What happened when things didn't go to plan?

What was the funniest moment of the exercise?

Is there anyone that surprised you?

If you did this again, is there anything you would do differently?

One thing they have learned from the experience?

# RADIO PLAY

## CHALLENGER BRIEF

### SCENARIO

Working in smaller teams, you must create your very own **radio play**. Once you have planned and prepared your play, you will then perform it in front of the other teams.

Each radio play must last at least three minutes and a maximum of five minutes. When you are performing your play, the other teams will be positioned to look in the opposite direction, so they will not be able to see you, just hear you.

Each member of the team must have a role in the performance, whether speaking or operating props.

When you are writing your play, you must include the five random words specified by the leader.

### Radio Play Explained

*Radio still captivates many listeners around the world and is a great medium for a play.*

*Radio drama achieved widespread popularity within a decade of its initial development in the 1920s. By the 1940s, it was a leading and popular form of entertainment. However, with the advent of television in the 1950s, radio dramas through the years have become less and less popular.*

*The key to writing successful radio plays is to realise that the listener can only understand what is going on by what they hear, so remember to paint a picture in the audience's mind. With no visual component, radio plays depend on dialogue, music and sound effects to help the listener imagine the characters and story.*



# SCRAPHEAP CHALLENGE

## ACTIVITY NOTES

### Overview

Scrapheap Challenge involves a whole heap of scrap and lots of creative thinking. In this challenge, teams are tasked with building a product made of scrap to protect an egg when dropped from a height.

**Resources:** Scrap (anything and everything), old newspapers, scissors, eggs, paper, pens and sellotape.

**Space Required:** Small. Indoors or Outdoors.

**Group Size:** 8 to 50 (split into smaller teams of 4-8).

**Total Time:** 60 minutes

- 5 minutes to brief and setup
- 10 minutes to design and plan
- 30 minutes for build
- 10 minutes for launch/testing
- 5 minutes to review and debrief

### Running the Activity

- Organise the group into smaller teams.
- Introduce the activity: In your teams, you must build a product to protect an egg when dropped from a height. Each team will be provided with an equal amount of scrap to build their product. You have a total of 40 minutes to plan and build your product.
- Provide teams with equal amounts of scrap and then allocate ten minutes for teams to plan and design their product. During this time, they are not allowed to build.
- Once they have planned their design, give each group an egg (or water balloon) and let them start building their product. If a team breaks their egg, then they are automatically disqualified from the activity.

### Launch

Once the time is up and their builds are ready for launch, each team must nominate one person to bring their build forward to the facilitator. The facilitator will then launch the item from either a raised height e.g. window or by throwing the item in the air.

Once all the builds have been launched, the facilitator with the help of the selected team member must unravel the builds one at a time to find out whether the egg has survived the fall.

## **Rules**

- Only resources provided can be used for the build.
- Team members may not interfere with another team's build.
- If any guidelines are broken, the group will be penalised (or even disqualified from the activity).
- Designs must be freestanding (not requiring any support from any person or object) and must be portable.

## **Activity Guidance and Notes**

If you have time, you may want to do some introductory scored activities to build up to the main scrapheap challenge exercise. The team with the most points will get the most amount of scrap to use, while the team with the least amount of points will receive the least amount of scrap.

Try a few of the quick team building activities in this book, such as human knot or photo finish. These activities can be scored based on teamwork, communication and planning by either the manager, teacher or facilitator.

Check before the activity to ensure nobody has an egg allergy. If they do, simply replace the eggs with water balloons instead.

## **Suggested Learning Outcomes**

- Cooperation
- Creative thinking
- Problem solving
- Time management

## **Review**

Suggested questions to ask:

How easy was it to design your product?

What considerations did you have to factor in when designing?

Did everyone in your team have input into the final build?

Did you change the design while you were building it? If yes, why?

How important is it to change and adapt a plan?

Did everyone have a role within the team? Did you designate a team leader?

How did you manage your time?

Is there anything you would do differently?

Are you happy with your design?

# SCRAPHEAP CHALLENGE

## CHALLENGER BRIEF

### SCENARIO

Your team must design and build a product to protect an egg when dropped from a height.

Each team will be provided with an equal amount of scrap to build their product.

You have a total of 40 minutes to plan and build your product.

### RULES

The designs must meet the following criteria:

- They must be freestanding (not requiring any support from any person or object).
- It must be portable.
- Only resources provided can be used for your build.
- Team members may not interfere with another team's build.
- The first 10 minutes MUST be spent on planning – NO BUILDING
- If any guidelines are broken, your team will be disqualified from the challenge.

# SCRAP TOWER

## ACTIVITY NOTES

### Overview

Teams compete to build the highest tower that holds a weighted object off the ground for a minimum of ten seconds. Careful planning and creative thinking are essential for this fun team exercise.

**Resources:** 2 x newspapers, 2 x rolls of sellotape, tape measure and a test object (anything will do).

**Space Required:** Small. Indoors or Outdoors.

**Group Size:** 10 to 16 ideally (3-5 in teams)

**Total Time:** 55 minutes

- 5 minutes to brief and setup
- 40 minutes to achieve outcome
- 5 Minutes for testing
- 5 minutes to review and debrief

### Running the Activity

- Split the group into smaller teams of 3-5 participants.
- Introduce the activity: Your team must design and build a tower to hold a weighted item off the ground. The team that has the tallest tower and that can hold the test item for a minimum of 10 seconds wins the challenge.
- Give each group a newspaper and a roll of tape – these are the only items they will have to complete the challenge.
- The time permitted to complete the challenge is 40 minutes.

### Rules.

- Only resources provided can be used to build the tower.
- The tower must be freestanding and portable.
- The height of the tower will be measured from the floor.
- Team members may not interfere with another team's tower.
- If any guidelines are broken, the group will be disqualified.

### Suggested Learning Outcomes

- Cooperation
- Creative thinking
- Goal setting
- Problem Solving
- Time management

## **Activity Guidance and Notes**

4 minutes to complete the build, may seem like a lot but most teams will be rushing towards the end of the activity to complete their towers. When working with kids, it is a good idea to provide a time check throughout the activity to keep them on track.

When working with adults, tell them they have 40 minutes to build their tower and let them get on with it. If they run out of time and don't finish building their tower, use it as learning point and discuss time management and effective planning during the review and debrief.

Try and keep team sizes small (3-5 people). When working in larger teams, people end up standing around watching rather than being actively engaged.

## **Variations**

### **Cooperation instead of competition**

Consider creating a situation where smaller teams work together. For example, challenge the teams to build the tallest tower they can. When the towers are complete, measure each tower and add the measurements of each tower together to create a total height score. Then, ask the groups to reflect on the task, review how they planned for the task and use what they learnt to build new towers. The goal of the new build is to try and exceed the total height score from the previous round.

This way, all teams contribute and can learn about effective teamwork, reflection and progressive goal setting.

## **Review**

Suggested questions to ask:

How did you plan for the challenge?

Did everyone have an opportunity to discuss the challenge and share their ideas?

How did you decide on your final design?

How did you decide the roles within the team?

Did you adapt your design during the build? How important is it to review and adapt?

How well did you work as a team during the exercise? What are the key elements of teamwork?

Looking back on the exercise, is there anything you would do differently?

How did you manage your time? Why was monitoring time important?

What surprised you most about the exercise and what did you learn from it?

# SCRAP TOWER

## CHALLENGER BRIEF

### SCENARIO

Your team must design and build a tower to hold a weighted item off the ground. The team that has the tallest tower and that can hold the test item for a minimum of 10 seconds wins the challenge.

You have a total of 40 minutes to plan, design and build your tower.

### RULES

- Only resources provided can be used for your tower build.
- Towers must be freestanding and portable (not requiring any support from any person or object).
- Team members may not interfere with another team's build.
- If any guidelines are broken, your team will be disqualified from the challenge.

# SPIDER'S WEB

## ACTIVITY NOTES

### Overview

The objective of this challenge is to get the entire team from one side of the web to the other without using the same gap twice and without touching any of the web.

### Resources:

- 1 x webbing (tracer rope or other rope)
- 4 x secure poles or 2 trees
- 1 x helmet
- 6 x blindfolds
- Marking tape (mine tape)

**Space Required:** Medium. Outdoors only.

**Group Size:** 8 to 15 ideally.

**Total Time:** 20-30 minutes

- 5 minutes to brief and set up
- 10 - 20 minutes to complete challenge
- 5 minutes to review and debrief

### Running the Activity

- Before you start the challenge, take your time to check the spider's web and remove any potential hazards.
- Introduce the activity: The aim of the challenge is for the whole team to travel through the web. At the moment, the web is blocking your path to safety. Be careful though, as the web is extremely poisonous and any time a team member touches the web, the challenge will be restarted.
- Before starting the challenge, teach and review proper spotting techniques and emphasise the importance of safety during the task.

### Rules

- The team must pass through the gaps in the web, one at a time.
- Each gap in the web can only be used once. Once someone has travelled through the hole in the web, it is then closed off for the rest of the activity.
- Nothing (including clothing) can touch any part of the web, or the structure supporting the web.
- No other equipment may be used in this activity.
- The group must complete this activity in a safe manner or the activity will be stopped.
- If any guidelines are broken, the group will have to restart the challenge.

## **Safety**

- Ensure the web is stable.
- In order to prevent injuries when lifting and lowering each other, keep your back straight and bend your knees.
- Team members being passed through the web must do so face up.
- If anyone is being lifted, they are required to be wearing a helmet to minimize the risk of injury.
- Jumping and diving through the web is strictly prohibited.
- All participants must be spotted as they travel through the web.

## **Setup**

Tie 2 ropes from two poles (or trees) to form a rectangle. Connect tracer rope between the top and bottom to form holes which can be a variety of shapes. Ensure when making the holes that there are enough holes for each person in the group and think of the age and size of the group members. Make sure the web is secure before commencing the activity.

It is also a good idea to have cushions, pads or a soft landing area placed under the web structure to minimize risk of injury on a fall.

## **Suggested Learning Outcomes**

- Cooperation
- Communication
- Decision making
- Leadership
- Problem Solving
- Trust

## **Activity Guidance and Notes**

Generally, the first and last people to pass through the web will use the lower gaps so they do not need to be lifted. The people that are lifted need to pass through the higher gaps. If anyone is being lifted, then we recommend a helmet is worn. You should also monitor spotting technique to maintain the safety of the participant.

You can use marking tape (mine tape) to close gaps after challengers have passed through them.

If your group is not physically strong enough or mature enough, then do not attempt this activity.

## **Variation**

Allow each challenger or the whole team to accidentally touch the web a certain number of times before being penalised. This number can be reduced each time the web is attempted. When penalising, you can either send the individual back, or the entire team.

Each gap can be given a certain value, and in passing through the web the team must score a certain number of points.



## **Review**

Suggested questions to ask:

What was the goal of the challenge? What was stopping you from achieving your goal?

How important was it to plan? How did you decide on the best strategy?

Who had the best idea? How involved were they with the rest of the challenge?

How did you allocate roles within the team? Did you have a leader during the exercise?

What did you do when your plan wasn't working? How did you adapt your approach to the challenge?

Was everyone involved in the activity and play a part in the success of the task?

Did you fail? How did you cope and what did you do to improve?

How well did you work as a team? What are the key qualities of a team?

Reflecting on the experience, is there anything you would do differently?

# SPIDER'S WEB

## CHALLENGER BRIEF

### SCENARIO

Your team is lost in the Amazon jungle, and you have encountered a spider's web blocking your path. There is no way around the spider's web, so you must get your whole team to pass through it without getting caught.

Great care should be taken, not to touch the web when passing through as it's extremely poisonous.

### RULES

- Teams must pass through the gaps in the web (not around it), one at a time.
- Each gap in the web can only be used once.
- Nothing (including clothing) can touch any part of the web, or the structure supporting the web.
- No other equipment may be used in this activity.
- Failure to follow the above rules will result in the challenge being restarted.

### SAFETY

- Ensure the web is stable before proceeding.
- In order to prevent injuries when lifting and lowering each other, keep your back straight and bend your knees.
- Anyone traveling through the spider's web must be spotted.
- Jumping and diving through the web is strictly prohibited.

# TRAFFIC JAM

## ACTIVITY NOTES

### Overview

Traffic Jam is a real 'brain buster' that requires a lot of thinking and communication. This challenge is very similar to a human chess game. The group is split in two, with both sides working together to complete the challenge. Cooperation and planning are essential to complete this task.

**Resources:** Cones/Floor Markers

**Space Required:** Small. Indoors or Outdoors.

**Group Size:** 8-14 ideally (no more than 16)

**Total Time:** 55 minutes

- 5 minutes to brief and set up
- 40 minutes for challenge
- 10 minutes to review and debrief

### Running the Activity

- Split participants into two smaller groups (side A and B).
- Introduce the activity: The aim of Traffic Jam is for the two sides to work their way across to the opposite side in the same order. To achieve success, both sides must work together and carefully select the best move. If you make the wrong move, you will end up in a jam and will need to restart the challenge.
- Both groups must line up vertically (one behind the other) with A facing B and B facing A. Everyone should be lined up in their team, standing next to a cone.
- There should also be one free cone to begin with, separating the two teams. Note there will always be one unoccupied cone throughout the activity to allow team members to move.

**Start Order:** A B C D – FC - 1 2 3 4

**End Order:** 1 2 3 4 – FC - A B C D

### Rules

- No moving backwards.
- A person can only move forward to an empty space.
- A person cannot jump over or pass their own team member.
- Only one person may move at a time.
- Only one spot per person is allowed (no sharing).
- If any of these rules are broken, the group must begin again.

## **Suggested Learning Outcomes**

- Communication
- Cooperation
- Decision making
- Problem Solving
- Resilience and mental toughness

## **Activity Guidance and Notes**

This activity takes a lot of careful planning to complete. It is recommended that you only use this activity for mature teams, or as part of a life skills workshop to teach failure and resilience as teams can become very frustrated during the challenge.

If the group is really struggling, get them to break down the problem into smaller manageable problems. Set up the activity with just 4 people instead and see how they do. They should complete this quite quickly. If they do, add an extra two people and continue doing this until the whole group is back on the activity.

As a basic rule, no two members from the same team should be standing next to each other at any point. If they do, they'll find themselves in a jam quite quickly and will need to restart the activity (let them work this out).

## **Review**

Suggested questions to ask:

Did you plan effectively for the challenge?

What was the most frustrating part of the activity?

How many times did you fail? What does failure mean?

How did you overcome your frustrations?

Did you adapt your plan during the activity?

How well did you work as a team?

What stopped you from achieving success?

How could you have managed the problem better? Could you have broken down the problem into smaller problems then gradually build up?

Reflecting on the activity, what did you learn?

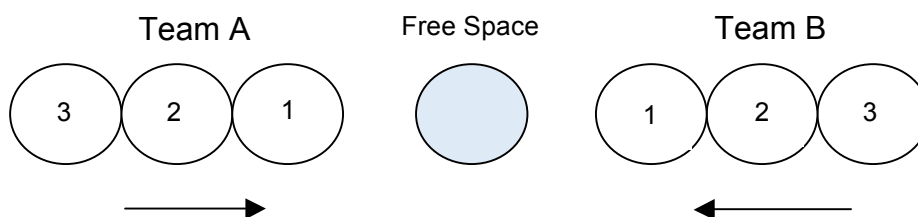
# TRAFFIC JAM

## CHALLENGER BRIEF

### HOW TO PLAY

- Split your team into two sub-teams (Team A and Team B). Ensure both teams have an equal number of participants.
- You will now see some cones in front of you. Team A should line up vertically on one side, Team B on the other.
- Everybody should be standing next to a cone, and lined up behind each other facing the team opposite.
- You will notice there is one free cone in the middle separating the two sides. Throughout the challenge, there will always be one space left unoccupied to allow team members to move.

#### Start Position



### THE CHALLENGE

The aim of Traffic Jam is for each side to work their way across to the opposite side by passing the other team. To achieve success, both sides must work together and carefully select the best move. If you make one wrong move, you will end up in a jam and will need to restart the challenge.

**Start Order:** A B C D – FC - 1 2 3 4

**End Order:** 1 2 3 4 – FC - A B C D

### RULES

- You can only move one at a time – if you attempt to do more, you will be told to return back to the start position.
- Participants in the same sub-team cannot pass each other.
- Once you have made a move you cannot return back to your previous position.
- There will always be one space which isn't occupied.
- No moving backwards.
- A person can only move forward to an empty space.
- A person cannot jump over or pass their own team member.

# TRAFFIC JAM

## ACTIVITY SOLUTION



- |         |  |
|---------|--|
| Step 1  | A moves forward to empty base          |
| Step 2  | 1 moves around A to empty base         |
| Step 3  | 2 moves forward to empty space         |
| Step 4  | A moves around 2 to open base          |
| Step 5  | B moves around 1                       |
| Step 6  | C moves forward to open base           |
| Step 7  | 1 moves around C                       |
| Step 8  | 2 moves around B                       |
| Step 9  | 3 moves around A                       |
| Step 10 | 4 moves forward to open base           |
| Step 11 | A moves around 4 (A completes switch)  |
| Step 12 | B moves around 3                       |
| Step 13 | C moves around 2                       |
| Step 14 | D moves around 1                       |
| Step 15 | 1 moves forward (1 completes switch)   |
| Step 16 | 2 moves around A (2 finishes)          |
| Step 17 | 3 moves around C                       |
| Step 18 | 4 moves around B                       |
| Step 19 | B moves forward (C finishes)           |
| Step 20 | C moves around 4 (B finishes)          |
| Step 21 | D moves around 3                       |
| Step 22 | 3 moves forward (3 finishes)           |
| Step 23 | 4 moves around A (4 finishes)          |
| Step 24 | D moves forward (the task is complete) |

### **FACILITATOR NOTE**

Two people from the same team must never stand next to each other to complete the challenge

# PART THREE

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## Blindfold Activities

"The single biggest problem in communication  
is the illusion that it has taken place."

*George Bernard Shaw*

# BLIND RETRIEVER

## ACTIVITY NOTES

### Overview

In this fun and challenging blindfold activity, groups are split into smaller sub-teams and must compete against each other to try and retrieve an object. One person is blindfolded in each team and directed by a team member to try and find the object before the other team does.

**Resources:** 1 x blindfold per team, markers, object to retrieve (can be anything: water bottle, ball, etc)

**Space Required:** Medium/Large. Indoors or Outdoors (the bigger the space the better).

**Group Size:** 8-24 per instructor (split into smaller teams of 4-6)

**Total Time:** 40 minutes

- 5 minutes to brief and set up
- 25 minutes to achieve outcome
- 10 minutes to review and debrief

### Running the Activity

- Risk assess the activity area and remove any potential hazards. Lay out a start line on the ground using marker cones or a rope.
- Split your group into smaller sub-teams of between 4-6 participants.
- Explain the activity: One person in each team will be blindfolded and will be given instructions by a team member to try and find an object. The team that finds the object first scores a point. The team with the most points at the end of the activity wins the challenge.
- Get each team to line up in a straight line, one behind each other facing you. The participants at the front of the line will be blindfolded first and the person behind them will give them directions.
- After the game is complete, the blindfolded participant moves to the back of the line and everyone else moves up a space. The person giving the instructions now becomes the blindfolded participant.

### Rules

- Only one person from each team is allowed to give commands.
- Only blindfolded participants may cross the start line.
- No running is allowed.
- You cannot try to sabotage the other teams by giving direction to a blindfolded participant not on your team.



## **Game Progression**

After 2-3 rounds, allow time to review the challenge and discuss with the group. What did they find was difficult and what would help?

Hopefully, you should get the answer that it is difficult to understand team members, because everyone is shouting the same commands: forwards, left, back, right, etc.

The learning lesson: the key differences between what we think communication is and **effective communication**.

Once the teams have established how difficult it is to understand their own team members, give them three minutes to come up with their own commands. The one rule is that none of the teams are allowed to use any words and must only use noises.

Begin the game again and see how they get on. Allow time after each round for teams to review what they are doing and think about how they can improve. This teaches the importance of reviewing performance, reflective practice and teamwork.

## **Safety**

- Identify out-of-bounds areas.
- The sighted person must always support their partners and avoid potential hazards in the area.

## **Suggested Learning Outcomes**

- Communication
- Cooperation
- Trust
- Leadership
- Review and reflection

## **Activity Guidance and Notes**

Think about your positioning when monitoring the safety of active participants. Ensure that you can see everybody. If you spot a blindfolded participant going off in a different direction, stop them, turn them around and set them off again.

To make the game more difficult, move the item they are trying to retrieve a couple of times to confuse them. If you spot someone ready to pick up the object, get there first and throw it in a completely different direction. Try not to do this too many times as it becomes painfully frustrating for all and predictable.

When you ask the groups to come up with their own commands, you will find they will have similar noises and that they forget a command for picking up the object (which is actually quite funny and helpful). Use this as a review point at the end of the activity and allow them time to change commands between games.

## **Review**

Suggested questions to ask:

Did you trust your teammates to guide you in the right direction?

How difficult was it to understand your teammates? How could you make it easier?

What's the difference between communication and effective communication?

How did you plan? Who come up with the idea?

Would you say you had a team leader for the challenge?

Did you review your performance as a team? How important was this?

# BLIND SHAPES

## ACTIVITY NOTES

### Overview

Team are blindfolded and tasked with forming a number of geometric shapes defined by the facilitator.

**Resources:** Blindfolds (for each person), 6 – 8m of rope

**Space Required:** Medium. Indoors or outdoors.

**Group Size:** 8 to 15 ideally.

**Total Time:** 20-30 minutes

- 5 minutes to brief and set up
- 10-20 minutes to complete activity
- 5 minutes to review and debrief

### Running the Activity

- Ask the group to line up in a straight line and give everyone a blindfold to put on.
- Get participants to put their hands in front of them and then place the length of rope in their hands.
- Now give them a shape to create with the rope. Start with something simple such as a square. When the team feel they have completed the task, they can take off the blindfolds on your command to check the results.
- Allow time to reflect on the task and review with the group. If time permits, give them another shape to form (triangle, hexagon, or octagon).

### Rules

- Participants must hold onto the rope with both hands for the entire activity. Letting go of the rope, even for a moment, is not permitted.
- Blindfolds cannot be removed, unless instructed otherwise.
- Failure to follow the above rules will result in restarting the activity.

### Suggested Learning Outcomes

- Communication
- Cooperation
- Problem solving
- Trust

## **Activity Guidance and Notes**

To make the challenge more difficult, tell the group they cannot talk during the challenge. Give them a time limit or get them to form two shapes from the same length of rope.

Doing this challenge with younger children can be quite difficult, so make the challenge easier by only blindfolding half the team (the ones that feel comfortable).

If you have a large group, divide into smaller teams of around 12 people and either get the teams to compete against one another, or give them two different shapes to form.

Another way of teaching this activity is to show a shape to just one member of the team (you can also tell them). They then return back to the group, put on their blindfold, and must then try to communicate the shape to the rest of the group without saying the name of the shape.

## **Review**

Suggested questions to ask:

How did you feel being blindfolded?

Did you find the experience frustrating?

How well do you feel you communicated as a team?

Did you come up with a plan or strategy for creating the shapes?

How did you discuss this as a group?

Did anyone adopt the leadership responsibility within the team? Were they selected?

Why is leadership essential for this challenge?

What's the difference between communication and effective communication?

What did you learn through the experience?

# BLINDFOLD MAZE

## ACTIVITY NOTES

### Overview

Blindfolded participants are given a route by their partners, and then tasked with retracing their steps without any instruction to try and end up as close to the start point as possible.

**Resources:** Ground markers, blindfolds (one per pair)

**Space Required:** Medium. Indoors or Outdoors.

|

**Group Size:** Any. Maximum of 20 participants (10 pairs) per facilitator.

**Total Time:** 25-30 minutes

- 5 minutes to brief and set up
- 15-20 minutes for activity
- 5 minutes to review and debrief

### Running the Activity

- Place a marker cone on the floor to define a start point.
- Get team members to partner up and then introduce the activity: One person will be blindfolded, while the other will give verbal direction and create a route in the area. After the time is up, the blindfolded person must then use their memory, to retrace their steps to try and end up as close to the starting point as possible (the closer they are to the start point the better).
- Start the activity and allow 2 minutes for partners to create a route for their blindfolded partner. After the time is up, give the blindfolded participants 3 minutes to retrace their steps and try to get as close to the start point as possible.
- Switch roles and the other person has their turn.

### Safety

- Identify out-of-bounds areas.
- The sighted person must always support their partners and avoid potential hazards in the area. Sighted people should consider their positioning when guiding their partner.
- If any pair fails to follow the rules, they will be asked to stop and sit out the activity.

### Suggested Learning Outcomes

- Communication
- Decision making
- Leadership
- Memory
- Trust

## **Activity Guidance and Notes**

You can also try this activity with groups of three instead of pairs. You follow the same instructions, but you have two blindfolded participants instead of one. Both blindfolded participants must try to retrace their steps back to the start point.

## **Review**

Suggested questions to ask:

How difficult was that activity?

What did you have to consider before directing your partner?

How did you memorise the route?

How did you feel when you were blindfolded?

Did you feel safe when you were given instructions?

How well did your partner communicate with you?

What are the key qualities of a leader?

Did your partner support you during the challenge?

Did you use any other senses besides hearing?

# NIGHT TRAIL

## ACTIVITY NOTES

### Overview

Working as a team, blindfolded participants follow a rope and try to navigate their way around a series of obstacles. Trust, support, leadership and communication are essential for this challenge.

**Resources:** Blindfolds, rope/tracer, temporary fencing stakes, course obstacles (tires, cargo netting, soft floor mats, etc)

**Space Required:** Medium. Indoors or Outdoors.

**Group Size:** Maximum of 15 participants (per facilitator)

**Total Time:** 65 minutes

- 10 minutes to brief and set up
- 20 minutes Introductory Game and task review
- 25 minutes on main challenge
- 10 minutes to review and debrief

Hand out the blindfolds. Brief participants to take care when moving about and to use their hands (touch) to ensure they don't bump into other participants

### Running the Activity

Ensure you have adequate space for this activity and the area is free from hazards (empty field is ideal).

#### **Blindfold Introductory Game (Optional)**

- Get the group to stand in a straight line (side-by-side) facing you.
- You will give the group a series of commands and all they have to do is follow them. Commands include: forwards, backwards, right, left, turn 180 degrees, etc.

*Example command instructions: everyone take 5 steps forwards, everyone take 3 steps to your right, turn 180 degrees, 2 steps to your left, 5 steps back, etc.*

- Do this without using any blindfolds to start with, so they can see where they're going – they should all end up in a straight line.
- Give this a try again but this time wearing blindfolds. Give out 15-20 commands and then get participants to remove their blindfolds.
- Hopefully they should be spread all over the place and nowhere near a straight line as before.
- Bring everybody back for a quick review and discuss:
  - How they felt during the challenge?
  - How difficult was it without their sight?

- What did they have to rely upon for guidance?
- Why didn't they end up in a straight line?

### **Night Trail Activity Instructions**

- Introduce the activity: Your team will be taking part in a blindfold challenge course. The key to the activity is for the group to communicate effectively and work together as a team.
- Organise the group into a straight line (standing behind each other). Explain safety points to the group (see below) and then hand out the blindfolds.
- Ask participants to place their hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them. You will then guide the leader at the front of the line towards the challenge course using a bag or something they can hold on to (you can use the blindfold bag).
- Once they are at the course, ask participants to let go of their teammates' shoulders and hold the rope either to left or right of them (depending on how you set up the course).
- The group can now begin the course; just ensure they follow the rope at all times.
- Keep an eye on the group and monitor for safety and anyone who strays off track. If they are struggling then you can help them. However, try not to interfere and allow the group to explore the course working as a team. This activity is about self-discovery or rather team-discovery.
- Once they have completed the course, move them to an area away from the course, so they can't see what it looks like. Get them to create a team chain (hands on the shoulder of the person in front of them) and follow your guidance.
- After you have reviewed the activity, go back to the course and allow them to see what it looks like. They'll be pleasantly surprised that it is pretty basic and a lot smaller than they imagined.

### **Rules**

- Follow the rope at all times.
- No overtaking. Stay in the same order unless instructed otherwise.
- Wherever the rope goes, you go, if the rope goes low, you go low, if the rope goes high, you go high.
- If you are told to stop at any point, you must stop and wait for further instruction.
- Keep your blindfolds on at all times, unless instructed otherwise.

### **Course Setup**

Select an appropriate area for your trail course. You can hammer a number of poles (or temporary fencing stakes) into the ground with rope tied/connected to them, or you can even connect the rope between trees if you have a woodland space available. If you are using a woodland area, ensure you do a full risk assessment and eliminate any potential hazards such as tree branches, nettles, etc.

It is also possible to do a course indoors. You just need to connect the rope between two or more areas. We recommend running the activity outside though, as it adds to the experience.



Mark out a trail course with rope or tracer cord. The trail should include areas of sensory interest such as over grass, over soft floor mats, under a cargo net for crawling, stepping on tires, etc. – just be creative with the resources you have available.

### **Suggested Learning Outcomes**

- Comfort zones
- Communication
- Cooperation
- Leadership
- Risk awareness
- Sensory awareness
- Trust

### **Activity Guidance and Notes**

Monitoring the safety of your participants is essential. If your team comes across an element of the course which is hazardous, then stand at the element and monitor (helping them if needed).

You will find that the person leading the task speeds off and you end up with a massive gap. Allow this to happen to begin with, then get them to stop and wait for everyone else to catch up. Use this as a learning lesson during the activity and emphasise the importance of teamwork.

Add an air of mystery to the course by having some sound effects ready. Try making a few animal noises or even ruffling leaves. Some leaders use water during the challenge – however we recommend staying away from it, as it could cause potential safety issues. If you do use water, only flick onto participants rather than tipping or throwing.

If you don't have enough time for the full activity, get the group straight onto the night trail course and skip the introductory game.

If you have more time available then make a full day (or half) of it and finish with the night trail course. Add some extra blindfold games to build on the skills learnt and keep developing teamwork before tackling the course.

Recommended blindfolded activities:

- Blindfold Maze
- Trust Walk
- Blind Shapes
- Sheep and Shepherd

More blindfold game descriptions can be found on <http://www.ventureteambuilding.co.uk>

### **Review**

Suggested questions to ask:

How did you feel being blindfolded?

What was the most frustrating part of the experience?

What did you learn about communication skills during the challenge?

How did you support others in the group?

Did you trust your team? Did you feel comfortable during the activity?

Why was leadership important during the challenge?

How important was touch and hearing during the challenge?

If you could describe your experience in one word, what word would you choose and why?

# SHEEP AND SHEPHERD

## ACTIVITY NOTES

### Overview

In smaller teams, blindfolded team members must be guided into a pen by the shepherd giving them verbal commands. The team that pens the most number of sheep in the quickest time wins the challenge.

**Resources:** Blindfolds and cones

**Space Required:** Medium. Indoors or Outdoors.

**Group Size:** 6 to 10 ideally, but can be done with more split into smaller teams.

**Total Time:** 50 minutes

- 5 minutes to brief and setup
- 15 minutes to plan
- 20 minutes for activity (five minutes per team)
- 10 minutes to review and debrief

### Running the Activity

- Introduce the activity: In your teams, you must select one person to be a shepherd; everyone else will be sheep. The aim of the challenge is for the shepherd to try and navigate blindfolded sheep into the pen. The team that directs the most number of sheep into the pen wins the challenge.
- Discuss and clarify activity rules.
- Before you begin, provide each group with ten to fifteen minutes to plan how they are going to communicate and give direction.
- While the groups are planning, you can begin setting up the course. Use the cones to mark a starting point and locate a pen around 10-15 metres away. Obstacle locations will be changed for each group.
- When the groups are ready, select one team to go first.
- All sheep will begin at the start point next to the shepherd. The shepherd is not allowed to leave this area or to physically guide the sheep; they can only direct them through verbal communication.
- Get the sheep to put their blindfolds on and then lay out the marker cones in the area. Once you are happy with the layout, begin the activity.
- Allow five minutes per team or until all sheep have been penned. At the end of the team's turn, note down the number of sheep in the pen and the time it took to complete the activity.
- Repeat for all teams and remember to change the location of the obstacles.
- At the end of the activity, tell the groups the final results and then review.

## **Rules**

- Shepherds can only direct the sheep through sounds – no words are allowed.
- Shepherds are not allowed past the start point.
- Only one sheep can be guided at a time.
- You have 5 minutes to complete the challenge.
- Each sheep has 3 lives. If you hit an obstacle, you will lose a life. If you use all your lives, you will be removed from the activity and your team will lose a sheep.

## **Safety**

- Risk assess the area you will be using for the activity and ensure it is free from any potential hazards.
- Monitor safety throughout the activity and think about your positioning when observing the teams.

## **Suggested Learning Outcomes**

- Communication
- Leadership
- Problem solving
- Resilience
- Trust

## **Review**

Suggested questions to ask:

How did you decide who would be the shepherd for the activity?

Did you discuss a strategy for the activity? How did you come up with this?

Did everyone have an opportunity to share their ideas?

What is communication? How do we know whether communication is effective?

How much planning and preparation did you do before the final activity?

Did you change your strategy at any point?

Why is it important to review your plan and adapt?

Did you trust the shepherd to guide you in the right direction?

# TRUST WALK

## ACTIVITY NOTES

### Overview

Working in pairs, blindfolded participants are led on a walk around the surrounding area or a course by their partners. This is great activity for focusing on communication skills and developing trust.

**Resources:** Blindfolds and cones

**Space Required:** Medium. Indoors or Outdoors.

**Group Size:** Maximum of 20 participants (10 pairs per facilitator).

**Total Time:** 35 minutes

- 5 minutes to brief and setup
- 20 minutes = 4 x 5 minute trust walks
- 10 minutes to review and debrief

### Running the Activity

- Organise the group into pairs and get them to number themselves either one or two.
- Explain that during this activity, one person will be blindfolded, the other sighted. The sighted person will take their blindfolded partner on a journey for five minutes using the space around them. Once they have completed the five minutes, they will then swap roles.
- Tell the group to be creative and tell a story to their partners while they're blindfolded to make the experience more interesting. This provides an opportunity for the sighted person to be creative and the blindfolded person to use their imagination.
- When guiding their partner, they may at first be led through physical contact, then progress to using verbal instructions only.
- Start the trust walks, ensuring that you monitor the safety throughout.
- After both have experienced being blindfolded, switch partners and allow each person to team up with someone new.

### Safety

- Identify out-of-bounds areas.
- The sighted person must always support their partner and avoid potential hazards in the area.
- Sighted people should think about their positioning when guiding their partner.
- If any pair fails to follow the rules they will be asked to stop and sit out the activity.

## **Suggested Learning Outcomes**

- Communication
- Creative thinking
- Leadership
- Risk awareness
- Trust

## **Activity Guidance and Notes**

Use this activity if you have an environment that is safe for conducting the activity. Use it only with people who will respond well and learn from it. If anyone indicates they are uncomfortable, be sure to respect their wishes and allow them to sit out or change the activity.

Think about your position when teaching this activity. Stand in a position where you have participants in full view and can stop a pair when you have a concern about their safety.

## **Review**

Suggested questions to ask:

How did you feel being blindfolded? Did you trust your partner?

Were their instructions and explanations clear? Did you understand them?

What was the most frustrating part of the experience?

What did you learn about communication skills during the challenge?

Did you feel safe? Can you give an example of when you might go into a situation blind?

How does this relate to business, coaching or mentoring?

# MORE BLINDFOLD ACTIVITIES

Here is a selection of quick and easy to deliver blindfold team building activities. These activities can be delivered in less than 20 minutes and only require a blindfold and a rope. Great for developing communication skills, especially active listening and they are also good fun!

**Resources:** Blindfolds, length of rope

**Space Required:** Low to large (depending on the challenge). Indoors or Outdoors.

**Group Size:** 12 to 15 ideally, but can be done with up to 30 participants.

## Key Keeper

In a good sized space, set out an area as a start/end point. Next lay a set of keys (or any object) about 5 metres in front of the area. The aim of the challenge is for a blindfolded key keeper to protect the keys and stop the rest of the group from retrieving them.

Select a person to act as the key keeper. They will then sit in the middle of the area on the floor, close to the keys. Everyone else will try and take the keys from the keeper.

Participants can only move when they are instructed to do so by the facilitator (you can do this by pointing at them). Once the person has set off, they can then make a play for the keys. If the key keeper points at them at any time, they then have to return back to the start point. Start off with just one person at a time, before building up to several players attempting to retrieve the keys at once.

Once the keys have been retrieved, you can either swap with the person who took the keys, or they can select someone else in the group to act as the next keeper.

## Blind Shadow

Organise your group into a circle. Explain that one person will be selected to be the shadow of the group. The shadow's aim is to walk around the circle, behind the blindfolded group and try and get them out of the game.

They do this by standing behind another person for 5 seconds – once the 5 seconds are up, the facilitator will tap the person on the shoulder and they must then sit down as they are now out of the game.

To prevent the shadow from catching them out, if someone believes the shadow is standing behind them, they can raise their hand. They will be told if they catch the shadow out. They can only do this a maximum of 3 times; any more and they will be out of the game (prevents constant hand raising).

Once a group member catches the shadow, they then become the shadow and you restart the game.

## Blind Animals

This works extremely well with groups of 10 or more. Divide the group into smaller sub-teams and give each team an animal type. Now ask everyone to find their own space. Get

them to put their blindfolds on. Give some simple commands such as: 5 steps backwards, 4 to your left, 6 to your right etc to mix them up more. On your signal, participants then have to make the sound of their animal and find other people of the same animal type. Eventually everyone should end up with their own sub-team.

Instead of using sub-teams, you can also do this in pairs or smaller groups of 3.

This can also be used at the start of a workshop when organising participants into teams. Give everyone a piece of paper with an animal written on it and begin the exercise.

Suggested animal types: Elephants, monkeys, cows, chicken, lions, dogs, cats, etc.

### **Cat and Mouse**

Organise the group into a large circle. The aim of the game is for the cat to catch the mouse. Sounds easy, but both will be blindfolded and they can move just one space at a time.

Select two people: one to act as a cat, the other as a mouse. Invite them into the circle and get them to put on blindfolds. You can then move both the cat and mouse to the edge of the circle to create a good distance between them.

They will then take it in turns to move, with the cat going first, followed by the mouse. Remind them they can only move one step at a time. When they move, they have to say either 'cat' or 'mouse' depending on the role they are playing.

On your command, they can then begin the game. Once the mouse has been caught or the game has gone on long enough, stop the game and switch the cat and mouse with others in the group and repeat.



# PART FOUR

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## Quick Team Builders

"I have not failed. I've just found 10,000  
ways that won't work."

*Thomas A. Edison*

# ALL ABOARD

## ACTIVITY NOTES

### Overview

The entire team must fit inside a circle. After each success, the circle will shrink and gradually get smaller and smaller until the team has to rely heavily on support and teamwork to complete the challenge.

**Resources:** Rope or shoe laces tied together

**Space Required:** Low. Indoors or Outdoors.

**Group Size:** 8-15 people depending on the size of the area used.

**Total Time:** 20 minutes

- 5 minutes to brief and set up
- 10 minutes to achieve outcome
- 5 minutes to review and debrief

### Running the Activity

- Make a large circle with your rope.
- Introduce the activity: Your team has been caught on a sinking ship and your team has managed to use the safety raft to travel to the nearest island. The Coast Guard has been notified of your situation and has sent out a rescue ship. The area around the island is full of sharks and the tide is coming in quick. With the island shrinking with every minute that passes, can your team hold on and survive until you are rescued?
- Get everyone into the circle and count up to 10. Get them to step out of the circle and decrease the size. Repeat this several times until the group are no longer able to fit everyone in the area and have to rely on support and teamwork.

### Rules

- Everyone must be touching the inside of the circle
- The group must remain in the circle for at least 10 seconds (you can increase or decrease the length of time depending on the age and ability of the group).
- The circle may not be altered in any way.
- If any of the rules are not followed, the group must begin again.

### Suggested Learning Outcomes

- Cooperation
- Communication
- Goal setting
- Leadership
- Problem solving

## **Activity Guidance and Notes**

To start the challenge, set a target for the group which seems impossible. After a failed attempt at completing the challenge, create a much bigger space for the group to fit inside. Once they complete this, continue to decrease the size of the space and eventually end up at the original sized space (the one they failed to complete at the beginning of the challenge). This teaches them about goal setting, breaking down problems, learning through the process and resilience.

During the latter stage of this challenge, when the space is at a premium, participants are going to need to feel physically comfortable with one another to fit inside the space. Keep an eye on participants to ensure they don't put anyone at risk when lifting each other.

This activity will require the group to be calm, responsible and mature. Do not allow the group to fall over in such a way as to injure a group member. If they fail to follow instructions, or are simply not ready for this activity, don't do it.

### **Variation**

When the group finds the task easy, try muting the team members that are leading the task. This will give others the opportunity to grow in confidence and challenge themselves.

For younger groups, instead of saying, 'everyone must fit inside the area', try 'everyone must be touching the area'. This will hopefully improve their listening skills and simplify the task for them without it being physically challenging.

As the circle gets smaller, the group usually goes through a period where they don't believe they can fit into such a small area. It's only through creative thinking and hard work that the group is able to solve this challenge.

### **Review**

Suggested questions to ask:

What did you find challenging and why?

What was the goal for this challenge? What prevented you from achieving it?

How did you work together to achieve your goal?

What is progressive goal setting? Do you set goals in your life?

Why was cooperation important for this task?

Did you support other team members?

How did you come up with your plan?

Did you have a leader? What makes a good leader?

What happened when things didn't go as planned? What did you do to overcome this?

# BUNGEE EXERCISES

## ACTIVITY NOTES

### Overview

Here are a couple of bungee exercises that can be used when you are looking for a quick team building exercise and you have a limited budget. These exercises can be used in a team meeting, or at the start of a workshop to develop teamwork and communication.

**Resources:** Bungee cord and stopwatch

**Space Required:** Small. Indoors or Outdoors.

**Group Size:** 8 to 15 ideally. Minimum of 6 participants – Maximum of 20.

**Total Time:** 20 minutes

- 2 minutes to brief and set up
- 3 minutes for planning
- 10 minutes for each exercise
- 5 minutes to review and debrief

### Through the Loop

The objective of this challenge is for everyone in the group to pass through the loop as quickly as possible. After the group has completed the challenge, keep lowering the time limit and push them to improve their time.

### Running the Activity

- The objective of the exercise is for every participant to travel through the bungee cord as quickly as possible. Set them a target which is achievable such as 90 seconds (depending on the amount of participants).
- Once they have achieved the set target, get them to reflect on their performance and think about how they can improve their time. Reduce the time limit and set them a new target.
- Every time the team succeeds, reduce the time limit. This exercise teaches them the importance of goal setting and reflecting on performance.

### Loop-De-Loop

The team stands in a circle and holds hands. Place the bungee cord over one pair of joined hands. The bungee must travel around the loop and back to the start position with every person in the group passing through the loop.

## **Running the Activity**

- Have the group stand in a circle and hold hands.
- Then have one pair release their hands and reach through the bungee and then reconnect hands.
- The aim of the challenge is for the loop to travel in a clockwise direction and return to the initial starting position.
- The team must stay connected by hands at all times – no letting go.

## **Suggested Learning Outcomes**

- Communication
- Cooperation
- Goal setting
- Leadership

## **Review**

Suggested questions to ask:

How important was it to select a leader for the exercise?

What are the key qualities of a leader?

How did you plan for the challenge? Did you change your approach to the exercise?

How well did you communicate? Is there anything you could have improved on?

Did you work well as a team? Did you have an opportunity to share your ideas?

What was the goal of the challenge? Why is it important to set goals?

Once we understand the goal, what is the best way to approach it?

# HOLE TARP

## ACTIVITY NOTES

### Overview

The objective of this challenge is for the team to work together to navigate a ball around a tarpaulin for as long as possible without the ball falling through a hole or off the tarp completely.

**Resources:** One tarpaulin with randomly cut holes and 1-3 tennis balls per group.

**Space Required:** Medium. Indoors or Outdoors.

**Group Size:** 8 to 16 ideally (per tarpaulin).

**Total Time:** 30 minutes

- 5 minutes to brief the group, allow planning and set up
- 20 minutes for challenge
- 5 minutes to review and debrief

### Running the Activity

- Introduce the activity to the group: The aim of the challenge is for the tennis ball to travel around the tarp for the longest time possible without falling through the holes or coming off the tarp.
- Provide the tarp and get participants to hold it with both hands, creating a table-top effect.
- Before you place the tennis ball on the tarpaulin, explain the rules of the challenge. Next, allow the group some time to discuss the challenge and think of a strategy to deal with the problem. Once ready, place the tennis ball on the tarp and begin the challenge.
- If the group finds the challenge easy, add an extra tennis ball or two to increase the difficulty.

### Rules:

- If the ball falls off the tarpaulin or through a hole, the team must restart the challenge.
- Participants must keep hold of the tarp with both hands.
- The tarp must be stretched out, so that it remains flat at all times (like a table top).
- The team must hold the tarp in the air and NOT place the tarp on the ground.
- If the ball starts to roll off the tarp, participants may use their body to act like a “bumper” to keep the ball on the tarp. However, they cannot remove their hands and let go of the tarp.
- Tarp holes may not be blocked, nor can the tarp be altered.

## **Suggested Learning Outcomes**

- Communication
- Cooperation
- Problem solving
- Reviewing and reflection

## **Activity Guidance and Notes**

Provide the group with a time limit. When they complete the challenge, increase the time limit. To make this challenge easier, you can cover some of the holes with paper and tape. As the group improves, uncover holes. Both of these variations teach goal setting and progressive development.

You can also have the group circle the holes in a specific order. Label them by number or letters and give the group a pattern or word to follow.

## **Review**

Suggested questions to ask:

How did you come up with a strategy for completing the challenge?

Did you communicate effectively from the start? How did you manage this?

Did you have a leader for the challenge? What role did you play within the team?

How important was it to support others?

How did your team cope when you had more than one ball to deal with?

Did you plan or strategy change when you had more problems (balls) to deal with?

Looking back is there anything you would do differently?

What did you learn from this activity?

# HUMAN KNOT

## ACTIVITY NOTES

### Overview

Starting in a circle, participants connect hands with two other people in the group to form the human knot. As a team, they must then try to unravel the “human knot” by untangling themselves without breaking the chain of hands.

**Resources:** None

**Space Required:** Small. Indoors or Outdoors.

**Group Size:** 8 to 12 ideally. You must have at least 4 participants to play.

**Total Time:** 20-30 minutes

- 5 minutes to brief and set up
- 10 - 20 minutes for challenge
- 5 minutes to review and debrief

### Running the Activity

- Get the group to form a circle.
- Tell them to put their right hand up in the air, and then grab the hand of someone across the circle from them.
- Then repeat this with the left hand, ensuring they grab a different person’s hand.
- Check to make sure that everyone is holding the hands of two different people and they are not holding hands with someone on either side of them.
- They must now try to untangle themselves to form a circle without breaking the chain of hands. Allocate a time limit to complete this challenge (generally 10 – 20 minutes).
- If the chain of hands is broken at any point, they must then start over again.

### Safety

- Get participants to take their time in order to limit injuries.
- Ask the group not to tug or pull on each other.

### Suggested Learning Outcomes

- Leadership
- Cooperation
- Time management

### Activity Guidance and Notes

If you have a group larger than 16, split them into smaller sub-groups to make the challenge easier. If there are too many people in a human knot, it becomes extremely difficult for the group to succeed.



To make the task more challenging, give teams a time limit on this activity (this forces them to focus on time management and the outcome). You can also blindfold or mute participants throughout the activity, especially when you want quieter members of the group to take the lead.

Instead of making groups start over when the chain is broken, you can create penalties like blindfolding or muting a group member.

If you have an odd number, then select one team member to lead the challenge and be the team's eyes from the side. You can swap them mid-way through the challenge, if they're not engaged in the activity.

## **Review**

Suggested questions to ask:

How did you feel during the activity?

Would you say you succeeded as a team?

How would you rate how you worked as a team?

Was everyone actively involved in the challenge?

Did you have a leader for this challenge? How did they help?

Did you communicate well as a team?

Is there anything you would do differently next time?

Did you have a strategy or plan for completing the challenge? Did you adapt this at any point?

Why is it important to review performance?

# MAGIC CANE

## ACTIVITY NOTES

### Overview

Teams are given a magic cane (also known as helium stick) which they must lower to the ground, using just their index fingers. All participants must remain in contact with the cane at all times. What seems like a simple task can become incredibly frustrating and funny for all involved.

**Resources:** 1 thin, lightweight, bamboo cane (can be purchased from a garden store) or tent-pole.

**Space Required:** Small. Indoors or Outdoors.

**Group Size:** 8 to 12 but can be done with 6 to 15

**Total Time:** 20-25 minutes

- 5 minutes to brief and set up
- 10 - 15 minutes for challenge
- 5 minutes to review and debrief

### Running the Activity

- Split the group into two and line them up in two rows facing each other.
- Introduce the magic cane to the group.
- Ask participants to hold their arms out in front of them and point their index fingers forwards.
- Lay the stick down on their fingers.
- Get the group to adjust their finger heights until the cane is horizontal and everyone's index fingers are in contact.
- Explain that the challenge is to lower the cane to the ground, while index fingers remain in contact.

### Rules

- Everybody's index fingers must remain in contact with the cane at all times.
- Pinching or grabbing is not permitted – it must rest on top of fingers only.
- If anyone's finger is caught not touching the magic cane, the challenge will be restarted.

### Safety

- Team members should take care when holding the cane, especially when handling the end.

## **Suggested Learning Outcomes**

- Communication
- Cooperation
- Goal setting
- Leadership
- Problem Solving

## **Activity Guidance and Notes**

The collective pressure created by everyone's fingers tends to be greater than the weight of the bamboo cane. As a result, the more a group tries, the more the cane 'floats' upwards.

To increase the difficulty of the challenge, introduce a no talking rule, or blindfold one of the participants.

The key to the task is identifying the problem – there is no set solution. If you ask the participants, they will usually identify the problem as getting the cane to the floor. This is a common mistake as this is the goal not the problem. The thing that is stopping them from achieving the goal is themselves.

It is very important that if this task is repeated the group succeed. By doing so, it reinforces the learning that taken place in this activity. If the group are still incapable of solving the task (this is usually caused by a conflict in communication or a lack of leadership) you need to join in with the group and act as the leader to solve the task. You would then use this as an example of good group communication and clear leadership.

## **Review**

Suggested questions to ask:

How did you plan for the challenge?

Did you change your approach to the challenge? Why was it important to do that?

What was the goal of the activity? What was stopping you from achieving that goal?

Why did the cane rise when you tried to lower it to the ground?

Looking back on the activity, is there anything you would do differently?

How important was leadership during the activity?

How well did you communicate as a team?

How do you define success? What leads to success?

Looking back on the experience, is there anything you can take away?

# PHOTO FINISH

## ACTIVITY NOTES

### Overview

The aim of the challenge is for the whole group to step across the line at exactly the same time. If one person is out of sync, then they must start over again. This activity involves planning, communication, timing and resilience.

**Resources:** Marker cones or rope (anything to make a straight line with).

**Space Required:** Low. Indoors or Outdoors.

**Group Size:** 8 to 15 ideally, but can be done with up to 20.

**Total Time:** 20 minutes

- 5 minutes to brief the group, allow planning and set up
- 10 minutes to achieve outcome
- 5 minutes review and debrief

### Running the Activity

- Line the team up side-by-side behind a marked line on the floor (can be marked with a length of rope or cones).
- Explain that every team member must step across the line at exactly the same time.
- Give the group 10 minutes to make 5 attempts to cross the finish line.
- If one person steps across before the rest of the group does, and the group is out of sync, then you shout, 'click' and the team restarts the challenge.
- Think about your placement, keep an eye on everyone and remain vigilant at all times. The group will find it difficult to start with as they rarely prepare for the challenge.

### Suggested Learning Outcomes

- Communication
- Cooperation
- Leadership
- Resilience
- Time Management

### Activity Guidance and Notes

Allow the group an opportunity to plan effectively for the challenge. Leadership is essential for the completion of the challenge to prevent chaos and shouting within the group. If they don't initially select a leader, bring them back and make it a discussion point.

The focus of the task is teamwork. Participants may blame each other for the failure of the task – ensure they understand the failing of the task is because of the team. Get them to think about support and encouragement.

There is no solution to the problem as such. The best method of completing the challenge is for the tallest participants to be placed on the outside of the line, so they can look across and see the smaller members in the middle. The leader should be placed in the middle of the group, so everybody can hear instructions clearly.

A good way of reviewing the group's attempt and validating a ruling is to take a picture of each 'click'.

## **Review**

Suggested questions to ask in the review:

How did you plan for the challenge?

Who selected the leader and why?

How did you manage the time effectively?

Who decided on the best method of dealing with the challenge?

Did you work well as a team? Is there anything you could improve?

How well did you communicate?

Did you review and adapt your plan?

What was the goal of the challenge? What stopped you from achieving this?

# PART FIVE

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## Ice Breakers

“People fail to get along because they fear each other;  
they fear each other because they don't know each other;  
they don't know each other because they  
have not communicated with each other.”

*Martin Luther King Jr.*

# Ice Breakers and Games

Whether you're teaching a management workshop, facilitating a team development day, or providing a multi-activity day for kids, getting to know your group can either be a struggle or very fun.

Ice breakers serve as a vehicle for getting participants to introduce themselves, break down barriers and nervousness. Most importantly, they help build a positive atmosphere.

The best time to use these activities is when the group first meets, or at the start of a training session. By doing some of these simple tasks first, you help participants develop trust and a rapport with each other, which leads to a positive experience for them during the main activity.

## **Animal Name Game**

Organise your group into a circle and select someone to start the game. The selected person begins by saying their name, and then an animal that begins with the same letter as the first letter in their name (e.g. David the Dingo).

The person sitting next to them in a clockwise direction, then repeats the first person's name and animal and then adds their own name and animal. This continues around the circle, with each person repeating everyone else's name and animal before adding their own. The last person in the circle will find the game the most difficult, as they have to repeat the names and animals of the whole group.

If someone messes up, the person who went before them has to repeat their turn and the game continues from there.

## **Animals**

Write down the names of various animals that make a distinct noise (such as an elephant, monkey, etc.) on different slips of paper (ensure you do this at least twice for each animal). Give the slips out to your group and tell them they have to find other people in the group that have the same animal without talking. Most participants will start making animal noises and/or gestures. This is a fun way to put people into teams for other activities, games or ice breakers.

## **Bus Stop**

Group members make choices (express their opinions) by getting on and off an imaginary bus. What follows is a number of word pairs, where individuals have to decide which one they agree with and why. This can be used as both a team building exercise and a fun ice breaker.

Create an imaginary bus by laying two ropes on the ground and in a parallel formation. The ropes should be about 10 – 15 feet apart. Get the whole group to stand between the ropes and face you. As the facilitator, you will be the bus driver for this exercise and standing at the front of the bus facing the group (your passengers).

Word pairs are read out by the bus driver (refer to the list below) and as the driver reads them, points to one side or the other. The passengers get off the bus on the side they most associate with at that time.

*For example: the bus driver says, “talk” (pointing to the left side) and “listen” (pointing to the right side).*

Allow time to discuss the choices with the group. Then say “Back on the bus!” and everyone steps back on (standing between the ropes) and you repeat with a different pairing.

#### Example Word Pairings

- Day/Night
- Spend/Save
- Shark/Dolphin
- Cat/Dog
- PC/Mac
- Run/Walk
- Listen/Talk
- Triangle/Square
- Read/TV
- Comedy/Thriller
- Sun/Rain
- Add your own

#### **Dots**

Great for organising smaller groups and works well with both adults and children. Fix a coloured dot onto the forehead of each participant. Get participants to move around the room and try to find out what colour their dot is without talking. Once they know what colour their dot is, they must then find others with the same colour and that will be their group for the next activity. This is a great game for encouraging non-verbal communication. Don't forget to give some thought to how you want to mix the groups.

#### **Desert Island**

Tell your group that they are going to be whisked off to a desert island in just 5 minutes. Each person is allowed to take three items with them. They need to write these three items on a post-it note and be prepared to place it on a flip chart (or wall) opposite their name.

Hand out some post-it notes and pens. Allow some time for participants to give thought to their 3 items. After 5 minutes, ask for a group member to come forward and place their post-it note on the flip chart and explain to the rest of the group what they have chosen as their items. Continue this until everyone has described their three items.

#### **Fear in the Hat**

Fear in a Hat is a good activity to run at the beginning of a workshop to understand how participants are feeling and promote unity as a team. Group members write their personal fears (anonymously) on sheets of paper, which are then collected in the hat and read out by the facilitator. Each person tries to describe their understanding of the person's fear. This leads to a discussion about fears. As a trainer, it is your job to eliminate those fears and put your learners at ease.

When discussing fears, use the acronym of F.E.A.R. = **F**alse **E**vidence **A**ppearing **R**eal. The focus is that the fear is in their head, and the fear of doing something is always worse than actually doing it.



### **For Sale Advert**

Each person has to write an advert for themselves as if they were going to be sold in the local paper. The variation of this ice breaker is for participants to write a 'for sale' advert for someone else in the group.

### **Group Juggle**

Stand in a large circle and throw one soft ball (or sponge, beanbag, rolled up socks, etc.) to another group member. They then catch it and throw to another person. Each time, the thrower must shout out the catcher's name. This continues until each group member has caught and thrown the ball just once. It should have ended back at the start point.

Ask each group member to identify who threw them the ball and who they threw it to next. Test this out by throwing the ball in the same order until it arrives back at the start point. The next stage is to introduce more balls and see how many balls the group manage at the same time.

You can also try reversing the throwing sequence to confuse the group. So start at the end and work your way to the start. Have one ball going forwards, while the other works backwards.

### **Group Story**

Form a circle. One person starts to tell a story. They then pass the story on to the person next to them at any given time. All they have to do is include the words "and then" in the context of the story. The next person in line carries on the story from where it had been left.

### **Human Map**

Describe an imaginary map of an appropriate area (national or local) and get your group to visualise it on the floor. Ask them to stand on the part of the map where they currently live. If you are meeting the group for the first time, also get them to state their name and a unique fact about themselves.

### **Human Scavenger Hunt**

Organise the group into smaller sub-teams and get them to sit in their teams. Read one item from the list below. The team that is the quickest to send up a person or group of people that matches the description you have provided earns a point.

An example might be to find two people in your group who have the same middle name. Group members must talk, find out if anyone has the same middle name and then quickly send those people to the facilitator to earn a point for their team.

Example Hunt List:

- Two people who have the same initials.
- The person in your group who was born the furthest away from here.
- Two people with the same middle name.
- A group of people whose shoe sizes add up to 28
- A group of people whose ages add up to 80.
- Two people with the same birth month.
- Two people with the same star sign.
- The person in your group who lives closest to here.
- A group of people who have attended school for a total of 25 years or more.

- A group of people who can spell a word by using the initials of their names.
- A group of three people who all have different coloured eyes.
- Two people who have a sweet wrapper in their pocket.
- Four people who are wearing red in their clothing.

### **Ice Breaker Questions**

Here is a list of twenty questions that you can use with any group to help break the ice. These questions are great for setting up a workshop and building rapport between group members. They are fun and allow participants to open up and let their personality come across. They can be used on assessments too.

You can also use these questions to create question cards to hand out to your group as an introductory exercise. Allow them time to think about their answer before sharing with the rest of the group.

- If you could eat any food every day, what would you have?
- If you could be any animal, what would you be and why?
- If you could pick a song about your life, what would it be?
- When you were little, what was your favourite cartoon?
- If you could be any superhero, who would you be and why?
- If your life was a movie, what would you call it and who would star as you?
- Who is your hero? (this can be anyone parent, family member, celebrity, Ghandi... whoever)
- If you could visit anywhere in the world, where would you go and why?
- What is your dream job and why?
- What is your favourite day of the week?
- What would you do if you won the lottery?
- Morning or night person?
- What are your favourite hobbies?
- What are your pet peeves and why?
- Things about yourself that you dislike?
- Describe yourself in just three words.
- If you could be anyone except yourself, who would you be and why?
- If you could meet anyone in history, who would it be and why?
- Your favourite television character and why?
- If you could live in any time period, which one would it be and why?

### **Interview and Introductions**

Have the group pair up (if there is an odd number of people the leader can pair up with someone). Each person will take 3 - 4 minutes interviewing their partner. At the end of the allotted time, everyone will introduce the person that they interviewed to the rest of the group.

### **Introduce your Partner**

In this game, you must speak about the person seated to your left for 30 to 60 seconds. Anything you say must, as far as you know, be made up/false.

### **Introductory Bingo**

Draw up a grid with 10 squares on it. In each square, put a question that the individual has to find someone to sign, e.g. find someone who went to the cinema in the last seven days. Once they have completed the grid, they should sit down or stand on a chair (or even shout bingo). The person that completes their card first or completes the most boxes in a set time wins the challenge. Allow participants to sign their own bingo card just once.

[Download Introductory Bingo Template \(Word\)](#)

### **It's Obvious**

Say three things about the person on your left. First sentence starts with the words "It's obvious ..." (this sentence should state something that is obvious about them.) The second sentence starts "I notice ..." (this sentence should state something less obvious). The third sentence starts "I think that you ...." (this sentence is a guess about what they will be like/something about them).

### **Jigsaw Groups**

Give a jigsaw piece to each person. Ask them to walk around the room and find other people in the group with pieces of the jigsaw that go with theirs. Eventually group members join up and match up their pieces to make the picture, and they become a team for the next activity or challenge. Remember to try and link this to your event workshop objective or a particular theme. You can also use printed pictures, split into smaller pieces.

### **Name Game**

Form a circle. The first person to go will state a word that describes themselves which starts with the first letter of their name followed by their first name, for example: Giant George or Footie Fred. The next person in the circle has to repeat the first person's name and follow up with their own. Continue around the circle, with the next person repeating the previous names and adding their own.

If someone messes up, the previous person that went has to repeat their turn and the game continues from there.

### **Penny for Your Thoughts**

Provide each person with a penny that is no more than 15 years old. They are then required to think back to the date on their coin and share with the rest of the group something significant or interesting that happened to them in that year.

### **Picture Yourself**

Hand out some coloured paper and coloured pens to each person. Ask group members to paint a picture that expresses who they are. Give them about 10 minutes and then pair them up with a partner; they must now explain their picture to each other. Next, gather everyone together and organise into a group circle. Group members will now take turns to introduce their partners to the rest of the group using the picture they have just created.

### **Speak in Pairs**

Get your group to partner up and sit them opposite each other. Once everyone is ready, pick a random subject (can be anything such as the weather, sports, movies or even your training workshop). Each pair must then speak simultaneously for one minute and try to make what they are saying so interesting that their partner stops what they're talking about and listens to them instead.

### **Speak for a Minute**

Your group forms a circle. The challenge of this ice breaker is for one person to speak for one minute without hesitation about a random subject of your choice (or the groups). While they're talking, if anyone notices a hesitation or repetition, they shout 'freeze'. They must then explain their reasoning and, if accepted, they then swap over and the next person tries. You can also use this as a reviewing method at the end of a team building activity to reflect on the team and individual performance.

### **Sweet Stories**

Everyone in the group is handed a sweet (such as Skittles, M&Ms etc). They are then required to share a story about themselves based on a colour code linked to their sweet colour.

- Blue = a time when you felt very proud
- Green = someone you respect and why
- Yellow = a reason why you want to be here; what are you are hoping to achieve?
- Brown = an embarrassing moment
- Orange = a time when you failed, and what you took away from the experience?
- Red = a funny thing that happened to you
- Purple = a time when you felt scared

### **The Last Line**

Split everyone up into groups and give them a silly sentence on a piece of paper. Tell the group that they have to make up a story, act it out, and have the story end with the sentence that you have given them.

### **Toilet Paper Game**

Pass a roll of toilet paper around the room and tell the group to take as much as they want (or the amount of toilet paper they use in an average day). After they have taken at least one square of toilet paper, have them go around the room and share one fact about themselves for each square of toilet paper they have taken.

### **2 Truths and a Lie**

Get each person to state two true statements about themselves and one false statement. After each person says their statement, the other group members have to try to figure out which one they made up. The guessers in the group are allowed to ask the speaker a limited amount of questions to figure out which statement is the lie.

### **Unique Fact**

Each person writes a unique fact about themselves that is unknown to the rest of the group. The unique facts are collected, shuffled and handed out at random. The new owners of the fact must then read out the fact to the rest of the group and the team must try to identify the owner.

### **We All Have This In Common**

Divide the participants into small groups. The task of the group is to find five things that all group members have in common with each other.

These cannot be things that are obvious or common human characteristics such as:

- I drink water
- I have teeth
- I am wearing socks

When time is up, each group must share what they have discovered with the other groups.

### **Who Am I?**

Write the names of famous people, characters or even places on post-it notes and place them on the back of team members. Team members then walk around the room and ask yes and no questions to try and figure out what is written on their post-it note. They are limited to just 3 guesses.

### **Who's Missing?**

An easy to deliver game for groups of any age. Organise the group into an inward facing circle with their eyes closed or heads down. Next, tap one of them on the shoulder and remove them from the circle. The first one to guess who is not there wins. Great as a quick game or an ice breaker when you are trying help groups learn each other's names.

# Bonus Resources

For access to these bonus resources, please visit the URL below. This is a restricted area only available to people who have purchased this eBook.

Web Address: [www.ventureteambuilding.co.uk/members-area-activity-book/](http://www.ventureteambuilding.co.uk/members-area-activity-book/)

Password: activitybook2015

You will receive the following resources:

## Assessments

Scenario Assessment Exercise (Word)

Assessment Score Sheet (PDF)

Assessment Scoring Criteria (Word)

## Ice Breakers

Introductory Bingo (Word)

## Learning Questionnaires

Dunn and Dunns – VAK (PDF)

Honey and Mumford (PDF)

## Reviewing

Comfort Zones (PDF)

Leading Sentence Cards (PDF)

'Someone Who' Cards (PDF)

Quote Cards (PDF)

## Sample Risk Assessments

Indoor Team Building (PDF)

Outdoor Team Building (PDF)

Blindfold Activities (PDF)

# Contributors

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# About Venture Team Building

Venture Team Building was created to provide resources for anyone interested in providing experiential learning and team building activities. The site currently has over seventy team challenges, fifty ice breakers and over a hundred games ideas to try.

Currently the website has one of the largest collections of team building challenges on the internet, helping teachers, managers, instructors and facilitators from all over the world provide activities to just about anyone.

What you can find on the website:

- Downloadable training tools, exercises and content
- How to video tutorials
- Web-exclusive offers
- Training tips, articles and news



Discover more at [www.ventureteambuilding.co.uk](http://www.ventureteambuilding.co.uk)