

Activity: **Aikido Exercises**

Overview

The *Aikido Exercise* challenges your group's paradigm for resolving conflict. This activity challenges the mindset we bring to traditional conflict. Participants find partners and position themselves on opposite sides of a rope. Partners connect hands to elbows, essentially locking the pair together. From this position, partners are trying to maneuver each other to their side of the rope. Although the initial perception is always win/lose, the end result invites win/win.

Set Up

One 20-foot length rope. In place of rope, tape, chalk or any other divider may be used. Place the rope in a straight line across the floor in the center of the room.

Instructions

Ask participants to find a partner and face each other, one on each side of the rope. Have them reach their right arm toward each other and grab the elbow of their partner's arm, so they are "locked" forearm to forearm. The objective is to bring the other person to their side of the rope. The three rules are:

- They must stay locked in this position.
- They must always face each other.
- They must not push, shove, yank, or display other overly rough behavior.

Typically, partners will pull hard to try and bring their partner (perceived adversary) over to their side of the rope. Each side pulls, attempting to get the other to come over the line. The metaphor, of course, is wanting others to switch to your way of being, seeing, hearing, or understanding. The belief or underlying thought is, "if they could just see it from my point of view ..."

In Aikido, the martial artist does not exert personal force, but rather turns the opponent's energy back onto them, thus moving them. In this activity, if one of the

opponents simply steps to the other side making sure to stay face to face, their opponent has no choice (given the rules) but to move as well and come to the other's side. Remember, the rules didn't say anything about where you had to be, just to bring the other to your side. One person's willingness to "see the other's position" often results in the other's willingness to see the other side as well.

Story Line

Congratulations! You have all qualified for the Grand Championships, held this year in beautiful Honolulu, Hawaii. You are the best of the best, and have traveled seeking fame and honor in your sport. As you prepare for what is sure to be a duel, you are surprised to find that it is not a duel at all. The final stage in your quest for honor will require cunning and thought, the very cornerstones of the martial arts. In this event, you will find a partner and stand facing him or her, one on each side of the centerline. You will reach across with your right arm, grasping each other's arm at the elbow, locking each other in. Your challenge is to maneuver your opponent to your side of the center line without yanking, pushing, shoving, or using any overly rough behavior. The first to get the other to their side of the centerline wins. I will be watching for rough play, and disqualifying those who are exhibiting such behavior.

Safety

Safety is paramount in this activity. The tendency is for the group to get carried away. Participants should move slowly and stay in control.

Pay close attention to your group and watch for rough behavior.

Variations

Try joining both hands or arms. Although the overall activity remains the same, this adds a new way to play.

Activity: Aikido Exercises

Reflection

Discover

- What was your experience when trying to get your partner to your side?
- What was the experience when you “stepped into their shoes?”
- What do you have to be willing to do in order to move out of the struggle around seeing other points of view?

Connect

- What is the metaphor related to “staying locked in position and facing one another?”

- How can you encourage the other to step into your shoes?
- Can you think of a recent situation where this would have been helpful to you?
- How will you know when you are in a conflict like this?
- What are the key indicators, thoughts, feelings, or behaviors?
- What steps do you take to resolve a conflict?

Create

- How will you use this concept when faced with conflict the next time?
- How can you be open to and continue to move toward win/win solutions in your life?

Activity: Awareness: You & Me

Overview

The open-ended statements in Awareness: You & Me intend to help individuals discover and share their reactions to conflict. In addition, through conflict they will learn ways of dealing with individuals and groups. Everyone is given a series of open-ended statements and challenged to complete them as honestly as possible. Participants have the opportunity to develop personal insight and learn from others through dialogue.

Set Up

For each pair of participants, print one copy of the *Conflict Management Statement Sheet* from the *Inspire! Conflict Resolution: Initiating & Beginning Activities* software.

Instructions

1. Ask participants to find a partner and move to a comfortable and quiet part of the room.
2. Hand each pair a "conflict management statements" sheet. Ask participants to take turns responding to or completing each statement in order.
3. Challenge participants to truthfully answer the statements and provide a thoughtful answer. The more they put in, the more they will take away.
4. Give participants sufficient time and make sure they both respond to the statements.
5. When time is up, put energy into the reflection component and allow space for participants to share.

Story Line

Life provides opportunities for individuals to grow and prepare to deal with the situations life brings. In order to gain the most from any learning experience, it is important to be consciously aware of what is going on around you. Since we are learning to manage and resolve conflict, it is important to know where you stand now so you can make good decisions about what strengths you already have and what additional

strengths you want to develop. In a few minutes, you and a partner will have the opportunity to discover your own conflict resolution style and to gain some insight into others. Your challenge is to look deeply into your own experience and gain personal awareness. The more conscious you become now, the greater your learning opportunity. Find a partner and a nice quiet and comfortable space. Look over the statements and begin to answer each within your group. Take the time to be thoughtful and answer each question or statement honestly. Feel free to ask one another questions as well.

Safety

Please explain to the participants that conversations are confidential. Participants will not be asked to disclose any of their discussion should they desire to keep it confidential. It is important to provide a solid foundation of trust, respect, and encouragement, and to allow people the space to share.

Variations

Another powerful way to facilitate this activity is to allow the pairs to switch members frequently. This presents many different opportunities for meaningful conversations.

This activity can also be given as a take-away assignment where they interview others (a friend, a family member), or even write journal entries about their own answers to the questions.

Reflection

Discover

- What did you discover about yourself that you would be willing to share?
- What is something of value you received during the discussion?
- How did your answers support your ability to handle conflict?

Activity: Awareness: You & Me

Connect

- Where did you and your partner share the same beliefs or provide the same answers?
- Where did you differ?
- What did you learn from your partner that will help you resolve conflict?

Create

- What insights about conflict resolution did you gain and how will those insights impact you?
- How will you benefit from this experience and use it to make a positive difference in your life?

Additional conflict statements to consider for "Awareness"

- Conflict is ...
- The time I felt best about dealing with conflict was when ...
- When someone disagrees with me about something important or challenges me in front of others, I usually ...
- When I get angry, I ...
- The most important outcome of conflict is ...
- I usually react to negative criticism by ...
- When I confront someone I care about, I ...
- When someone avoids conflict with me, I ...
- My greatest strength in handling conflict is ...
- Here is an actual situation in which I was involved in a conflict (explain). What do you think I did? How do you think I felt? (Tell your partner how accurate his/her prediction is)
- When things are not going well I tend to ...
- I imagine that you handle most conflict by ... (Check out your prediction with your partner.)
- I will sometimes avoid unpleasant situations by ...
- I am most apt to confront people in situations such as ...
- I usually hide or camouflage my feelings when ...
- My greatest challenge in handling conflict is ...
- When I think about confronting a potentially unpleasant person, I ...
- I sometimes avoid directly confronting someone when ...
- I am most likely to assert myself in a situation that ...
- By next year, I would like to be able to handle conflict better by improving my ability to ...

Activity: Awareness: You & Me

Conflict Statements For Awareness

- Conflict is...
 - The time I felt best about dealing with conflict was when...
 - When someone disagrees with me about something important or challenges me in front of others, I usually...
 - When I get angry, I...
 - The most important outcome of conflict is...
 - I usually react to negative criticism by...
 - When I confront someone I care about, I...
 - When someone avoids conflict with me, I...
 - My greatest strength in handling conflict is...
 - Here is an actual situation in which I was involved in a conflict (explain). What do you think I did? How do you think I felt? (Tell your partner how accurate his/her prediction is).
 - When things are not going well I tend to...
 - I imagine that you handle most conflict by...(Check out your prediction with your partner.)
 - I will sometimes avoid unpleasant situations by...
 - I am most apt to confront people in situations such as...
 - I usually hide or camouflage my feelings when...
 - My greatest challenge in handling conflict is...
- When I think about confronting a potentially unpleasant person, I...
 - I sometimes avoid directly confronting someone when...
 - I am most likely to assert myself in a situation that...
 - By next year I would like to be able to handle conflict better by improving my ability to...

Activity: **The Book Room**

Overview

The Book Room requires participants to work together in pairs and communicate effectively for success. The challenge is for team members to retrieve their partner's book from the center of the "book room" while blindfolded. Trust, listening, and clear communication are essential in this activity.

Set Up

Props

- 1 book per participant
- 1 piece of scratch paper per participant
- 1 blindfold for each participant (for safety reasons, the participants should not wear the same blindfold)
- 1 large rope or piece of webbing (75' recommended)
- 1 smaller rope or piece of webbing (12' recommended)
- 1 round table
- Pens, pencils, or markers

1. Create a large circle using a 75-foot length of rope (or webbing).
2. In the center of the large circle create a smaller circle using a 12 foot length of rope (or webbing). If you have chosen to use the table, place it in the center of the large circle.
3. Books, paper, pens and blindfolds will be distributed once the activity begins.

Instructions

Provide each participant with a book, a piece of paper, and a pen. (If each participant has their own book, let them write their name on it). Ask each participant to write their name on a piece of paper and place it inside the front cover of the book. Once a participant's name has been placed inside the book, ask participants to pile the books together in the center of the inside circle or randomly on the table.

After the books are placed in the pile, participants are asked to find a partner and work together to retrieve

each other's book from the center of the circle. Before they begin, mix up the books and share the following rules:

- One member of the pair will be blindfolded and the other will be the coach, guiding the blindfolded person safely to the books and back out again. Only a blindfolded person may enter into the circle.
- The only person who can open a book is the partner standing outside of the circle.
- If your partner brings your book back to you, then you keep it, switch roles, and go after their book.
- If your book is returned to you, you may keep it. If you retrieve your own book, it must be returned to the center circle.
- Participants are to keep taking turns until they have both books.

Facilitator Note: Participants often assume that only their partner can give them their book, but the rules simply say "if your book is returned to you." The easier solution to this event is to return the person's book you find to the person outside the circle. Don't tell them this, but certainly allow it if they question their assumptions and figure this out.

Story Line

Deep in the bowels of an ancient castle there is a room that holds sorcerer's books on the life of every person. Inside the cover of the book is the person's name, and if you have the book with your name, you will know your life's mission and can discover your future! There is a spell on the books, however, prohibiting you from retrieving your own book. If you attempt to bring your own book from the castle cellar, it will not open, and magically fly back to the cellar. The cellar is dark so you need both hands in front of you (bumper style) to travel safely. The only light that shines comes from your partner at the top of the stairs (outer edge of the rope), so you can not tell whose name is on the inside of a book until you are back at the top of the stairs. If your partner brings his or her own, or someone else's book and not yours, the book will

Activity: **The Book Room**

be returned and you must immediately switch roles. You and a partner will work together switching roles until you both find your books and discover your future!

Safety

Throughout the activity remind participants to walk, listen and move with care. Instruct participants that while walking blindfolded they must keep their hands up in front of them (bumper style) at all times.

Variations

To raise the difficulty level and increase the safety level, add the following rule:

- If any blindfolded person touches another blindfolded person, he or she must remove his or her blindfold, exit the circle, and switch with his or her partner.

This will challenge the sighted person to be more specific with the level of instruction, and ultimately keep the blindfolded person safer. For additional difficulty, give each participant a book with the same cover (perhaps one that ties into the story and one they can keep).

Reflection

Our assumptions impact how we perceive the boundaries and rules in any project or task and sometimes we create barriers that make the overall project more difficult than need be. Frustration and conflict can arise when members of a team or organization operate from a “smaller vision” perspective.

Take time after *The Book Room* to explore the following questions with your group.

Discover

- What supported effective teamwork in this exercise?
- What was the experience like for you when you were blindfolded? When sighted?
- How did each role contribute to the successful completion of the task?
- What did you need from your partner and the team in order to be a successful with the project?

Connect

- Imagine a scenario in work, school, or life that is similar (working toward a goal where you are sometimes in the dark and need to rely on outside information and your own intuition). Describe this.

Create

- What did you learn here that will be valuable in that situation? How will you apply this learning?

Thanks to Chris Cavert and Laurie Frank for this activity. Games & Other Stuff for Teachers by Chris Cavert and Laurie Frank. Wood 'N' Barnes Publishing & Distribution, 1999.

Activity: Chris-Cross

Overview

Working under pressure can lead individuals and groups to react in ways that can lead to conflict. In Chris-Cross, your group transforms into a team of scientists working to avert a potential nuclear disaster. Time is against your team as they feel the pressures of coordinating movements and planning strategies for success.

Set Up

Props

- One 20-foot rope (to create a circle in the middle of the play area)
- One 20-foot rope for each team of four in play
- One 12" X 12" mat or one sheet of 8 1/2" X 11" paper for each player
- Tape (if playing on a slick surface)
- Pens or markers

Set Up

1. Use one of the 20-foot lengths of rope to create a large circle and place it in the center of your space.
2. Position the other circles around the center circle.
3. For best results, there should be a minimum of 20 feet between each circle and the center circle.
4. The farther the outside circles are from the center, the harder the activity becomes. Keep in mind that you will need one outer circle for every four participants.

Instructions

1. To begin, create teams of four. Ask each team to step into one of the outside circles. Distribute a marker and one sheet of paper to each participant. Instruct participants to write their name on their sheet of paper.
2. The goal is for each foursome to travel from one circle of rope (work area) to another circle of rope by passing through the center circle. The rules of the game are as follows:

- A. Participants move by using their sheets of paper as stepping stones between circles.
- B. If any part of a participant's body touches the ground outside of a circle, that person must begin again from his or her original circle.
- C. If a stepping stone ever completely loses contact with a player, the stepping stone is lost from play.
- D. In order to move into a different circle, participants must pass completely through the center circle first.

NOTE: No running or jumping from circle to circle or mat to mat is allowed. The facilitator should not give the participants the clue that they can use each other's mats. The goal is for them to come up with the idea of sharing on their own.

Story Line

Each group (team of four) is skilled and technically trained to perform one task in a nuclear power emergency. They each have to get from where they are to another location where they need to perform their duties. The problem is, they must pass through the area in the center of the plant in order to collect their tools and instruments, but the area surrounding the center room has been contaminated. Each team member's personalized mat will allow them to step safely into the area.

NOTE: Be sure to offer the rest of the instructions after reading this story-line.

Safety

Safety is always the number one concern. Make sure participants are moving carefully from paper to paper and circle to circle. Be mindful that the paper might slip/slide when stepped on (putting masking tape on the bottom of each paper may help to avoid slippage if done on a slick surface). Remind participants that no jumping, running, or leaping is allowed, and encourage everyone to move safely about the play area.

Activity: **Chris-Cross**

Variations

You may use the Mobile Team Challenge 12" x 12" mats instead of paper. You may also wish to add a time limit. The added stress may impact the group's ability to think and function well. Set a realistic timeline that will provide your group with a fair opportunity for success.

Reflection

The paradigm we hold often leads us into conflict. If four-person teams perceive themselves as isolated and separate from the others (and even in competition), then conflict will arise when groups all converge in the center at the same time, competing for another route. In addition, it will impact their willingness to cooperate in sharing mats/paper with members of another team. If they work together as one large team, this activity is relatively easy and conflict does not arise. To do this they must see the big picture, cooperate as a whole group, challenge their assumptions and perceptions, come to agreement on the mission, trust one another, and be willing to be flexible, patient, and supportive. Good communication, leadership, and a shared vision are essential for smooth success.

Take time after *Chris-Cross* to explore some of the issues stated above by asking some of these questions in your group:

Discover

- What behavior and thought pattern had an impact on the way you moved through this activity?
- What planning competencies did you use?
- How did you challenge assumptions or suspend your preconceived patterns?
- What thoughts and behaviors enabled you to move through the challenge?

- What types of conflict emerged for you and your group during this exercise?
- What leadership characteristics emerged as important to the process and your success?

Connect

- How was this team exercise similar to other team experiences in your past?
- Have you ever been on a team that made something apparently difficult attainable through its teamwork and planning? Explain.
- If you have ever been on a project where the team that made something apparently simple more difficult, what did you do to move through this?
- How can you build on the excitement of competing and being challenged and still work cooperatively and easily?

Create

- How can you assure that creating a simple, cooperative process is experienced as something positive and keep those who need challenge and competition inspired and involved?
- What kind of work environment would you have if people became inspired to do their best? What will it take to bring more inspiration to your workplace? How can you contribute to this cause?
- What are possible benefits to simplifying the tasks we do on a regular basis? What might the benefits be to cooperating instead of competing?

Thanks to Chris Cavert and Laurie Frank for this activity. Games & Other Stuff for Teachers by Chris Cavert and Laurie Frank. Wood 'N' Barnes Publishing & Distribution, 1999.

Activity: **Cookie Cookie**

Overview

We are heavily influenced by our senses, and often even more influenced by our beliefs, assumptions, and preconceived notions. These all impact our decisions, reactions, behaviors, thoughts, and emotions. *Cookie Cookie* exists to help participants recognize how quickly they can make assumptions and how powerfully those assumptions can influence them.

Participants are asked to judge a cookie contest and vote on the best cookie. Participants score the two different types (one expensive sugar cookie, and the other a generic, inexpensive sugar cookie) in a series of categories. This activity will help participants appreciate how assumptions inform and influence their judgments, decisions, and perception(s). In addition, participants will recognize the power of presentation and the effect of language and concept.

Set Up

Props

- One box of inexpensive store-brand sugar cookies.
- One box of expensive high quality sugar cookies
- Copies of the ingredients from both boxes of cookies (you may wish to simply cut the ingredients label from each of the boxes).
- Two bowls or identical containers for the cookies.
- One "Best Cookie Chart" for each participant, printed from the *Inspire! Conflict Resolution: Initiating & Beginning Activities* CD-ROM
- Napkins and a cup of water, for each participant (optional).

Set Up

Pour each box into separate containers, and mark one box A and the other B then place them in the front of the room. Hand out one Best Cookie Chart to each participant.

Instructions

Explain that each participant will receive one of each cookie to judge in a variety of areas. They will vote for the best cookie in each category. The facilitator also has a list of the ingredients for each box which will be posted later for them to see, as well as the prices. Steps and questions:

1. First, ask participants to look at the cookies, taking into account color and texture. Which cookie is the most appealing? Ask participants to indicate their choice on the sheet.
2. Next, ask participants to smell the cookies. Which cookie smells the most appetizing? Ask participants to indicate their choice on the sheet.
3. Next, ask participants to taste each cookie. Which cookie has the best taste? Ask participants to indicate their choice on the sheet.
4. Present a list of the ingredients. Based on the ingredients, which cookie is the best cookie? Ask participants to indicate their choice on the sheet.
5. Present the price for each cookie. Based on price, which cookie is more appealing? Ask participants to indicate their choice on the sheet.
6. Now vote for the best overall cookie and indicate your choice on the sheet.
7. Finally, after they have all voted, show them the box that each cookie came in. Process the experience.

Story Line

A food corporation is about to introduce a new cookie into the marketplace. You have been asked to take part in a national cookie judging in order to help the company decide how to best market their new cookie. You will be asked a series of questions, and the company needs you to give your honest response.

Activity: **Cookie Cookie**

Safety

Be sure to find out if any group members have food allergies that could affect them in this activity. Do not use anything unless you are familiar with the brand or contents in the box.

Variations

The Assumption Test: Prepare six to ten containers that are opaque, placing various ingredients into the containers that are not “native” to the container. For example, you might put breadcrumbs in a cereal box, flour in a soup box, or water in a milk jug. Provide paper and pencil for each participant. Ask participants to write down, the contents in each container. They should be timed (1 minute) and told to write as quickly as possible.

Reflection

Discover

- What did you find influenced your decision the most? What assumptions did you make?
- What beliefs do you hold that may have caused you to vote for one cookie over another? What values or beliefs caused you to change your vote? (This value or belief carries greater priority).
- What happened to your assumptions and preconceived notions at the end?
- Our perceptions are influenced by information, expectations and intent, patterns of being, and worldview. How did additional information change your perception? How did changes in expectations change your perception? What patterns of being or beliefs influenced your perception? How did your worldview/paradigm impact your vote?

Connect

- How did the “label” impact your final decision? How powerful are “labels” when they are attached to people, products, situations, etc.?

- Where do you find yourself attaching labels to people or situations? How might this behavior influence conflict?

Create

- How can we manage our assumptions so they do not negatively influence our ability to work with people and continue to respond well in situations?
- How do labels benefit us?
- What would it be like to interact with people without attaching labels? Is it feasible?
- How could we move in that direction?

Reflection Questions for the Assumption Test

Variation:

Discover

- What assumptions did you make, and how did those assumptions influence your list of ingredients?
- How might you have discovered additional information that would have altered your perceptions?
- How might we discover more about people and situations that will help us have more “accurate” perceptions?

Connect

- What assumptions do we make about people and situations, and what signals do we use to make these assumptions?
- How do you ensure your information is correct, and your expectations appropriate, so that you perceive situations or people accurately?

Create

- What are the benefits of having “accurate” perceptions about people and situations?
- How will you use what you have learned to help you in life situations?

Donna Davis, Maryville, Tennessee first shared this activity with Mobile Team Challenge in 1992 at Maryville College. Donna learned about it in the



Conflict Resolution

Initiating & Beginning Activities



Activity: **Cookie Cookie**

Best Cookie Chart

(Please circle which cookie is best for each criteria)

1. Appearance: **Cookie A** **Cookie B**

Comments: _____

2. Smell: **Cookie A** **Cookie B**

Comments: _____

3. Ingredients: **Cookie A** **Cookie B**

Comments: _____

4. Cost: **Cookie A** **Cookie B**

Comments: _____

5. Taste: **Cookie A** **Cookie B**

Comments: _____

Activity: Empathy

Overview

Given the opportunity to practice, all of us can “step into another’s shoes,” although some shoes are more easily worn than others. The practice of thinking, feeling, and perceiving through another’s eyes, ears, and feelings helps us to build empathy and appreciation. In addition, it expands our own ability to be creative, flexible, open-minded, and to discover more solutions.

In *Empathy*, participants are given a card with a noun written on one side. Participants are then asked a series of questions that they must respond to as if they were the noun on the card they hold.

Set Up

1. Create a series of “noun cards” out of 3” x 5” note cards, or print copies from the *Inspire! Conflict Resolution: Initiating & Beginning Activities* software.
2. Arrange your group in a circle.

Instructions

1. Hand out a noun card to each participant and ask everyone to review the card they are given.
2. Explain that you are going to ask a series of questions, and they must respond as if they are the noun on their card. You may use the following sample question(s) to get you started; feel free to add your own and to have participants ask one another questions.

- What is your favorite food?
- What is your favorite thing to do?
- Where is your favorite place to go?
- What do others say when they make fun of you? How do you feel about that?
- What do people say to make you happy?
- What do people say to make you sad?
- What do people say to make you angry?
- What do people say to make you proud?

- What do people say to make you confident?
- How do you feel about fresh air and sunshine?
- When you are tired or stressed, what do you like to do?
- What brings you joy?
- What was it like for you growing up?
- Is your life easy? Why or why not?

Note: If your group is small, you may choose to do this as a whole group and allow everyone to have a turn. For larger groups, you may break them into smaller work teams, to answer the questions.

Story Line

It is a dark and stormy night. Your group was riding on an elevator to a party on the top floor of a very fancy hotel when lightning struck the building. The elevator jolted, stopped, fell several floors, and then came to a stop. All of you hit your heads on the ceiling of the elevator. When the doors opened, you stepped out of the elevator, not remembering anything about who you were. You have a card in your hand with a noun on it and all you can remember are memories, thoughts, and feelings related to the noun. You decide you must be this noun.

Safety

Always provide the option to pass. Make this a comfortable environment for people to share. Remind group members to be thoughtful in answering the questions and mindful of their reactions.

Variations

Try challenging participants to guess one another’s noun cards based on the responses to the questions asked. This opens another powerful conversation around stereotypes, and how commonly we share them in our culture. It also helps us develop empathy and other awareness.

Activity: Empathy

Reflection

Discover

- What was the experience like to tap into another's thoughts and feelings?
- What insights did you gain from this activity?

Connect

- How might this skill help you in resolving conflict? How could you apply it?
- Describe a situation in the past where a conflict might have been resolved had you used the skills you just used in this activity.
- How does your ability to see/feel/think like another enhance communication?
- How does empathy impact flexibility and cooperation?
- Did you recognize stereotyping at work? How did it impact communication? Authentic relations? And what do those have to do with conflict?

- What sorts of interaction have you had with the noun in the past, and how might these interactions affect your answer?

Create

- Did you discover anything about yourself or others that you did not realize before this activity? How will this discovery impact your ability to manage conflict?
- If you had never interacted with the nouns, what information were you drawing from to answer the questions? Is this the best source? What is the best source? How will you look at things differently in the future?
- What did you gain from this experience and how will you use what you have learned?

Thanks to Chris Cavert and Laurie Frank for this activity which can be found on Games & Other Stuff for Teachers by Chris Cavert and Laurie Frank. Wood 'N' Barnes Publishing & Distribution, 1999.

Activity: **Empathy**

Female in a powerful upper management position



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Activity: **Empathy**

Young white man



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Activity: **Empathy**

Chinese mother



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Activity: **Empathy**

Raccoon



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Activity: **Empathy**

Muslim student in the U.S.



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Activity: **Empathy**

Eagle



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Activity: **Empathy**

Oak Tree



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Activity: **Empathy**

Frog



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Activity: **Empathy**

President of the United States



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Activity: **Empathy**

A little boy or girl



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Activity: **Empathy**

African-American woman



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Activity: **Empathy**

Zeus or Aphrodite



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Activity: **Empathy**

Male or Female with a disability



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Activity: **Empathy**

Canada Goose



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Activity: **Empathy**

Refugee



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Activity: **Empathy**

Graduate Student



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Activity: **Empathy**

CEO of a major company



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Activity: **Empathy**

Migrant Worker



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Activity: **Empathy**

Factory Worker



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Activity: **Empathy**



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Activity: **Get Off The Fence!**

Overview

When we share things in common with others, we are more likely to give them the benefit of the doubt and seek to understand them. After you get to know people on a more personal level, you have the advantage of discovering commonalities with each other, which in turn develops a rapport. Going through this process with team members assists in making the group process a success.

In *Get Off the Fence!*, participants respond to a series of questions by moving to one side of a rope or the other. The chosen side represents the answer they most closely associate with themselves. No one may stay in the middle, so a choice is required. This activity creates a safe and fun environment for people to notice commonalities and/or differences within their group.

Set Up

Using one 20-foot rope, create a line on the rope, dividing a room or space.

Instructions

1. Ask everyone to stand along the rope with a foot on each side, all facing the same direction.
2. Next, call out two words or phrases and say "get off the fence."
3. Instruct participants that if they agree with, favor, or are otherwise inclined toward the first word or phrase, they are to get off the fence on the left. If they agree with, favor, or are otherwise inclined toward the second word or phrase, they must step off the fence on the right.
4. Periodically ask if anyone would like to discuss their choice. This could lead to some wonderful "in-the-moment reflection" opportunities.

You may use these sample words/phrases or choose to use words/phrases more appropriate for your group.

- Loud/quiet
- Running/walking
- Save money/spend money
- Bus driver/bus rider
- Problem solver/problem maker
- Meat and potatoes/vegetables and fruits
- Security/freedom
- Planner/spontaneous
- Practical/imaginative
- Conflict avoidance/conflict confrontation
- Leader/follower
- Cat/dog
- Playing/watching
- Doing/being
- Cooking/eating

Story Line

You're sitting on the fence with a group of other people. It's a great fence, affording a great view, but the neighbors really don't like folks sitting on the fence. They are worried it might break under all the weight. When the neighbor catches you, she will give you two choices before telling you to get off the fence: You need to pick the one most akin to you, and join others on that side of the fence for a bit of conversation. Then, when the coast is clear, you can hop back on the fence.

Safety

Although everyone must commit to a choice, not everyone must defend or explain that choice. Open the space for sharing, but be careful not to put anyone on the spot.

Variations

Add more controversial statements; see where people are willing to take a stand. You may wish to process this variation while the activity is in progress. For example, ask participants to take a few moments to discuss their decisions with the people who are on their side and with those who aren't.

Activity: Get Off The Fence!

Reflection

Discover

- What did you discover about this group and yourself?
- How did these discoveries promote respect for differences and diversity?

Connect

- How might just this simple activity impact your interactions with some of these people if you were to find yourself in conflict with them?

Create

- How can you take this lesson into work, school, or home?

Activity: **Get Off The Fence**

Sample Statements

- Loud/quiet
- Running/walking
- Save money/spend money
- Bus driver/bus rider
- Problem solver/problem maker
- Meat and potatoes/vegetables and fruits
- Security/freedom
- Planner/spontaneous
- Practical/imaginative
- Conflict avoidance/conflict confrontation
- Leader/follower
- Cat/dog
- Playing/watching
- Doing/being
- Cooking/eating

Activity: **Itsawat**

Overview

Faced with a unique challenge, teams are asked to role play a situation. In this situation, an assistant manager must give directions over the phone to her manager in order to assemble the famous *ITSAWAT*. With only verbal commands, the assistant manager works to clearly describe Itsawat to the manager in a timely fashion while an Observer processes the experience.

Set Up

Props

- *Itsawat* pieces or T-puzzles (two sets for each team of three; each set should contain one of each color).
- 1 copy of the *Itsawat Assembly Sheet* for each Assistant Manager and Observer.
- Paper and pen for each observer.

You may view and print puzzle pieces and the *Itsawat Assembly Sheet* from the *Inspire! Conflict Resolution: Initiating & Beginning Activities Software*.

Setup

1. Arrange the play area so your teams of three can not see one another's work. You may wish to use dividers and distance to insure participants focus on their own work. Managers and Assistant Managers may also sit back-to-back.
2. Prepare the *ITSAWAT* pieces for the teams. Each team will receive two sets of *ITSAWAT* pieces, one for the Manager and one for the Assistant Manager.
3. Each set must contain a different colored puzzle.
4. You will also need to prepare the *ITSAWAT* Assembly Sheets for the Assistant Managers. Assistant Managers will use this sheet as a reference and as an aid in describing the puzzle to the managers.
5. Provide blank paper and pens for the observers.

Instructions

1. Ask participants to divide into teams of three and decide who will play what role. The first role is the Manager, the second role is the Assistant Manager, and the third role is the Observer.
2. When roles have been established, each threesome needs to sit in such a way that the Manager and the Assistant Manager can hear one another, but cannot make eye contact or see one another's *ITSAWAT* pieces (a table top with a tall divider is ideal; back to back also works). The third person (the Observer) should be able to see and hear both of them.
3. Distribute two different colored sets of *ITSAWAT* pieces (T-puzzles) to each group.
4. You will also need to provide a copy of the *ITSAWAT* Assembly Sheet for the Assistant Manager and Observer in each group.
5. Give each Observer paper and a pen for note taking.
6. One complete *ITSAWAT* is assembled correctly by the Observer in front of the Assistant Manager.
7. The pieces of the second *ITSAWAT* puzzle are in a pile in front of the Manager.
8. The Assistant Manager must tell the Manager how to assemble the pieces into the same configuration as what is in front of him or her.
9. When time is up or a team believes it has finished correctly, allow the team to evaluate its work.

The following rules also apply:

1. The Manager may not speak or otherwise communicate with the Assistant Manager for the first 5 minutes. The Assistant Manager, however, may communicate during this time.
2. Neither the Manager nor the Assistant Manager may see each other at any time.
3. Observers must be able to see and hear both Manager and Assistant Manager. The Observer takes notes and observes the process of the experience. They do not participate.

Activity: **Itsawat**

4. The facilitator may play the role of the timekeeper, “breathing down the neck” of the Manager.
5. To engage your participants, read the sample story in the next paragraph aloud.
6. When time is up or a team believes it has finished correctly, allow the team to evaluate its work.

Story Line

Your company has recently developed a new product, a digital screening device called an ITSAWAT. Only two prototypes have been made. The Assistant Sales Manager is in Chico at a trade show displaying one of the prototypes. The Sales Manager is in the office of the Resident of the company demonstrating the other prototype when it falls apart in her hands. The Sales Manager doesn't have a clue how to reassemble it and gets on the phone to the Assistant Manager in Chico. The Manager thinks she can get the product reassembled if the Assistant Manager will describe the assembled one. The Manager has just mentioned that the President is breathing down her neck and to “get on with it!” when the operator cuts in and says there is trouble on the line. The Manager can continue to hear the Assistant Manager, but may not talk back. You must use what communication opportunities are available until the line is fixed.

Safety

Only general safety precautions are necessary.

Variations

Try one of these variations to change the dynamic of the activity.

- Use actual telephones or walkie-talkies and separate rooms; have two observers; allow “videophone” (remove blinds).
- Have the communication take place via Internet. You can vary the possibilities for communication (only words, words and diagrams, all technology).

Reflection

Conflict is often a result of simple misunderstanding, miscommunication, and inaccurate assumptions. This activity provides an opportunity for participants to discover the importance of clarity in directions and shared assumptions. In addition, participants learn more valuable communication when all senses are involved.

Discover

- What conflicts arose and how did you move through them?
- How did urgency impact your thinking process and ability to function?
- What important leadership/followership skills were used?
- What communication challenges did you face that actually created or had the potential to create conflict?

Connect

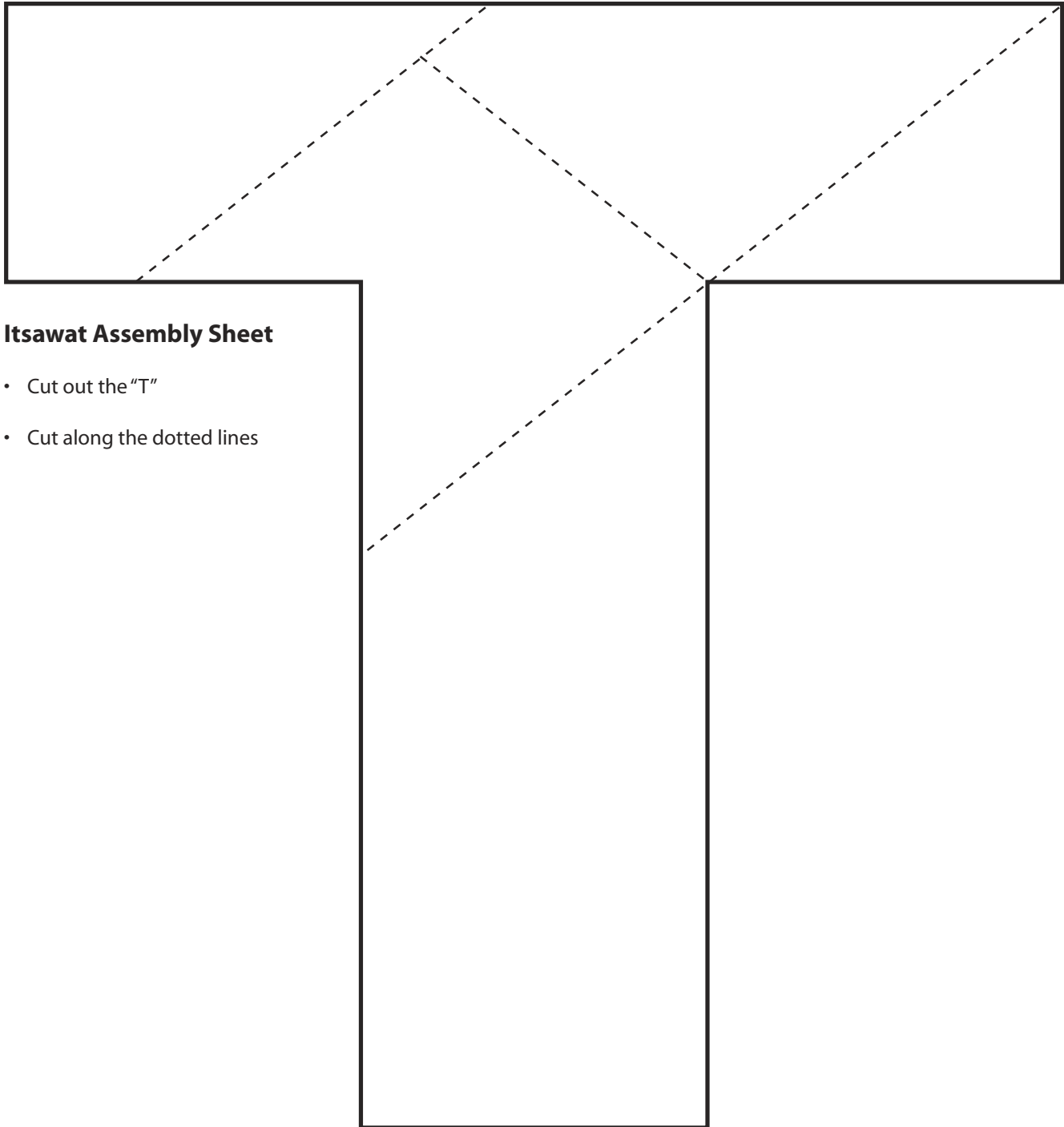
- How did things change once you had two-way communication?
- What role do you most relate to? The Manager? The Assistant Manager? The Observer? Explain.
- Observer Question: What did you see or hear the Assistant Manager do or say that helped the Manager with the task? How often do you see/hear that type of communication at work?
- Can you think of an example at work, school, or home that is similar to this situation?

Create

- How can you take the lessons you learned here and apply them? What exactly will you do?
- What do you already attend to in communications that were essential in this activity?
- What additional communication strategies and techniques will you use?
- How will those additional communication elements impact the quality of your relationships?

Thanks to University Associates for this activity. “Blivet” found in The 1979 Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators edited by John E. Jones and J. William Pfeiffer, John Wiley & Sons, NY.

Activity: **Itsawat**



Itsawat Assembly Sheet

- Cut out the "T"
- Cut along the dotted lines

Activity: **I Know Her!**

Overview

Even with very little information, people will form opinions and give responses about individuals. *I Know Her!* demonstrates how easily one makes judgments about others on the basis of age, race, sex, or ethnic stereotypes. This activity also explores self-awareness, especially with regards to the issue of prejudice and its impacts on conflict.

Set Up

Props

- One set of the eight Data Survey Sheets per participant
- One pencil per participant
- Flipchart or butcher paper & markers

Print the *Data Survey Sheets* from the *Inspire! Conflict Resolution: Initiating & Beginning Activities* software.

Instructions

Part One:

1. Give each participant a pencil and Data Survey Sheets — AI, RI, SI, and EI.
2. Instruct everyone to circle the choice under each item they feel best represents the person being evaluated. Participants will find the name and a short description of the person being evaluated at the top of each Data Survey Sheet.
3. Spend about five minutes on this section. Ask the participants to hand in their sheets.
4. Distribute the second set of Data Survey Sheets (All, RII, SII, EII) and ask participants to do the same for this set as the first.
5. Instruct participants to form groups of 5-7 members and to share their reactions while you tabulate and summarize the responses from the second set of Data Survey Sheets on the flipchart. It will become clear how assumptions and beliefs have influenced the answers given.

Story Line

You are in training as FBI profilers and expect to join the prestigious organization in a few short months. Your exit exam requires strength, stamina, reasoning, and the use of what you have learned over the past six months. I am here to administer the written portion of the exam. In a moment, I will hand out the questionnaire and you will have five minutes to complete it. Do your best and base your answers on what you know.

After collecting part one: Part two of the exam will be handed out momentarily. Please work with what you know and answer the questions presented as best as you can given the limited data you have. You will have another five minutes to complete the task.

Safety

To make this activity very safe, play with common sense and mutual respect.

Reflection

Discover

- What did you notice about your responses during this activity?
- Describe how easy or difficult it was to respond to the first set of questions given the information.
- Describe what it was like to respond to the second set of questions given further information about your interviewees.

Connect

- How does stereotyping impact conflict and conflict resolution?
- Can you think of a situation where stereotyping occurs (or where you have been stereotyped)? How can you help others learn to stop the stereotypical thinking and become more open/receptive to differences?

Activity: **I Know Her!**

Create

- What are some ways we can stretch ourselves? How can we become aware of our prejudices and check them at the door?
- How could you gather more information before forming opinions? Would this be valuable in conflict situations? How?

Activity: I Know Her

Data Survey Sheet (AI)

Character: Nurse at Letchworth Village Developmental Center named Lee Scott.

Instruction: For each of the items below, circle the choice that you think best describes Lee.

1. When assigned new responsibilities:

- a. Catches on quickly b. Continues old patterns

2. Preference in music:

- a. Classical b. Rock

3. Political attitude:

- a. Conservative b. Liberal

4. Work performance:

- a. Energetic but impulsive b. Slow but thorough

5. Considers job valuable because:

- a. Pension is good b. Work is challenging

6. Circle the number that best represents the degree of confidence you have in the above judgements:

Little Confidence

High Degree of Confidence

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

Activity: I Know Her

Data Survey Sheet (RI)

Character: 28-year old male named Bill Rogers, resident of Minneapolis.

Instruction: For each of the items below, circle the choice that you think best describes Bill.

1. Favorite televisions program:

- a. News
- b. Adventure

2. Employment:

- a. Laborer
- b. Accountant

3. Preference in clothing:

- a. Conservative, dark colors
- b. Sharp, bright colors

4. Religious background:

- a. Episcopal
- b. Baptist

5. Sports Preference:

- a. Basketball
- b. Tennis

6. Circle the number that best represents the degree of confidence you have in the above judgements:

Little Confidence

High Degree of Confidence

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Activity: I Know Her

Data Survey Sheet (SI)

Character: Airline clerk, resident of Cleveland, named Chris Jones.

Instruction: For each of the items below, circle the choice that you think best describes Chris.

1. In difficult situations:

- a. Acts independently b. Is dependent on others

2. Personality on day-to-day basis is characterized by:

- a. Marked emotionality b. Little emotionality

3. Regarding automobiles specifically and mechanical devices in general:

- a. Is skillful b. Possesses little skill

4. Family matters at home:

- a. Frequently affect work performance b. Rarely affect work performance

5. When making decisions:

- a. Relies on rational methods b. Relies on intuition

6. Circle the number that best represents the degree of confidence you have in the above judgements:

Little Confidence

High Degree of Confidence

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Activity: **I Know Her**

Data Survey Sheet (EI)

Character: 28-year old married male, resident of New York City, named Joseph.

Instruction: For each of the items below, circle the choice that you think best describes Joseph.

1. Most likely to meet with friends at:

- a. Local pub b. Gourmet coffee shop

2. Preference in recreation:

- a. Boxing matches b. Opera

3. Number of children:

- a. Two b. Five

4. Occupation:

- a. Teacher b. Police officer

5. Political attitude:

- a. Conservative b. Liberal

6. Circle the number that best represents the degree of confidence you have in the above judgements:

Little Confidence

High Degree of Confidence

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Activity: **I Know Her**

Data Survey Sheet (All)

Character: 63 year-old nurse at Letchworth Village Developmental Center named Lee Scott.

Instruction: For each of the items below, circle the choice that you think best describes Lee.

1. When assigned new responsibilities:

- a. Catches on quickly b. Continues old patterns

2. Preference in music:

- a. Classical b. Rock

3. Political attitude:

- a. Conservative b. Liberal

4. Work performance:

- a. Energetic but impulsive b. Slow but thorough

5. Considers job valuable because:

- a. Pension is good b. Work is challenging

6. Circle the number that best represents the degree of confidence you have in the above judgements:

Little Confidence

High Degree of Confidence

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Activity: **I Know Her**

Data Survey Sheet (SII)

Character: Female airline clerk, resident of Cleveland, named Chris Jones.

Instruction: For each of the items below, circle the choice that you think best describes Chris.

1. In difficult situations:

- a. Acts independently b. Is dependent on others

2. Personality on day-to-day basis is characterized by:

- a. Marked emotionality b. Little emotionality

3. Regarding automobiles specifically and mechanical devices in general:

- a. Is skillful b. Possesses little skill

4. Family matters at home:

- a. Frequently affect work performance b. Rarely affect work performance

5. When making decisions:

- a. Relies on rational methods b. Relies on intuition

6. Circle the number that best represents the degree of confidence you have in the above judgements:

Little Confidence

High Degree of Confidence

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Activity: **Mat, Puzzle, Screw**

Overview

Mat, Puzzle, Screw was designed to help people recognize that effective communication happens between speaker and listener, not with either one independently. This activity will give participants the chance to practice both sending and receiving information effectively as they attempt to send and follow a simple set of instructions. *Mat, Puzzle, Screw* will help participants recognize numerous key factors in effective communication.

Set Up

1. Each pair will need 2 mats, 2 screws, and 2 identical puzzle pieces. If you do not have these props, you may substitute two identical sets of any 3 unique objects.
2. Once the materials have been distributed, ask group members to sit back-to-back and wait for further instructions.

Instructions

1. Ask participants to divide the props in their partnership so each person has the exact same props.
2. Next, ask each pair to determine a person A and a person B. Person A must create a pattern with the three objects in his/her possession.
3. He/she must then describe the pattern to person B who must attempt to replicate the pattern exactly.
4. After successful completion, have the pairs switch roles and repeat the exercise.

Rules:

1. Neither partner may look at the other partner or the other partner's work.
2. Options: Only A can talk; B may only ask yes or no questions.

Story Line

You have been sent to a remote spot, to set up a device that will track a rare species of bird. Only three pieces of equipment are needed, but the exact configuration

of these pieces is of paramount importance for the equipment to work properly. You had the diagram with you when you left, but now that you have arrived you cannot locate it anywhere. Fortunately, you have a two-way radio and you have been able to contact your colleague at headquarters. He or she will describe the configuration for you and you will have to do the best you can.

Safety

Only general safety precautions are necessary.

Variations

You may wish to add more props to this activity. This will allow for more complex models to be developed and shared.

Reflection

Effective communication is a tricky endeavor, especially when we cannot add the important sensory cues of vision into the equation. Many factors enter into the equation: learning style, perception, expectation, clarity of information, patterns of perception, interpretation, and terminology/language.

Spend some time exploring the above issues by addressing the following questions:

Discover

- What information helped you gain an accurate picture of the configuration?
- What did you learn about yourself? Your partner?
- What enabled you to move through challenging moments?
- How did you know if your instructions were heard the way you intended?
- What was your experience in giving directions? In receiving directions? Did your perception or perspective change when you changed roles? If yes, how?

Activity: Mat, Puzzle, Screw

- Did your joint communication style change during the second round? If you were more effective, what allowed you to be more effective?

Connect

- What examples can you think of at school, work, or home similar to this exercise?
- When have you experienced a time when you thought what you said was clear and that the person understood, only to find that they did not? What happened? How might you have discovered this "in the moment?"

Create

- What will be your biggest "take away" from this exercise? How will you apply it in your life?
- What can you do to make sure communication between you and others is truly shared? What will you do as the "sender?" What will you do as the "receiver?"

Activity: **Mirroring**

Overview

Mirroring provides an excellent opportunity for participants to explore the importance of body language in communication. Participants divide into groups of three and take turns mirroring each other while posing in positions that reflect a significant emotion or memory. The poses offer the opportunity for others to discover deep empathy with one another by experiencing the feelings and thoughts associated with the body languages.

Set Up

Ask participants to form small circles of three people each.

Instructions

1. Participants divide into groups of three. One person (person A) recalls an intense emotional experience. She gets into a position that reflects her recollection, paying close attention to facial expression, body position, gesture, and breathing pattern. The goal is for person A to fully “get into the experience” (e.g., feel the feelings, think the thoughts, relive the moment) and freeze in this position. A and B do not talk in the activity.
2. Another person (person B) mirrors the first person; in other words, gets into the exact same position, breath pattern, gestures, and expression.
3. The third person (person C) helps person B, moving her body and telling her what else she needs to do in order to be a perfect mirror, down to the most subtle details.
4. Once there, person B holds the position and simply experiences, allowing images, thoughts, feelings, and intuitions to flow freely.
5. After a minute or two, person B shares her experience, relating all the thoughts, images, etc., which she had during the pose.
6. Person A then shares her recollection of the moment.

7. The exercise is repeated until each person has had the opportunity to experience each role.

Story Line

Mime school has always been your dream. Now at last, you and two of your best friends are finalists for the most elite mime company in New York City. The final test is the “mime-mirror-assist.” In this activity, you must not only create poses that exude energy and emotion, but be able to re-create the poses and understand their depth and origin as well. In addition, you must know how to be a supporting director. In order to qualify, you must excel in each role.

In your trio, decide who will be person A (mime), B (mirror), and C (supporting director). The Mime recalls an intense emotional experience from his or her past. Without saying anything to anyone, he or she gets into a position that reflects the recollection, paying close attention to facial expression, body position, gesture, and breathing pattern. The goal is for the Mime to “get into the experience” (e.g., feel the feelings, think the thoughts and relive the moment, then to pick a peak moment and freeze).

The Mirror must “mirror” the Mime: In other words, they must get into the exact same physical position, mimicking the breathing pattern, gestures and expression(s). The Supporting Director helps the Mirror, telling him or her how to move the body and providing suggestions in order for the Mirror to be exactly the same as the Mime. Once the Mirror has locked-in the pose, he or she freezes and then simply opens up to the experience, allowing images, thoughts, feelings, and intuitions to flow freely. After a minute or two, the Mirror shares his or her experience, relating all the thoughts, feelings, images, and so forth, which he or she had during the pose. The Mime then shares his or her memory associated with the pose. Take your time and make sure everyone gets a turn in each role.

Activity: **Mirroring**

Safety

As in all activities, focus on physical and emotional safety. Remind participants to use appropriate contact, when guiding each other into poses. Supporting Directors should ask before they touch another member of the group.

Variations

- Try challenging your group to create a list of emotions. Ask for volunteers to come before the group and act out one of the emotions. Challenge the group to guess the emotion presented. This provides another quick way to introduce the power of body language, which conveys feelings, emotions and information.
- After participants learn how to do this activity, invite participants to try mirroring in other situations (be careful not to offend others). The more practice they have, the better they will understand where another comes from.
- Give participants a journal assignment that asks them to reflect on their experience in developing rapport. Have them reflect on their sense of rapport with others before or after they mirror body positions, expressions, and voice quality in conversations. Then have them reflect on their sense of rapport if they do the opposite body position, expression, and voice quality. For example, what are their feelings towards the other person as they are exactly mirroring them? How do their feelings change when they are

both sitting cross-legged and both are engaged in animated conversation? How do their feelings change when they uncross their legs, cross their arms and speak in hushed tones while the other person continues talking in animated tones with their legs crossed and different body language is presented? How does this impact them? How does it impact the other?

Reflection

It is amazing how often person B will have images, feelings, and thoughts that mirror the recollection that person A is experiencing. This is a wonderful opportunity for people to realize that, not only that they can be empathetic, but they can also learn a lot about a person from their body language cues.

Discover

- What experience did your model depict?
- What insights did this mirror exercise give you about your partners?

Connect

- Where else have you experienced real empathy? When have you allowed yourself to walk in another person's shoes?

Create

- How can you utilize this skill in managing or resolving conflict?

Activity: NLP Awareness

Overview

NLP Awareness explores the three primary ways people access and recall memories and information. As a volunteer responds to questions, the relative emphasis they place on auditory, kinesthetic and/or visual modes of expression become evident to those observing. When people use different representational systems to communicate, there is an opportunity for miscommunication and conflict.

Set Up

- For each pair of participants, print one copy of the *Communication Model Worksheet* from the *Inspire! Conflict Resolution: Initiating & Beginning Activities* software.
- Arrange your group in a semi-circle in front of you.

Instructions

1. Ask for a couple of volunteers (2-6 depending on group size) to briefly leave the room as you explain the activity to the remaining participants.
2. With the volunteers away, hand out one *Communication Model Worksheet* to each participant. This worksheet outlines the basics of Neuro-Linguistic Programming, or NLP. For example, the illustration shows that those who rely on visual communication will tilt their heads up when accessing visual information. Those who rely on kinesthetic communication will tilt their heads down and/or move their bodies. Finally, those who rely on auditory communication will turn their heads to the left or right. Give your group a few moments to look over the worksheet. Explain that sometimes movements are subtle; so they will have to watch carefully.
3. Next, explain that once the volunteers return, the group will listen and observe closely as the volunteers respond to a series of questions. They must watch for the cues as described on their worksheet, and take notes on the volunteers.

The facilitator then asks the following questions in order to elicit visual sensitivity (leave enough time between questions for a thoughtful response):

- How many windows are on the front of your house?
- Imagine that you are standing in front of this building. What color is the roof?

To elicit auditory information, the facilitator asks such questions as:

- What is the eighth word of the national anthem?
- When you open the door to your house, what is the first sound that you hear?

To discover kinesthetic information, the facilitator can ask:

- Imagine that it is a cold winter day and you have just stepped out of your warm house. What are you feeling?
- Which hand do you use to answer the phone?

The facilitator can also choose a particular scenario, like the beach. Questions can be asked that are related; for example:

- Imagine you are standing at the beach. What are the waves like?
- Describe the sky above the ocean.
- What sounds do you hear? What kinds of birds?
- Describe the sounds of the waves.
- Imagine you have taken off your shoes and are walking to the water. Feel the sand on your feet. What is the temperature?
- Now you walk into the water. How does the water feel?

Finally share the communication model worksheet with the volunteers and move into the reflection component of the activity.

Activity: NLP Awareness

Story Line

The group is conducting a study on human development and informational processing styles. Most of you will be observing and collecting data, but we will need a few volunteers as test subjects. Please take this seriously in the interest of science!

Facilitator: follow the instructions after reading this story line.

Safety

It is important to make everyone feel comfortable, especially the volunteers. Make sure your observers are being respectful and following the instructions of the activity.

Reflection

Discover

- What did you notice about the volunteer(s)?
- What might you infer from what you observed?
- What else could you do to verify your assumptions?

Connect

- How can understanding this information help resolve conflict?
- How can developing this sensitivity be a valuable asset at work? School? Home?

Create

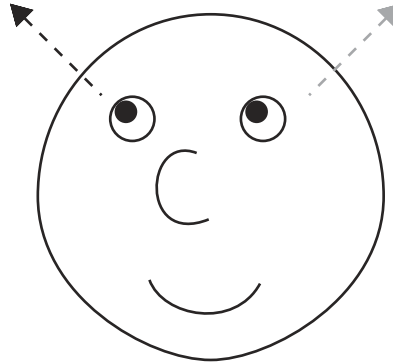
- How might this knowledge help you improve your memory?

Activity: **NLP Awareness**

Communication Model: Indicators of Representational Systems

Visual Thinking

I see
It looks
It might look like

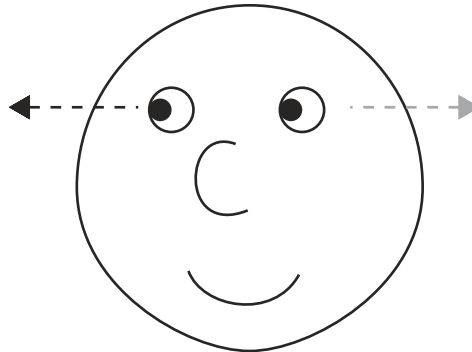


Visual Memory

I saw
I looked
I remember how it
looked

Auditory Thinking

I hear
It sounds
I can hear

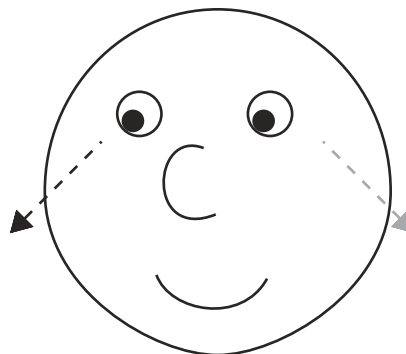


Auditory Memory

I heard
It sounded
I recall hearing

Kinesthetic Thinking

I feel
I touch
I'm in touch



Kinesthetic Memory

I felt
I touched
I was in touch

Activity: **NLP Challenge**

Overview

We all have our preferences for taking in and processing information. Knowing our own strengths and the preferences of others can help us work together to avoid conflict, and allow us to easily move through conflict when it occurs. *NLP Challenge* provides the opportunity for group members to develop an appreciation for the differences in perceptions of different people and to appreciate the need to address people in their preferred communication style(s).

Set Up

- Paper and pencil for each pair
- Written patterns of movement (e.g. pre-made dance steps) are optional

Instructions

1. Ask participants to pair up. Explain that each participant will have the opportunity to be the “sender” of information and the “receiver” of information for three rounds.
2. Have pairs decide who will be the first sender and who will be the first receiver.
3. Explain the following instructions.

Round One

For the first round, the receiver sits with his or her back to the sender and has a pencil and paper in front of him or her. The sender, using his or her index finger, draws several specified pictures on the back of the receiver. The receiver must draw on the paper exactly what he or she believes the sender is drawing. During this round:

- The sender may not speak.
- The receiver may not turn around or look at the sender. The receiver may talk to the sender (it is optional whether you tell them this information).
- One drawing should be a picture (house, tree, known design).

- One drawing should be a telephone number (10 or more digits).
- One drawing should be a pattern or directions (e.g., a dance step or how to move in order to reach a specific object placed in a room). Be creative.

Round Two

For round two, the sender must tell (whisper to) the receiver specific information, and the “receiver” must follow the instructions exactly. During this round:

- The receiver may not turn around or look at the sender.
- The receiver may talk to the sender (it is optional whether you tell them this information). It is important that the sender not tell what the object is, but rather describe how to draw it. For example, “draw a horizontal line. Next, draw a vertical line going up about 3 inches from one end of the horizontal line ...”
- The sender may not demonstrate, show, draw, or communicate except by verbal instructions.
- The sender may not repeat the exact same instructions twice.
- The sender chooses three of the following options (or make up others):
 - The sender can ask the receiver to draw something simple such as a landscape or a building, describing how to draw it without naming any objects.
 - The sender tells the receiver a 10-digit (or longer) phone number (a different number from round 1) without repeating it, and the receiver must write it down.
 - The sender gives directions for how to get to a certain place in the room. Be creative and include ducking, walking backwards, or crawling.

Round Three

For the third round, the sender demonstrates or shows the receiver exactly what she/he is to do or write. During this round:

Activity: **NLP Challenge**

- The sender may not speak or draw, but may demonstrate in any way that is effective.
- The receiver may talk to the sender (it is optional whether you tell them this information).
- The sender chooses three tasks from previous rounds or makes up others. For example:
 - The sender shows a picture or drawing of a dance to the receiver and then asks him/her to do the dance steps.
 - The sender shows the receiver a sequence of moves and the receiver repeats the movements.
 - The sender shows the receiver a phone number and asks him or her to write it down.

Once all of the tasks have been completed, ask participants to switch roles and repeat the process. Encourage them to try new tasks and keep the new receivers guessing!

Story Line

You have applied for the opportunity to serve as a member of a group traveling to the inner rain forest to collect important data that could result in the cure for cancer. In order to ascertain which team to place you on should you be accepted, you must go through a series of assessments that will let the admissions group know where your strengths lie in receiving and storing information.

Safety

Remind participants to play with respect and care for the people around them. Participants should be mindful when moving from place to place, and be gentle when

writing on each other's backs. Keep a close watch for unsafe behavior and address it immediately.

Variations

Try facilitating this activity with any number of different tasks. The drawings, movements, and dance steps can be at your discretion and specific to your group. Be creative and this activity may be varied in many ways!

Reflection

Discover

- In what ways have you experienced conflict that arose because of differences in the processing of information? Give a specific example when, because of style differences, conflict arose. How might you manage that situation knowing what you know now?
- What are some of the key behaviors, words, or mannerisms that will give you important clues about another person's style?

Connect

- Think of your peers, teachers, parents, and siblings. Reflect on your interactions with them. Describe how differences or similarities in style might influence potential conflicts with each one. What can you do to work with those differences?

Create

- How can you use your awareness of another person's style to work together so conflict does not arise or you move through it when it does?

Activity: Roomination

Overview

In *Roomination*, players are divided into interior design teams and set to task dreaming and mocking-up the ideal classroom, school, or youth center. Players must communicate ideas, work through options, and arrive at a consensus about the ideal space. Roomination is rich with conversation, decision-making, and collaboration.

Set Up

Props

- Graph paper (enough that each design team has multiple sheets)
- 1 pencil per participant
- 1 ruler or straight-edged object per team
- 2 pair of scissors per team
- 1 roll of tape per team

Divide your group into teams of 3-5 participants and supply each team with graph paper, one pencil per person, a ruler or straight-edged object, a pair of scissors and a roll of tape.

Instructions

1. Each team has supplies that will enable them to make or design, roughly to scale, the furniture and layout in an office, classroom, factory, or other relevant working environment.
2. The team is to design the area so it best fits their needs, and so the area will be the "ideal classroom" for schools.
3. The designs or "mock-ups" must be creative and well thought out.

Resources may be used in any fashion. For example, if a team would like to create a 3D mock-up using the paper and tape, and another simple drawing, both would be appropriate. Remember the conversation created by the challenge provides the value in this activity.

Give teams enough time to design, build and collaborate,

on their final product. It is helpful to periodically encourage teams to consider why they have made certain choices and to engage them in thoughtful conversation about the final product. Once teams have finished, allow time for each to present their final design to the rest of the group and describe how they arrived at the particular design.

Story Line

Your team specializes in classroom and school workspace design, and you're submitting a bid to a large school system to better redesign their main office area and classrooms. Your floor design will have to be created and presented to the "client" with an explanation that you hope will get you hired for the project. The Request for Proposal specifically states you must include furniture and creative additions to win the bid. Further, the design choices must be logical, functional, and conducive to collaboration by those who will use the space. Take some time and think about what the office/classroom will look like, and remember that it must meet the stated requirements. Your bid must be in soon, so get to work!

Safety

Remind participants to be careful using scissors during the activity. In addition, general safety precautions for moving around the room and caring for one another apply.

Variations

Try making this activity specific to your participants. Ask design teams to design an environment that would best suit the demands of their current jobs or classroom teams. Encourage them to dream, and ask, "What would your ideal learning environment look like?" "What are the characteristics?" Ask teams to consider these questions as they work toward their final designs. A second concept is to dream up a learning environment and design around the concept of what they do. For example, a team of salespeople that must work fast, work

Activity: Roomination

seamlessly together, and expedite tasks. Similarly, a group of students that must utilize diverse learning styles and ways of learning to be successful in a specified subject.

Reflection

This activity indirectly explores what participants think they would need to work or function in the ideal environment. Spend time asking questions that encourage participants to think about how their current working environments could promote the ideal work environment and encourage more creativity and collaboration.

Discover

- What important considerations did you take into account in your design?
- Why were these considerations important to your group?
- What assumptions did you make?
- How did they influence your plan?
- How did you come to consensus?

Connect

- What communication techniques did you use to support your ideas and to listen to others?
- What conflicts arose and how did you resolve them?
- Who will have issues with your design, and how can you bring them around to your thinking?

Create

- What would change if you worked in the ideal environment that you just created?
- If all the small groups were asked to combine their plans and create the "ideal," what important steps would you take to do this with the least amount of conflict and the greatest joy in the process?

Thanks to Chris Cavert and Laurie Frank for this activity. Games & Other Stuff for Teachers by Chris Cavert and Laurie Frank. Wood 'N' Barnes Publishing & Distribution, 1999.

Activity: Shoes

Overview

Shoes explores self awareness, interpersonal awareness, and provides opportunities to learn how to develop comfort with different situations. In this activity, participants use placement of one of their shoes to signify how comfortable they feel when asked a series of questions. Appreciative questions can be asked that invite those who are comfortable in situations that support conflict resolution or management to share their experiences, their skills, their ideas, and suggestions.

Set Up

- One personal shoe from each participant
- One 12" x 12" mat, (or chair).

Place the mat or butcher paper in the center of the floor. The group stands in a large circle around the object.

Instructions

1. The facilitator opens the activity by making a statement or describing a situation which relates to conflict management, resolution, or understanding others. The mat represents complete personal comfort with the statement or situation.
2. Each participant then places his or her shoe on the floor in relation to the mat according to their comfort level with the statement or situation. The further away from the mat a shoe is placed, the more uncomfortable a person would be with the statement or situation. A shoe placed in the center of the mat is the most comfortable a person could be with the comment. Keep these thoughts in mind as you facilitate the activity:
 - Participants may pass.
 - Participants may place their shoe and then pass during the discussion.

Spend time addressing questions or comments after each shoe placement, and open conversation in the reflection component of this activity.

Sample Statements Or Situations:

- Confronting others
- Disagreeing verbally with others
- Being disagreed with
- Decision-making
- Speaking up; voicing your opinion
- Being in control
- Being out of control
- Asking questions
- Delegating
- Asking for help
- Taking risks
- Making mistakes
- Challenging authority
- Agreeing with others
- Giving in or compromising
- Following rules; taking orders
- Admitting you are wrong
- Including everyone; consensus leadership
- Leadership
- Listening attentively
- Putting oneself in another's position
- Drugs, alcohol, cigarettes
- Handling peer pressure
- Handling life's challenges

Story Line

For this activity, everyone will need to remove one shoe, and use it as a game piece. I will read you a series of questions or statements. Depending on your response, you will position your shoe in relation to the object in the center. If you completely agree with the question or statement, you may place your shoe directly on the object. If you disagree or do not associate with the statement, place your shoe further away. If you are somewhere in the middle, place your shoe accordingly. When you are finished placing your shoe, you will have a chance to discuss the comfort level of where you placed your shoe. Some questions or statements will require you to think, and some may be as "stinky" as the shoes in the center. Answer honestly and courageously, and this activity will be enlightening.

Activity: Shoes

Safety

Be sure to exercise caution when participants are moving around with one shoe removed. Use mutual respect and common sense when playing to create a safe environment.

Variations

1. Participants stand in a circle around the mat. After the facilitator makes the statement, participants stand in relation to the mat according to their comfort level with the statement or situation.
2. After the initial placement and discussion, participants are invited to go and “stand in someone else’s shoes” (preferably one that is significantly different from their position). The discussion then turns to imagining what it would be like to be in this position.
3. After the initial placement and discussion, participants partner (or form small groups) with those who placed his or her shoe “opposite” from theirs. They share their thoughts, feelings, concerns, and ideas. They have the opportunity to explore the others’ position and ask questions. They can make commitments to support one another about developing desired new skills. For example, someone may want to learn how to confront others effectively and feel comfortable doing so. They partner with someone who is already comfortable with this and ask for guidance, suggestions, and support in learning how to do the same

Reflection

Discover

- What was this activity like for you?
- What did you find most difficult? Least difficult?
- How does your position impact your ability to manage conflict, avoid conflict, or create conflict?

Connect

- What ways have you found to confront others effectively—ways that resolve conflict rather than escalate it?
- What beliefs do you hold that support your ability to _____ (e.g., confront another, let go of an argument)?
- What processes do you go through in making decisions easily? How do others respond to your decisions?
- What goes on for you mentally, emotionally, and/or physically when you _____? How do you manage or respond to that?
- In dealing with conflict, what behaviors, language, and thoughts are important for you to be aware of given your position?

Create

- What would have to happen in order for you to move closer to “comfort?”
- If you could move to another spot, where would you move and why? What benefits would this new position afford you in handling conflict? In order to move, what would you have to do? What beliefs would have to change for you? What fears would you have to release? What skills would you need to develop? What thought would you need to have? How can you do that?

Thanks to Chris Cavert and Laurie Frank for this activity. Games & Other Stuff for Teachers by Chris Cavert and Laurie Frank. Wood 'N' Barnes Publishing & Distribution, 1999.

Activity: Shoes

Sample Statements or Situations

- Confronting others
 - Disagreeing verbally with others
 - Being disagreed with
 - Decision-making
 - Speaking up; voicing your opinion
 - Being in control
 - Being out of control
 - Asking questions
 - Delegating
 - Asking for help
 - Taking risks
 - Making mistakes
 - Challenging authority
 - Agreeing with others
 - Giving in or compromising
 - Following rules; taking orders
 - Admitting you are wrong
 - Including everyone; consensus leadership
 - Leadership
 - Listening attentively
- Putting oneself in another's position
 - Drugs, alcohol, cigarettes
 - Handling peer pressure
 - Handling life's challenges

Activity: **Similarities**

Overview

Typically, people share more commonalities than differences. Unfortunately, the everyday focus is usually on the latter. *Similarities* opens conversation about how participants are alike, instead of how they are different. Participants connect with one another by discovering similarities, and build common ground by discussing the things that bring them together.

Set Up

- Chairs (optional if you choose to sit on the ground or stand in a circle)
- Participants form a circle of chairs, enough for each person less one.

Instructions

Ask for a volunteer to stand in the center of the circle. The volunteer must observe the seated participants and look for commonalities within the group. Next, he or she must choose one commonality to focus on. This could be height, clothing, brand of shoe or something more creative. One by one the volunteer asks individuals who share the chosen commonality to stand. The seated participants observe the process while attempting to figure out what the commonality is. The first person to identify the commonality becomes the next person in the center. Continue this process until you run out of time, or everyone has had an opportunity to be in the middle.

Story Line

On the horizon is a special project that your team wants, and you have submitted an aggressive bid for it. You have made it to the last stages in the bid process and there is one final test that you must pass. To be selected, you must have superior powers of observation, be capable of making fine distinctions, and be able to see subtle patterns where others might miss them. Your test is as follows: (deliver instructions at this point in the story).

Safety

General safety rules apply. Make sure the commonalities chosen are positive and appropriate, and will not hurt anyone in the group.

Variations

A variation is to begin with partners. Partners find something they have in common. After they have identified something, they seek another pair and create a group of four. The four must find something they all have in common which is different from either of the first two commonalities. Then groups of four seek out another group of four, and the eight find another unique commonality. This continues until the whole group is together, connected by one common thread.

Reflection

Sometimes what we share in common is not highly visible, but it nonetheless binds us. Draw out this idea:

Discover

- What results from discovering similarities? What thoughts and feelings about yourself in relation to others surfaced?
- How could a conflict between two people who have a number of similarities be different from one where they have not explored their similarities?

Connect

- How did you discover patterns of similarities?
- Did anything unusual occur? How can you transfer these ideas into your daily life?

Create

- What will you take away from this activity, and how can you use what you learned?
- How might your relationships with others, especially those with whom you are in conflict, change if your focus when with them was on finding commonalities/similarities?



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Activity: Similarities

Thanks to Chris Cavert and Laurie Frank for this activity. Games & Other Stuff for Teachers by Chris Cavert and Laurie Frank. Wood 'N' Barnes Publishing & Distribution, 1999.

Activity: **Slogans**

Overview

A sense of ownership, loyalty, and camaraderie develop when a group works together on a project. When someone comes in from the outside, especially in a managerial or leadership position, conflict can easily arise. In *Slogans*, the stage is set for this dynamic to unfold when volunteers are asked to leave the room and the remaining members are divided into small work groups. Each small group is tasked with creating a set of slogans or advertising themes for a fictional company. As the groups are gaining momentum, there is a shift in management and leadership. The volunteers return as manager-leaders, and the dynamics of the small groups are altered. Slogans address how this shift may affect the groups, to what consequence or benefit, and how this is similar to real-world situations.

Slogans also generates powerful conversation around such topics as ownership, momentum, patience, and change.

Set Up

Props

- One sheet of butcher paper (or flip-chart paper) per group
- Markers for each group
- Notebook paper
- Writing utensils

Set Up

For this activity, consider setting up the small work stations in advance. Tables and chairs are recommended but not required. Gather your group together and explain the instructions in the next section.

Instructions

Ask several volunteers to leave the room. You want groups of approximately 4-5 members with no more than 1 volunteer per group. Keep this in mind as you are choosing the number of volunteers.

AFTER the volunteers have left the room, divide the remaining participants into small groups of 4-5. Each group will now be referred to as an Ad Agency.

Note: If you have a large number of participants, create small groups of 8-12 participants.

There are two phases to this activity.

During phase 1:

1. Each agency has ten minutes to organize as a company, select a name, establish a hierarchy, and assign participant roles and responsibilities. In addition, they will produce an organizational chart reflecting these decisions. Everyone must be involved and represented on the chart.
2. At this point, read the first paragraph of the story line to bring the participants into focus.
3. While the agencies are forming, meet with the volunteers who are patiently waiting outside of the room. Explain that they will soon be stepping into manager-leader roles within the small advertising groups.
4. Using paper and a pen, each manager-leader must write down expectations and leadership characteristics or contributions he or she is going to bring to the team.

Allow 10-15 minutes for Phase 1. Check in with both volunteers and agencies often, and answer any questions they may have.

During Phase 2:

1. Collect the organizational charts and introduce one volunteer (manager-leader) into each agency, announcing that the person is joining the company as the senior manager.
2. At this stage, read the second paragraph of the story line to tie the story together.
3. Next, put the agencies to task. Each agency has 20 minutes to prepare a set of at least 10 slogans or advertising themes for a fictional company of your choosing.

Activity: Slogans

4. Be sure your chosen company is interesting and relevant to insure buy-in from participants.
5. When 20 minutes has expired, ask each group to present their slogans for evaluation.

Story Line

To be read with the volunteers out of earshot: Each small group represents an advertising company engaged in the business of promotion. Each company is newly reorganized and you are all decision makers during this reorganization process. Your first task is to create an organizational structure to include a company name, hierarchy, participant roles, and job tasks. Everyone needs to fit into your organization. Second, you will need to brainstorm a list of at least 10 slogans and/or advertising themes for a fictional company. I will give you that information in a moment. You will have 10 minutes to complete your organizational structure and 20 minutes to compile your list of slogans.

To be read as you reintroduce the volunteers: Introductions are in order. After our restructure, corporate has decided to hire management from the outside. This is your new manager. Please adjust accordingly.

Safety

General safety precautions for moving around the room and caring for one another apply.

Variations

Choose another project that closely matches your participants roles, needs, or current challenges.

Reflection

Discover

- What was the group's initial response to an outside manager coming on board?
- How did the group respond?
- What was important for each individual to be willing to do? What was important for the "outsider" to do?

Connect

- What did the group and the manager do to help move the group through any conflict?
- What positive impact did an outside person have on the group?

Create

- What are some important skills and characteristics that are important for leaders, group members, and teams?
- How do they manage conflict when individuals come and go from teams?

Activity: **What It Is?**

Overview

Conflict can easily arise if we do not recognize that different perspectives often provide different information. *What It Is?* is a unique challenge that requires group members to work together to bring differing perspectives into focus. Resources are few, so group members must be creative and communicate effectively to uncover the answers to the puzzle.

Set Up

Props

- 1 pair of scissors
- 8 envelopes
- 8 sheets of colored paper — 1 of each of the following colors: Pink, brown, blue, tan, green, yellow, orange, and red (or substitute any 8 colors you choose)
- 8 sets of description words (create your own or print them from this CD)
- 3 guess ticket cards per small group in play (create your own or print them from this CD)

Set Up

1. Create the colored description cards by using one 8 1/2" x 11" sheet of construction paper, cut into fourths, in the following colors: Pink, brown, blue, tan, green, yellow, orange, and red. (If you do not have those colors, you may substitute any 8 colors you choose.)
2. Print sample description words and guess tickets from the *Inspire! Youth Series Conflict Resolution: Initiating & Beginning Activities* software.
3. Tape one description word on each 1/4 sheet.
4. Make sure each set of 4 description words is taped to the same color of paper. For example, on pink cards you would put (1) rough, (2) long, (3) thin, (4) moves, etc.
5. Put each set of 4 cards in an envelope.

Instructions

Begin by evenly dividing your team into smaller work groups. Each group receives three guess tickets and

an envelope with four words that describe part of an object. If you do not have enough groups, distribute two envelopes per group. Ask groups to review the materials contained in the envelopes before moving on. Next, explain that they must work together to identify the object described by their cards. Every group has part of the same object. The rules are as follows:

Written words may not be spoken out loud at any time. This is very important. Words may, however, be described. Small groups must come to a consensus before presenting a guess. Each small group is limited to three guesses and must turn in one guess ticket with each guess they make. The facilitator will only answer "yes," "no," or "partially correct" in response to a guess.

If the team seems stuck, you may provide a clue by letting participants know they can use any resources available to them to help identify the object (e.g., other groups, though you don't suggest this).

The object provided for you in this activity is an elephant. Each envelope contains adjectives describing a certain part of the elephant's body such as the legs, trunk, and tusks. Remember, they are all trying to understand what part they have, and then how that part plays into the whole. Groups often get stuck in the minutia and forget about the larger goal.

To capture the learning, you may choose to read the "ending story" after the activity and reflection. This story captures the essence of the activity, and provides a nice way to wrap up conversation.

Story Line

A new TV game show is being test marketed and your group has been selected to be one of the first to be on the show. The contest is to see who can identify an object with a limited number of clues.

You will be given an envelope with four clues and three guess tickets. You may not speak the word clues that you

Activity: **What It Is?**

will be given aloud. When you think you know what it is, you can ask the game show host. Before you present a guess to the game show host, your group must come to a consensus on your guess. Every time you guess, you must turn in one of your guess tickets; you only have three! The game show host will answer “yes,” “no,” or “partially correct” to any of your guesses.

Safety

Simple safety precautions regarding movement around the room and caring for one another are necessary in this activity.

Variations

Try distributing parts of a picture or a puzzle to each small group and ask them to guess what the picture is. If the whole team brought the pieces together, they would have the complete picture. Let the groups come to this conclusion as they struggle through the details. In this variation, do not tell the whole team they each have a part of the whole.

Reflection

Discover

- What was essential to solving this puzzle?
- What did each of you have to be willing to do in order to solve the puzzle?

Connect

- How is this like work, school, or home? (Select which one fits based upon which book you are working on). Can someone give us an example of a situation that is similar?
- When or where in our lives do we have incomplete information, and yet still make assumptions and draw conclusions about what is real or true?

Create

- What would it take for you to recognize your assumptions about your information and seek greater input?
- How can you take what you learned here and apply it to the situation that you described?
- How do you know when you don't have all the information? How do you know when you do?

Mobile Team Challenge first learned of this activity from Rochelle Behling and Christie Peterson at the 2002 ACCT Conference in Nashville, Tennessee. Thanks Rochelle and Christie.

Activity: **What it is?**

Guess Ticket

Guess Ticket

Guess Ticket

Guess Ticket

Guess Ticket

Guess Ticket

Guess Ticket

Guess Ticket

Guess Ticket

Guess Ticket

Guess Ticket

Guess Ticket



Conflict Resolution

Initiating & Beginning Activities



Activity: What it is?

Elephant Cards

Pass cards out to the participants (one word per card)

1. **Four pink tail cards:** rough, long, thin, moves
2. **Four brown body cards:** rough, round, large, strong
3. **Four blue head cards:** Gray, smaller, foundation for features, central processing unit
4. **Four tan ear cards:** flat, sound-sensitive, flexible, gray
5. **Four green eye cards:** wet, large, round, closed sometimes
6. **Four yellow trunk cards:** hollow, rough, flexible, long
7. **Four orange leg cards:** gray, rough, bends in the middle, can support an extreme amount of weight
8. **Four red tusk cards:** smooth, weapon, valuable, pointed

Make sure the cards only have one word from the descriptive list, i.e. the pink cards will not read pink tail cards, only rough or long or thin or moves.

Print the cards in this document.

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Visit <http://www.mobileteamchallenge.com> for conflict curriculum and training.

Activity: **What it is?**

Team #1

Rough



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Activity: **What it is?**

Team #1

Long



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Activity: **What it is?**

Team #1

Thin



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Activity: **What it is?**

Team #1

Moves



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Rough



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Round



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Large



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Strong



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Foundation for features



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Gray



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Central Processing Unit



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Smaller



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Sound-Sensitive



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Flat



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Flexible



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Gray



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Closed Sometimes



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Wet



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Large



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Round



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Hollow



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Flexible



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Rough



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Round



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Can support
an extreme
amount of weight



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Gray



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Rough



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Bends in
the middle



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Pointed



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Valuable



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Smooth



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Weapon



Conflict Resolution
Initiating & Beginning Activities



Activity: **Winner Share All**

Overview

Perceptions and assumptions heavily influence how we make decisions and how we resolve differences. In *Winner Share All*, people are given a task in which they typically compete because of the assumptions associated with the activity. What they may discover, is a very simple way for everyone to win if assumptions are put aside.

Set Up

- Tables and chairs
- Bring your group together and explain the rules. No setup is necessary

Instructions

Participants partner with someone and assume an arm wrestling position. The goal is for the group, to earn as many possible points for the team by trying to bring their opponent's hand to the table. They will have one minute to do so. The rules are as follows:

1. Each time a player gets their partner's hand to the table, they earn a point.
2. As soon as someone gets a hand down, they both come back to the start position and try again.
3. Each pair should keep track of their own scores; the team totals them at the end.

Note to facilitator: If pairs work together and put competition aside, they can simply go back and forth allowing one another to touch their hand to the table and rack up points as fast as they can move. Let your group figure this out on their own, and spend time talking about it in the reflection.

Story Line

It's county fair time and your group has decided to enter the team arm contest. Since it is a team contest, it will be the team's accumulated "wins" that count. The

winner share with the team and the best team wins! Each time someone gets the opponent's hand to touch the table, the team earns a point. You have one minute of competition, so get ready to play!

Safety

Remind group members to be careful not to hurt each other in an eagerness to win. Group members must play fair and with safety in mind. If anyone says stop, their opponent must do so immediately.

Variations

Try using a long pole or rope. Ask participants to grab a hold of the pole or rope, with each person facing towards the center of the object (half facing in one direction, the other half facing in the opposite direction as in a typical tug-of-war). The two teams must stay in contact with the pole or rope at all times. The objective is for a team to collect points by bringing the people from the other side over to their side. As with the original version, if the team decides to work together and simply step to each others sides they can earn many more points than if they compete.

Reflection

Discover

- What influenced your perception and ultimate decision about how to proceed with this activity? (Patterns of being and belief, expectations and intent)
- What assumptions did you make that helped or hindered the number of points that the team earned?

Connect

- What paradigm dominated the thinking and why?
- How did/could you move beyond the traditional win/lose paradigm and how would that have influenced the final result?
- What would everyone have to be willing to do in order to have made the paradigm shift?

Activity: **Winner Share All**

Create

- What beliefs do you hold that would have supported the shift? What beliefs had to change?
- How might this difference in attitude or mindset support your success in managing or resolving conflict? What would you have to be willing to do?
- How might you influence another to adopt this attitude as well?

Activity: **The Young Princess**

Overview

Our beliefs and assumptions influence everything we do. The irony is that we often can't recall how these beliefs and assumptions were formed. *The Young Princess* takes a look at how our beliefs and assumptions influence the decisions we make and the ideas we adopt. Participants read a short story and independently, in small groups, answer a series of questions related to the story. Participants may be surprised with the wide range of responses and be interested in how many ways there are to interpret the same event.

Set Up

Props

- 1 copy of the Young Princess Story per participant. .
- 1 writing utensil per participant
- 1 sheet of blank paper per participant
- 1 copy of the Group Decision Sheet for each small group in play (typically 5-6 people each).

Print copies of the handouts from the *Inspire! Conflict Resolution: Initiating & Beginning Activities* software. The Young Princess requires little setup, and can be done just about anywhere. Direct your group to a comfortable spot around tables or on the floor.

Instructions

1. First, have participants split into small groups of 4-6, depending on your overall group size. Pass out one Young Princess Story Sheet to each participant and ask that each person read it silently to themselves.
2. Next, rank each character in the story from 1 through 6 with 1 being MOST responsible for the plight of the Young Princess and 6 being LEAST responsible.
3. Once completed, hand out one Group Decision Sheet to each small group.
4. The next task is for each small group to come to consensus on who is most responsible and who is least, again ranking the characters from 1 to 6.

Allow groups to present their rankings and their reasoning behind the rankings.

Story Line

Well, it has finally happened. The lawyers have decided to get involved in the world of princesses, dragons, and sorcerers. And you have been called to sit in on a jury that is to decide the extent of guilt or innocence of a host of characters in a most devastating crime. Once you hear all the facts, you will be sequestered until you come to consensus on your decision.

Facilitator: Follow the instructions for this activity from this point on.

Safety

General safety precautions for moving around the room and caring for one another apply. People need to be aware that sometimes participants can get very emotional over their values and beliefs. Make sure they commit to honoring one another.

Variations

Have a member of the group take on the role of one of the characters in the story and make an argument for why they are not responsible for the fate of the princess. In the argument, they must present the facts and details about themselves (which they are making up), the beliefs they hold which support their position, and the values they hold that underlie their beliefs. After they have each made their case, they can look at the conflicting stories, beliefs, and values in order to understand at a deeper level where and why conflict arises so easily.

Activity: **The Young Princess**

Reflection

Discover

- What assumptions did you make and how did they influence your decisions? How did you respond when your assumptions were challenged?
- If you changed your rank during the group discussion, why? What changed for you?
- Why was it difficult to come to consensus? What needed to happen before consensus could occur?
- How much do you support the group's final decision?
- How much do you feel your input was heard and taken into account?

Connect

- Where else do you see yourself or others not seeing eye-to-eye based on differing interpretations of the same situation?

- Are there parallels that you can draw from what you have learned here to that situation? For example, completeness of information is an issue in The Young Princess. How does completeness of information play out in your example?

Create

- What did you learn here that will be of value in moving through conflict?
- What did you discover about yourself that will influence what you say or do or how to act in conflict situations?
- How can you be sure to know your assumptions and challenge them in conflict?

Activity: The Young Princess

The Story Of The Young Princess

A long time ago there lived a young Princess. She lived with her father, the King, and her mother, the Queen, in a castle near the Black Forest. Her mother felt unhappy and neglected because the King traveled frequently to other lands. Therefore, she gave all her attention to the young Princess, who became spoiled and demanding. One day the Princess commanded that she visit her "subjects" in the neighboring village. The Queen gave in, even though it would be dangerous, and allowed her to go off. After a day of pranks, the young Princess found herself far from home as night was falling.

Unable to find her way home alone, the Princess found a church and demanded an escort. The Friar, who was angered with the King for taxing the people, told the young Princess to return home by way of a shortcut. Unbeknownst to the Princess, the path the Friar described was through the most dangerous part of the Black Forest and belonged to the Wicked Sorcerer.

The Princess, tired and lost, had given up hope when she came across a White Knight. The very frightened Princess begged for aid. The Knight promised his undying support but rode away when he found that the Princess had no money. The Princess went deeper into the forest, whereupon she met the Wicked Sorcerer. After listening to her pleas, the Sorcerer turned the Princess into a fox, forever to live in the forest.

Activity: The Young Princess

The Young Princess: Group Decision Sheet

On a scale from 1 to 6, rank the order of characters from most responsible to least responsible for the plight of the Young Princess (1 being the most responsible for the plight of the Young Princess):

_____ The Young Princess

_____ The King

_____ The Queen

_____ The Friar

_____ The White Knight

_____ The Wicked Sorcerer

Activity: **Bridges to Cross**

Overview

In *Bridges to Cross*, two teams standing on opposite shores must cross a river with a limited amount of available resources. Both teams will need creativity, confidence, and cooperation to work through the challenge.

Set Up

Props

Using Mobile Team Challenge equipment, you will need:

- 4 7-foot beams
- 4 Splice plates
- 1 All Aboard Platform (or 2 18" x 22" mats)
- 4 12"x12" rubber mats
- 2 18"x22" rubber mats
- 2 Pivot nubs (if using standard MTC course)
- 1 Set of tools (if using standard MTC course)
- 2 12-foot ropes
- 1 20-foot rope
- 1 MTC drawstring bag (e.g., the Big Foot Slider carry bag without the Big Foot Sliders inside)
- 1 Copy of written Instructions Part A
- 1 Copy of written Instructions Part B
- Blindfolds

Note: If using the MTC Standard ropes course, replace the All Aboard Platform with two 18"x22" rubber mats for the island in the middle. The teams will need to attach two pivot nubs crosswise, 2–3 inches from the end, under the top beam to keep the beam level to the ground.

Written instructions can be printed from the *Conflict Resolution: Advanced Activities* software.

1. First, use the two 12-foot ropes to create the banks of the river approximately 18 to 22 feet across.

2. Place the All Aboard Platform in the middle of the imaginary river with two rubber mats on top of it.
3. The other two mats are placed just on the land side of the ropes used to mark the river banks.
4. On one side of the river, place two 7-foot beams, the tools, and the written Part A Instructions.
5. On the other side of the river, place the two remaining 7-foot beams, 4 splice plates, the bag, the 20-foot rope, and the written Part B Instructions.

Instructions

Divide the team into two groups, one on each side of the river. Each group must get to the opposite side of the river using the equipment available to them, and by following the written instructions they have received. The following rules must also be shared:

- The beam ends may not be completely in the "river" and weighted in any way (they will sink and be lost from play if they are not supported on at least one end by land).
- A bridge must be created that stretches from the 12-inch mat on the shore to the 12-inch mat on the All Aboard Platform (island).

The beams may be spliced together in order to create a bridge long enough to reach the island. At the splice points, the beams must overlap at least 8 inches. The splice plate must be attached in the middle of the overlapping area, and the beams may only be joined on their broad side (so that there is a 3-inch platform for walking).

Note: If a member of a team touches the river, his or her entire team must return to the beginning and start again. Be sure to read and follow the written instructions carefully. Feel free to add a stone in the middle of the river about 6.5 feet from the shore mat. This can be a stone in the river that will support the bridge. This will also protect floor covering in a gym or cafeteria.

Activity: **Bridges to Cross**

Part A Instructions (the group with the tools and rope): Your group must cross to the other side of the river using the resources available to your team.

Part B Instructions (for the group with the pivot nubs and splice plates): Your group must cross to the other side of the river using the resources available to your team. No team member may leave the island until at least two members of both groups are on the island. If anyone attempts to leave the island before this, those team members must return to their original river bank (and are blindfolded). These instructions may only be shared with the other group once you are both on the island. In this activity, each team has resources the other will need to safely cross the bridge. Typically, the team with the bag and the rope will rig a system to move the tools in the bag across and use them to secure the first bridge to the island. As you can imagine, each team will truly have to use the other to succeed. Allow enough time for your group to find success. For safety reasons, be sure to monitor the use of equipment such as the splice plates and placement of the beams.

Sample Story Line

Your engineering team has been assigned the task of designing and building the new expansion bridge for the River of Hope. This river is devastatingly polluted. If a bridge can be built, the treatment plant on the northern shore can be used by the industrial plant on the southern shore and the river will be saved. The team members from the northern and southern shores of the river have resources to complete this task. Each team has special skills required to complete the entire bridge. Team members must do their part along the whole bridge. There is an island in the middle of the river which can be used. The river is so polluted at present, if anyone falls in, the whole group must rush them back to shore to be rinsed and disinfected. A safety officer (facilitator) must inspect your bridge design before you can cross it. By the way, the river is wide, and rushing water prohibits

you from hearing one another across the river (i.e., no cross-verbal comments) until you are close to one another.

Safety

Safety is critical in every activity you do. *Bridges to Cross* requires a critical eye on safety because of the physical nature of the activity. Remember to check the bridges at the splice points for safety. Address these concerns and be sure to share the following rules with the group:

- Loose beams may not be walked upon.
- Beams must be level for safety.
- Tell participants that if they feel themselves beginning to fall, they should step off the beam rather than falling and pulling others with them.
- Inform participants a spotter will be used for anyone who is blindfolded or who may have balance limitations.
- Take care not to pinch fingers when splicing beams together.

Reflection

When teams collaborating on a project are separated by distance, planning, communication, teamwork, sharing, and other awarenesses are important for their success. This activity provides opportunities for developing all of these skills, plus the added element of differences in perspectives, for they do not all have the same information—all information cannot be shared at the outset.

Discover

- How did your teamwork impact your success? What specifically contributed?
- Describe both teams' performance.
- How did completeness of information, resource allocation, and communication challenges impact your team?

Activity: **Bridges to Cross**

- If conflict arose, what triggered it for you and/or your group? Why or why not, and how did you move beyond it?

Connect

- Can you think of other examples when groups assume they are working under the same plan, only to find later that the assumptions they started with were different?
- What kind of conflict arises when information and assumptions are not understood from the beginning?
- How can you make sure, at the outset, that everyone has the same information and all assumptions are on the table?
- Working together, even from separate shores, was the only way to succeed. What skills did the team use to complete this task?

Create

- What are three lessons that you plan to use from this activity?
- How can you better clarify assumptions in the beginning of future work projects?
- How could you use these skills to develop collaboration in a work situation where conflict might be an issue?

Additional Questions

- Where were opportunities for conflict to develop during this project? What did your team do that moved you beyond conflict? What role did you specifically play in moving beyond conflict?
- Distance and division of labor can easily pose natural obstacles that impact working relationships. How did the natural obstacles impact your planning? What skills were used to move beyond conflict? How did your decisions affect the sharing of ideas? Communication? The decision-making process?
- When was other-awareness important in this activity? How did this occur? When there are many opinions and thoughts being presented (as in many conflict situations), how did the team respectfully listen and respond?
- What potential conflicts were presented in the distribution of resources? How did your team move beyond conflict? What specific individual and group beliefs, skills, and behaviors were important? What called those qualities forth for the team? Imagine using the same beliefs, skills, and behaviors at work or school.
- Can you think of a situation that is currently bound with conflict that would be altered if these qualities were used by those involved? Please be as detailed as you can in how the conflict would shift when these qualities were present.



Conflict Resolution

Advanced Activities



Activity: **Bridges to Cross**

Part A Instructions

Your group must cross to the other side of the river using the resources available to your team.

Activity: Bridges to Cross

Part B Instructions

Your group must cross to the other side of the river using the resources available to your team.

No team member may leave the island until at least two members of both groups are on the island.

If anyone attempts to leave the island before this, those team members must return to their original

river bank (and are blindfolded). These instructions may only be shared with the other group once you are both on the island.

Activity: **The Bell**

Overview

The Bell is a high energy, problem-solving activity that demonstrates how chaos impacts conflict, planning, leadership, flexibility, and cooperation. In addition, participants learn to recognize the differences in style and personality of other participants.

In *The Bell*, participants have one simple task: In the quickest time possible, they must change places with a partner and high five as they pass through the center of a circle. Even such a simple task can prove difficult when planning fails and confusion emerges.

Set Up

Props

- 1 75-foot rope
- 1 12-foot rope

For this activity you will need one 75-foot rope and one 12-foot rope. Make a large circle with the 75-foot rope and inside this circle, make an inner circle with the 12-foot rope. Be sure to set the circles in a large, flat area free of debris.

Instructions

1. Gather the group around the outside of the 75-foot circle.
2. Ask participants to identify a partner across the circle from them by pointing and making eye contact. If there is an uneven number, you may allow one group of three to balance the group.
3. The goal is for everyone to meet their partner in the center of the inner circle, high five one another as they pass through, and reach the other person's spot as fast as they can. The whole group has 3–5 chances to make their best time.
4. 10 seconds is added to their time for breaking the following rules:

- a. Running
- b. Stepping on the rope
- c. More than two feet in the center circle at a time
- d. Missing the high five

Sample Story Line

You've made plans to meet your best friend in the hall between classes to exchange notes. When the bell rings, you have 3 minutes to meet, exchange notes (high five one another), and get to your next class. Of course, every other classmate of yours has the same plan! Naturally, there can be no running or yelling since you are all in school. If the bell rings before all of you have had a chance to meet, you'll have to try again to meet after the next class.

Safety

During this activity, be sure to remind the group of the following safety rules:

- Watch out for others as people are moving quickly about the play area.
- Absolutely no running, jumping, or otherwise unsafe movements.

Variations

You may wish to add that participants may not touch anyone other than their partner during the exercise. Add 10 seconds to their overall time for each errant touch. This will surely change the group's approach and may infuse the activity with more reflection opportunities.

Reflection

If the group acts without planning (independently), chaos will ensue. Conflict for space and territory will result. People will experience frustration, irritation,

Activity: **The Bell**

impatience, and conflict. They will succeed easily if they plan, communicate, coordinate, and cooperate. In addition, they need to practice patience and flexibility. This will require leadership and vision.

Discover

- What happened to your group in the beginning of the exercise?
- What group behaviors contributed to your team's success?
- What did individuals have to be willing to do?
- Specifically, how do these behaviors impact conflict?

Connect

- Can you give examples where chaos, which always has the potential to create conflict, could be "ordered" by using these same behaviors at school or in the workplace?
- What leadership characteristics enable someone to "confront" chaos and facilitate order?

Create

- What communication strategies will you employ to work through future conflicts?
- What planning tools can be used in the beginning of a group activity to prevent conflict from arising?
- Is there a chaotic situation in your current life where you can apply what you learned here? If yes, describe exactly what you would do.

Activity: **Buddies, Inc.**

Overview

The *Buddies, Inc.*, simulation challenges participants with tough decisions. Faced with a large corporate deficit, facility managers must agree on how to trim \$1,000,000 from the overall company budget. The money has to come from somewhere, and it is up to the plant managers to make the difficult choices. Be prepared for great conversation as participants navigate through this in-depth simulation.

Set Up

Props

- 1 Set of nametags labeled A, B, C, D, E, and F for each group in play
- 1 *Buddies, Inc.*, Instruction Sheet per person
- 1 Set of 6 different *Buddies, Inc.*, Priorities Sheets (A, B, C, D, E, F) for each group
- 1 Copy of the *Buddies, Inc.*, Key Facts Sheet per person
- Scratch paper
- Writing utensils for everyone

Print copies of the handouts from the *Conflict Resolution: Advanced Activities* software.

1. You will need a table or alternate space for each group to work, and chairs for your participants.
2. Space the groups far enough apart so they are not a distraction to each other.

Instructions

1. Participants are divided into 4–8 member groups.
2. Assign each group a letter (A, B, C, D, E, or F) and provide the groups with all of the corresponding materials.
3. If you do not have enough participants to make six groups, make three larger groups and assign an additional letter to each team.

4. Explain that each group represents one of six manufacturing plants spread across the United States, all with the same parent company.
5. Each plant (group) will be asked to assess its current needs, and collaborate on a plan that will cut an additional \$1,000,000 from the company budget.
6. The President/CEO has asked them to fly to a meeting where all six plants will present their cost-cutting measures and agree on a path the entire company will support.
7. They will have 30 minutes to discuss what cuts they are willing to make within their plants before coming together with the whole group. The whole group discussion will last approximately 45 minutes with the outcome being an agreement of the cost-cutting measures to present to the president.

Sample Story Line

Buddies, Inc., in which you are employed as the manager of one of six facilities, must cut \$1,000,000 from its budget for the next fiscal year. Although a tentative budget had been agreed upon by all plant and corporate managers, this drastic adjustment must now be made because of a recent legal judgment against the company. The president of *Buddies, Inc.*, has called a special meeting of all plant managers; the meeting will convene soon and will last only 45 minutes. Consistent with her/his style of management, the president has given you and your colleagues complete freedom to decide how the budget cuts will be allocated. Her/his only requirement is that all managers must agree to the final decisions, whatever they may be, and that the decisions on how the cuts will be allocated must be made at today's meeting.

Safety

Simple safety precautions regarding movement around the room and caring for one another are all that are needed in this activity.

Activity: **Buddies, Inc.**

Variations

Here are some variations to consider:

- Designate a leader or cast one participant as the president to conduct the meeting within each group.
- Designate a leader to run subgroup meetings and a president to run the larger meetings for the team as a whole.
- Designate an observer to record the decision-making process utilized in the groups.
- The budget meeting and/or group discussion can be videotaped and replayed for the participants' later examination.

Reflection

When people come to meetings with hidden agendas, where complete disclosure, trust, and openness are not the norm, it creates serious challenges and conflict. Take time after *Buddies, Inc.*, to explore the following questions with your group.

Discover

- What was the general tone of the meeting? What created this tone?
- Describe the conflict that existed within your group.
- Describe the conflict that existed between the groups.
- What contributed to the level of conflict that existed? How did you respond to the conflict?
- How did your group respond to the conflict? How did other groups manage the conflict?
- Did your group meet its objective at the large group meeting? If so, how? If not, why?

Connect

- Can you think of examples where you were part of a similar type of meeting?
- What type of conflict exists within your groups at work, school, home, or community?
- Do you agree or disagree that people are generally open with their personal agendas? Why?
- How do personal agendas impact decision making?
- How can you effectively uncover hidden agendas?
- What did your group do that supported a solution that was best for all? What else might you have done?

Create

- What conflict management or resolution strategies would be most effective in a group of this type?
- How might consensus be achieved most easily in a group of people with apparently conflicting objectives?
- How could the techniques and skills used in this activity help you in situations at work, school, or life? Give a specific example.

Thanks to University Associates for this activity. "Budget Cutting" is found in **1980 Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators**, edited by J. William Pfeiffer and John Jones. John Wiley & Sons, NY.



Conflict Resolution

Advanced Activities



Activity: Buddies, Inc.

Budget-Cutting Instruction Sheet

You and your staff have reconsidered the financial requirements for your plant, and have decided that you should attempt to use this opportunity to improve the position of your plant relative to the others.

In this budget meeting, you intend to see to it that your plant will receive the smallest possible budget cut, while you attempt to support the financial interests of the company as a whole and the president's request for a decision on the budget-cut allocations.

Your copy of the **Buddies, Inc., Meeting Priorities Sheet** represents the new expenditures for your plant that had been agreed to in the draft budget. You may use any or all of this information in the discussion, but you may not read verbatim from the sheet.

Activity: **Buddies, Inc.**

Budget-Cutting Key Facts Sheet

- Buddies, Inc., has 2,446 non-unionized employees located in six plants throughout the country.
- All the plants produce the same product for comparable markets. The reasons for having six geographically dispersed facilities are to minimize transportation costs and to better serve regional markets.
- The company has been in business for twelve years and for the past several years has held approximately 11 percent of the national market share.
- In the next three to five years, business is expected to expand steadily.

	Plant A	Plant B	Plant C	Plant D	Plant E	Plant F
Number of Employees	405	399	412	395	420	415
Annual Employee Turnover (%)	15	10	13	9	12	10
Average Hourly Earnings	\$10.35	\$11.40	\$10.85	\$10.65	\$11.15	\$11.50
Work Days Lost Due to Accidents	187	133	215	150	141	175
Annual Production (in millions)	2.315	2.107	2.410	2.110	2.323	2.349
Cost Per Unit	\$10.75	\$11.15	\$10.65	\$11.15	\$10.80	\$10.70
Price Per Unit	\$19.05	\$20.20	\$19.90	\$20.20	\$20.00	\$19.95

Activity: Buddies, Inc.

Budget-Cutting Priorities Sheet (Plant A)

1. Warehouse Expansion (estimated cost: \$850,000)

Because of steadily increasing production and frequently inclement weather, our present warehouse needs to be expanded by 25 percent to accommodate a larger finished-goods inventory. Three times this past year severe snow storms have prevented the shipment of finished goods on schedule. Also, because of the limited warehouse capacity, widgets (which must be protected from the elements) had to be stored temporarily in the production area. Consequently, production had to be cut back and some employees were laid off. An addition to the present warehouse would permit the temporary storage of widgets during inclement weather. This addition is necessary, not only for present needs, but also to accommodate the expansion of the plant in future years.

2. Purchase of Semi-trailer Trucks (estimated cost: \$200,000)

The trucking firms that have been transporting both our raw materials and our finished goods have been disrupting our operations lately with increasingly frequent strikes. These wildcat strikes appear to be the result of rather severe internal conflict within the union. Several local unions in the area have refused to obey the order of their top officials to refrain from illegal strikes during the life of existing labor-management agreements. Although it is not our desire to antagonize union truckers, we feel that we no longer can sit idle while the unions fight among themselves. We have calculated that with the purchase of four trucks at \$50,000 each, we will be able to handle our shipments ourselves during these wildcat strikes. If and when we no longer need to haul our own goods, we can lease the trucks to another company.

3. Consulting Contract (estimated cost: \$210,000)

In recent months, our plant has been the target of union organizers. Although we are convinced that our employees have always been compensated well and treated fairly, we are concerned about the possibility that the union's efforts may prove to be successful. If they are, it would affect the entire company—not just our plant. For these reasons, we feel that it is imperative that we do everything within our power to resist unionization. A well-known consultant has proposed a plan designed to resist the unionization of our employees. The consultant says that because the union effort is in an early stage, with the benefit of his/her services we would have better than a 50 percent chance of keeping the union out. Additionally, his/her proposal calls for extensive training of our supervisors, which, in itself, would be quite valuable to us.

Activity: Buddies, Inc.

Budget-Cutting Priorities Sheet (Plant B)

1. Expansion of Production Capability (estimated cost: \$900,000)

We urgently need to expand our production capability by adding a second assembly line. For the past several months, orders for our product have far exceeded our ability to fill them, even though we have been operating at full capacity. Not only did we lose approximately \$600,000 in sales last year, but we have also lost several good customers to our competitors. If we do not increase our output in the near future, we run the risk of irretrievable losses in our market share, both regionally and nationally. We estimate that it would cost about \$900,000 to expand our production area and equip it with the necessary machinery.

2. Purchase of Overhead Crane (estimated cost: \$500,000)

When our plant was built five years ago, corporate headquarters decided that it would be too expensive to install an overhead crane to handle materials. At that time, the company was expanding rapidly and capital was very tight. Although installation of such equipment then would have added only \$125,000 to the construction budget, the money just was not available. However, the board promised that as soon as cash flow improved, we would be able to add a crane to our production facility. Because of inflation and improved technology, the crane necessary for our operations now will cost about \$475,000, plus \$25,000 for installation and testing. Since we are the only plant that does not have a crane (which has hurt our production), we feel strongly that one must be purchased.

3. Security Contract (estimated cost: \$180,000)

Three times within the past year, our plant has been the target of vandalism and theft. Although other facilities in the city have also been affected, we are particularly vulnerable because of our location and our general lack of safeguards. To provide minimal security, it will be necessary to install various detection devices around our plant and hire at least four full-time security guards. A local security firm has offered us a contract that would provide both types of protection. It is willing to install the necessary equipment for the price of \$100,000 (a one-time cost) and provide us with four trained security guards for an additional \$80,000 annually. Considering that we have already lost approximately \$31,000 this past year because of vandalism and theft, we believe that the proposed security contract will be well worth its cost.

Activity: Buddies, Inc.

Budget-Cutting Priorities Sheet (Plant C)

1. Purchase of Building (estimated cost: \$1,275,000)

The opportunity has recently arisen for us to purchase an abandoned warehouse near our plant, and the six acres of land on which it is located. Since our production output is the highest in the company and is constantly increasing, we will soon need additional storage facilities for both raw materials and finished goods. Our present storage facilities are adequate, but the price and location of the property for sale are too good to pass up. If we do not purchase the property soon, it is highly likely that it will be purchased by someone else.

2. Purchase of Forklifts (Estimated cost: \$525,000)

To increase our capability in handling both raw materials and finished goods, we must purchase five new forklifts. Although we have two older models, they are not sufficient to meet our needs. Both have a lift capacity of only one ton, and one of them needs to be overhauled. The newer forklifts have a lift capacity of five tons and normally sell for \$125,000. If we agree to purchase a minimum of five and trade in our two older models, we can buy new ones for only \$105,000 each. This offer will remain open only so long as the equipment dealer has current inventory in stock. Since they are trying to move out the present stock to make room for a new shipment of more expensive forklifts, we must act now if we intend to take advantage of the offer.

3. Safety Study (Estimated cost: \$135,000)

Our plant has lost more days of work this year because of accidents than any other plant in the company. We have been unsuccessful in isolating the source of the problem. Because of our inability to reduce the number of accidents, we were prompted to seek outside assistance. In response to our inquiries, we received proposals from several consulting firms that specialize in industrial safety. After carefully reviewing each proposal, we decided to sign a contract with J.B. Smith and Associates for a study to be conducted over a period of approximately six months. Although the figure quoted was only an estimate, the company guaranteed that the cost will not exceed \$135,000. We have not yet signed the contract, but would like to do so as soon as possible.

Activity: Buddies, Inc.

Budget-Cutting Priorities Sheet (Plant D)

1. Replacement of Metal Trimmers (estimated cost: \$900,000)

The ten metal trimmers in our plant have been fully depreciated and are now in need of replacement. Not only have maintenance expenses on these machines been increasing, but we are the only plant in the company that is still using this old, first-generation equipment. Five of the newer models—which have twice the capacity of our old machines—can be purchased for \$180,000 each. In addition to the increased efficiency and safety of these pieces of newer equipment, they require less space, thus permitting additional uses for a portion of the production area.

2. Parking Lot Landscaping (estimated cost: \$385,000)

We have an immediate need for an employee parking lot. Since our plant was built four years ago, our employees have been forced to park in a field adjacent to the building. Although we cover the field with gravel annually (at great expense), in the spring it becomes a swamp. On several occasions, cars have become mired up to their axles, and a few have sustained damage. A local contractor has surveyed the area and estimates that he could solve the problem for approximately \$385,000. For this price, he will regrade the land and haul in fill dirt where needed, construct a five-hundred-car asphalt lot, install appropriate lighting, and plant trees and shrubs for aesthetic effect. We believe that we should implement this project to raise the morale of our employees and increase the value of our property.

3. Feasibility Study (estimated cost: \$165,000)

One of the engineers in our plant has developed a plan for the improvement of our production process that calls for the design of a full-scale working model of a major piece of equipment. Our production manager was quite impressed with the proposal and urged our senior staff to obtain funding for a feasibility study. As a result of our effort, corporate headquarters became convinced that the project was worth funding. The principal reason for the approval of our request was headquarters' belief that our proposed modification would be beneficial not only to our plant, but also to other plants in the company. If the funds for this study are withdrawn, it will have a negative impact on the entire company.

Activity: Buddies, Inc.

Budget-Cutting Priorities Sheet (Plant E)

1. Acquisition of Land (estimated cost: \$900,000)

Land adjacent to our plant has been offered for sale. The parcel consists of approximately 180 acres with 1000 feet of waterfront. Although we have no immediate need for that amount of land, we are extremely interested in obtaining the two deep-water docks that are part of the property. Just recently, we received our first overseas order (from South America); this will make it necessary for us to ship some of our goods by sea. The ability to unload raw materials and load finished goods from our own docks would greatly reduce our handling expenses and increase our chances of obtaining a greater foreign market for our product. The portion of the new property that we will not develop immediately could be leased to offset the cost of the acquisition; however, no figures are available yet to substantiate the financial feasibility of such action.

2. Personnel Acquisition (estimated cost: \$410,000)

In order to maintain our increasing production output, it was necessary for us to expand our work force. As a result, we have hired a new assistant plant manager, two more engineers, and four new supervisors. Within the next month, we hope to add three or four more on-line employees. The total labor cost to our plant for these new workers is estimated at \$410,000. These additions are for the purpose of adding a special process to our production operation. A new customer has signed a five-year contract with us for an annual minimum of 250,000 widgets. Our part of the agreement, however, calls for the design, manufacture, and attachment of an additional device onto our finished product. The increase in our work force is necessary, therefore, to serve the unique needs of our new customer. Without these employees, we probably would lose the contract to a competitor.

3. Waste Treatment Study (estimated cost: \$110,000)

For the past several months, a local ecology group and residents in our area have been criticizing our waste treatment efforts. It has been their contention that we are not concerned about protecting the environment. The negative publicity that these people are causing our plant could prove to be quite damaging. Because there is some truth to their claims (our pollution-control equipment is not very effective), we feel that we must initiate immediate action to curb these attacks. We have solicited bids from several engineering firms that specialize in pollution control. The lowest bid proposes a six-month study of our operations, complete with specific recommendations and estimated costs for improvement. By authorizing this study now, we can publicize our intentions and thereby calm our critics. We have built up a great deal of goodwill in the community, and we do not want to lose it.

Activity: Buddies, Inc.

Budget-Cutting Priorities Sheet (Plant F)

1. Modification of Assembly Line (estimated cost: \$985,000)

The assembly line in our plant is no longer suitable for our needs. Because we took over the existing facility of a company that went out of business, our plant was not designed to meet the specifications of our product. In the year since we have been in operation, we have done very well with some modifications. In fact, we are now second in the company in the quantity of widgets produced. However, we feel that further increases in production will no longer be possible because of the inefficiency of our assembly line. We know that with the proper equipment, we could lead the company in production. It is not fair to deny us the opportunity to achieve the higher levels of production that currently are enjoyed by the other five plants. Our building (and much of our equipment) is older than that of four of the company's other plants.

2. Correction of Violations (estimated cost: \$420,000)

A little over six months after we occupied our present facility, it was inspected by the county fire marshal. Whose report cited numerous violations of the industrial fire code. We explained that we were new occupants of the old building and would correct all deficiencies in time. However, the fire marshal informed us that "substantial improvements" would have to be made within six months, at which time we would receive another inspection. Our budget already has been depleted by necessary modifications to the production line, and our engineers have estimated that the correction of all violations will cost approximately \$420,000 (the largest expense is for an automatic sprinkler system). What makes our situation even more urgent is that the fire marshal has a reputation for harassing violators, and in two cases, has succeeded in having factories shut down pending corrections of violations. We really have no choice but to comply as quickly as possible.

3. Training and Development (estimated cost: \$190,000)

Because of the location of our plant, we do not have a large labor pool from which to hire workers. The labor market in our area provided us with the minimum number of employees needed to start production a year ago, but we have suffered all along from a serious shortage of skilled workers. Our only alternative is to establish a program within our plant to upgrade the skills of selected employees. The emphasis at first would be remedial and for a select group of workers in critical production jobs, but eventually we hope to be able to expand the program to all employees. We estimate that, for the first year of operation, this program will cost approximately \$100,000 for a training director and staff, plus \$90,000 for equipment and materials.

Activity: Coded Messages

Overview

Coded Messages provides an opportunity for participants to recognize the potential for conflict when departments (family members, individuals) share different visions, have different goals, and are challenged by distance and indirect communication. Two teams set forth on seemingly separate missions as code-breakers, each with a unique code to crack. What they soon find out is how connected they really are, and how they cannot succeed without the help of the other team.

Set Up

Props

- 2 Spiderweb stands
 - 1 Coded Message panel
 - 1 4-foot cross bar with joining plates
 - 30 Coded Messages squares
 - 1 5/32" balldriver tool
 - 1 Copy of the Team Instruction Sheet (printed from the *Conflict Resolution: Advanced Activities* software)
1. To begin, remove the endcaps from the top of the Spiderweb stands and store in the outside pocket of the Spiderweb bag.
 2. Slip each side sleeve of the Coded Message panel over the top end of a Spiderweb stand.
 3. Place the stands approximately 3 feet apart.
 4. Slide the top cross bar through the top sleeve of the panel. Rest the cross bar on top of the two Spiderweb stands and secure each side with the joining plates. Stretch the panel taut.
 5. The Coded Message squares attach to one another through the panel; one side will be all yellow with TEAMWORK lettering, and the other side will have four different colors. To facilitate a successful setup, lay out the TEAMWORK grid in the proper order (spelled out horizontally), and lay the sequenced colored column squares right on top of this pattern.

6. Take each set of squares (or pair) and attach them to one another, one on each side of the Coded Messages panel, by slipping the pegs through the grommet holes and securing it to its mate from the other side. The squares should be placed randomly on each side, taking care to make sure that when TEAMWORK is spelled on one side, it is possible to get the appropriate color pattern on the other side (you must take care to make sure the correct colors are paired with each letter).

Instructions

The basic goal is for the team to create columns of like color on one side and spell TEAMWORK on the other. In order to do this, they are divided into two groups, each group working on opposite sides of the panel.

Each group is given written instructions. One set of instructions states, "You must spell TEAMWORK horizontally and you may not tell anyone what you are doing." The other set of instructions states, "You must align each color vertically, creating columns of the same color, and you may not tell anyone what you are doing." (As the facilitator, you may choose to replace TEAMWORK with a message more specific to your group.)

By following the process below, you will assure that the event will be set up correctly.

- Read the story line to the team as a whole.
- Immediately following, divide into two groups; group A is on one side of the panel and group B is on the other side. Distribute the appropriate instructions sheet to each group.
- Each group is working to solve the coded message that they are given; they are told that they may not tell the other group their instructions.
- The groups may not switch sides or look on the other side at any time during the activity. Neither group may show the other team their instructions nor tell them what it says.

Activity: Coded Messages

- Each member of a group must be responsible for moving a square before a member of the same group can move a second square. The rotation should continue throughout the process.
- Responsibility for moving squares must be shared by both groups. Someone from side A must be responsible for directing the movement of a square, then someone from side B takes the responsibility for directing the next square, and so on.
- Participants may not speak when they are moving a square, but may communicate at any other time.
- Only one set of squares may be moved at a time. A square may only be moved horizontally or vertically into an adjacent empty space. If this proves too timely or difficult, adapt the activity with one of the variations from the variations section of this activity.

Sample Story Line

Note: Read the story line in a location where the participants cannot see the panels.

We have just received a top-secret message related to an urgent project that is ongoing. As you would imagine, the message is scrambled. Your team has been assigned to the Special Decoding Unit, and you must decode the message on the giant screen. Once the message is deciphered and completed, the project may move forward but only if the message is clear! Safety measures have been taken to ensure only highly trained officials like yourselves are able to use the Special Decoding Unit; take care to follow the specific instructions on how you must work. If you fail, the message will re-scramble and you may sustain temporary injury.

Safety

As with any activity, you may want to ask the group to be mindful of emotional safety when working through this challenge.

Variations

Allow squares to be moved horizontally, vertically, or diagonally into any adjacent empty space. For a faster variation, allow squares to be moved into any empty space on the grid.

Reflection

Conflict can arise when more than one person, group, or department are working on the same project or assignment. Conflict originates from different perspectives, points of view, visions, or locations. Moving through conflict requires skilled communication, appeal to a higher vision, good leadership skills, and individual willingness to be flexible, patient, supportive, and trusting.

Discover

- How did your performance impact success?
- How did both teams work together? Describe the ways you worked well together.
- How did the barrier impact your ability to communicate? How did you overcome this?
- How were the decisions made during this challenge? What did the group do to ensure that everyone's voice and ideas were valued?
- How do you give value to others' voices and ideas when there are disagreements or conflicts?

Connect

- What are examples of barriers to communication in the workplace or at school?
- When others are working toward the same goal, how does communication and cooperation play into the success? Where did you see this happening during this activity?
- When you cannot "see" another person you are working with, what helps to keep you both moving toward the same goal? How could these skills/techniques help you to resolve conflict?
- When working closely on a task, who is monitoring the "big picture"? Was that of value in this task?
- How was feedback provided?

Activity: Coded Messages

- How does feedback happen at work, in school, or in your personal life?
- How do you prefer feedback to be given to you?
- Why was feedback effective here? What allowed you to receive it?

Create

- What solution-finding skills did you use in this activity? Where and how can those be used in your daily life to resolve or manage conflict?
- What temperaments, leadership, and work styles surfaced and how did those elements impact conflict?
- In your work, school, or family, what structures are already present to support effective communication, appreciation of others' contributions, and valuing the "big picture"?
- What would you like to add to this structure to make it even stronger?

Activity: Coded Messages

Side 1

T	E	A	M
W	O	R	K

Add one row at a time. Make sure the correct colors and letters are added in the correct order. You want to end with "TEAM WORK" on Side 1 and four color columns on Side 2.

Side 2

RED	BLUE	GREEN	YELLOW

Each column is a different color. Make sure the words are correct on Side 1. There is one open space with no panel

Activity: Coded Messages

“You must spell TEAMWORK horizontally and you may not tell anyone what you are doing.”

Activity: **Coded Messages**

“You must align each color vertically, creating columns of the same color, and you may not tell anyone what you are doing.”

Activity: **Creating the Ideal**

Overview

What constitutes the ideal group member? What would he or she be like and what qualities would he/she contribute to the team? *Creating the Ideal* gives participants a chance to explore these questions and to discover their own ability to manifest the ideal team. The team has one basic job: to build the ideal teammate out of ordinary and not-so-ordinary supplies. Each work group has the responsibility of building one part of the ideal group member. Ultimately, *Creating the Ideal* will demonstrate the importance of sharing information, communicating with clarity, and the value of sharing different perspectives.

Set Up

Props

- 1 Policy manual per small group in play
- 1 Location card per group in play (i.e., L-head, R-head, L-leg, R-leg (upper and/or lower), L-torso, R-torso, L-arm, R-arm (upper and/or lower))
- 1 Resource bag per group in play (click on the link for a sample list of supplies)
- 1 Set of Life Happens! cards
- 1 Blindfold for each participant

Print copies of the handouts for this activity from the *Conflict Resolution: Advanced Activities* software.

Instructions

1. Create groups of 3–7. You will need a minimum of two groups for this activity. More groups usually provide for a richer experience. Distribute one resource bag per group.
2. Next, explain that the team is responsible for creating the “ideal group member.” Each group must create one part of the ideal group member using the materials in the resource bag. With only two groups, split the task

into upper and lower body. With more than two groups, assign any number of specific parts such as arms, legs, head, etc. Pass out one location card per group. This will assign each group to a part or region.

3. The most important thing to mention is that a group’s part (or region) must be created in such a way that it can be joined with the other parts (or regions) and presented as one complete being, able to stand on its own.
4. Before the activity begins, each group must select a Team Representative. The Team Representative will have the responsibility of attending special meetings to communicate intentions and plans to other Team Representatives. Communication between groups may only happen at the representative meetings.
5. The facilitator begins the activity by calling the first special meeting to order. By this time, the groups should know which region they have (from the location cards) and have decided upon a Team Representative.
6. Life Happens! cards can be passed out at any time during this activity. These cards change the flow of the activity in numerous ways. Some cards remove resources from a team and others make them change parts entirely. They have various consequences and should be used sparingly. Be sure to read over the cards before you play.
7. The facilitator should now adhere to the following timeline:
 - a. First 5 minutes: Team Representatives meet to plan.
 - b. Next 10 minutes: Groups at work.
 - c. Next 5–10 minutes: Special meeting; groups continue to work.
 - d. Next 10 minutes: Groups at work with any new information from the special meeting.
 - e. Final 10–20 minutes: Groups share their creations and put the Ideal Group Member together for a presentation to the facilitator.
 - f. Be sure to close this activity appropriately with conversation about WHY groups made the choices they did and what the QUALITIES of an ideal group member are.

Activity: **Creating the Ideal**

Safety

Ask the group members to use caution when reaching into the resource bag for it may contain sharp objects.

Variations

Many of the variations in this activity are included with the introduction of the Life Happens! cards. Feel free to write additional Life Happens! cards to add specific issues to the planning process.

Reflection

This activity provides the opportunity for a variety of conflicts to present themselves. Personality differences, beliefs and value differences, communication issues, and frustrations may surface. This affords participants the opportunity to become more self-aware and other-aware and to practice leadership and team skills, as well as creative and critical thinking skills that will support their ability to work without conflict.

Discover

- Describe the group's performance in this exercise.
- What ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and behaviors contributed to the challenge and to your success?

Connect

- What skills were used to move through conflict and support team success?
- Can you identify the potential sources of conflict that were involved in this activity? What were they? When did they arise?
- How did you manage to move forward without conflict or resolve it when it arose?
- What personal assets did you bring? What insights did you have about yourself? What assets did others bring? What insights did you learn about others or the process that will be useful to you
- How would you relate the introduction of the Life Happens! cards to real-life work situations?

Create

- What is one important lesson you will take away from this exercise?
- How will you apply what you have learned at work? School? Home?

Many thanks to Rochelle Behling and Christie Peterson for this activity, which they distributed at the 2002 ACCT Conference in Nashville, Tennessee.

Activity: **Creating the Ideal**

Policy Manual for Creating the Ideal

Each group is responsible for creating **only one part of the Team Member**; however, it should be created in such a way it can be joined with the other parts and **presented as one complete being**. The end product needs to meet the following minimum qualifications:

- Consistent—parts should be synchronized with each other so that continuity is accomplished.
- Able to stand on its own two feet
- Three-dimensional
- Strong and solid
- Well-balanced
- Other possible traits may include creativity, attentive to detail, safety consciousness, or whatever else goes into being the Ideal Team Member

You are responsible for time management and all *Staff Representatives* are expected to be on time for staff meetings.

Here is your schedule:

- Your group has 5 minutes to discuss or work on your task before the first special meeting begins. **Begin timing NOW!**
- Special meetings typically last 5-10 minutes and no more. The only people attending these meetings are the Staff Representatives from each group. (Facilitators may observe, but will not be involved in the operation of the meetings. What you do with your time is up to you; use it wisely!) Your Staff Representative will attend the first special meeting then return to your team.

- From the time that your Staff Representative returns, you will have an additional 10 minutes to work on your Team Member part.
- The second special meeting will be held; don't be late!
- Your group will have an additional 10 minutes after the return of your Staff Representative to work on your Team Member part. Your group will be informed sometime during these ten minutes about the schedule from that point forward.
- Once the separate groups are instructed to come together, you will be asked to give a one-minute presentation about your Team Member part. After all the groups have presented, you will have 5 minutes to assemble all the parts into the ultimate Team Member.

You will be given further instructions when they are available. Please do not disturb other groups' progress by attempting to communicate with them outside of Special Meetings.

Sample Resource Lists For Creating The Ideal



Activity: **Creating the Ideal**

Group 1

- 2 pens
- 1 pack of markers
- 1 lime green sheet of paper - small
- 1 white poster board - large
- 3 gold fasteners (3-hole paper brads work)
- 1 sheet twisty ties
- 5 rubber bands
- 1 pair scissors
- 1 PVC pipe

Group 2

- 2 pens
- 1 pencil - long
- 2 white sheets of paper - small
- 2 orange sheets of paper - large
- 1 green sheet of paper - large
- 1 bag crumpled tissue
- 3 gold fasteners (3-hole paper brads work)
- 1 blindfold

Group 3

- 2 pens
- 1 pencil - short
- 2 white sheets of paper - small
- 1 brown sheet of paper - large
- 2 green sheets of paper - large
- 3 gold fasteners (3-hole paper brads work)
- 1 long rod
- 2 CDs
- 1 holiday ball ornament
- 1 bag of feathers

Group 4

- 2 pens
- 1 pencil - short
- 1 brown sheet of paper - large
- 1 green sheet of paper - large
- 1 bag brown napkins
- 1 roll thin green tape
- 3 gold fasteners (3-hole paper brads work)
- 1 ruler
- 1 rope

Group 5

- 2 pens
- 1 pencil - short
- 2 white sheets of paper - small
- 2 purple sheets of paper - large
- 1 box Kleenex
- 3 gold fasteners (3-hole paper brads work)
- 1 group of straws with a rubber band
- 1 wood block
- 7 Styrofoam plates

Group 6

- 2 pens
- 2 white sheets of paper - small
- 1 yellow sheet of paper - large
- 1 blue sheet of paper - large
- 1 purple sheet of paper - large
- 1 roll masking tape
- 3 gold fasteners (3-hole paper brads work)
- 1 coffee can
- 8 plastic cups
- 1 group of straws with rubber band
- 1 cardboard box

Group 7

- 2 pens
- 1 pack of markers
- 1 green sheet of paper - small
- 1 white poster board - large
- 1 stack burgundy cocktail napkins
- 3 gold fasteners (3-hole paper brads work)
- 3 rubber bands
- 1 paper plate
- 1 piece cardboard
- 1 hula hoop
- 1 holiday ball ornament

Activity: Creating the Ideal

Group 8

- 2 pens
- 1 pencil - short
- 1 pack markers
- 2 gold/orange sheets of paper - small
- 1 white poster board - large
- 3 gold fasteners (3-hole paper brads work)
- 3 black plates - small
- 1 roll yarn
- 2 balloons
- 1 holiday ball ornament

Group 9

- 2 pens
- 1 yellow sheet of paper - small
- 1 white poster board - large
- 1 roll packing tape
- 3 gold fasteners (3-hole paper brads work)
- 2 Styrofoam cups
- 1 bunch of colored sticks
- 1 compass
- 1 hip pack (fanny pack)

Group 10

- 2 pens
- 1 pencil - short
- 1 box pastels
- 4 blue sheets of paper - large
- 1 piece of cardboard
- 1 roll duct tape
- 2 binder clips - small
- 1 ruler
- 2 long rods

Group 11

- 2 pens
- 1 white sheet of paper - small
- 3 sticky note pads
- 1 glue stick
- 1 binder clip - large
- 3 gold fasteners (3-hole paper brads work)
- 1 plastic bag

Life Happens!

You have just been informed that the Team part that you are working on has been reassigned to a different work group.

Please prepare your Team part to leave your group. You need to deliver the Team part to the facilitator within **2 minutes**. You will be given a new Team part to work with shortly.



Conflict Resolution
Advanced Activities



Life Happens!

You have just been informed that the Team part that you are working on has been reassigned to a different work group.

Please prepare your Team part to leave your group. You need to deliver the Team part to the facilitator within **2 minutes**. You will be given a new Team part to work with shortly.



Conflict Resolution
Advanced Activities



Life Happens!

Another group is working with a Team part that is in trouble and in desperate need of valuable resources.

They have much less financial and community support than your group has. Your organization has decided that in this time of need, it is appropriate for other groups to donate the most important items. Your supervisor has identified your group as a group that can spare resources. In order to comply with the organization's request, please identify your one **MOST VALUABLE** resource and deliver it to a facilitator within 3 minutes. Your generosity may change a life.



Conflict Resolution
Advanced Activities



Life Happens!

You have just been informed that the Team part that you are working on has been reassigned to a different work group.

Please prepare your Team part to leave your group. You need to deliver the Team part to the facilitator within 2 minutes. You will be given a new Team part to work with shortly.



Conflict Resolution
Advanced Activities



Life Happens!

The Staff Representative you chose to send to special meetings has been repeatedly recognized for his/her communication skills, attention to detail, and for excellent customer service.

As a result of these talents, he/she has been promoted to Special Staff Representative and this promotion requires him/her to move and work with another group. Your current Staff Representative must report within 3 minutes to a facilitator in order to receive their reassignment. A new Staff Representative will be arriving soon to fill the vacant position.



Conflict Resolution
Advanced Activities



Life Happens!

The Staff Representative you chose to send to special meetings has been repeatedly recognized for his/her communication skills, attention to detail, and for excellent customer service.

As a result of these talents, he/she has been promoted to Special Staff Representative and this promotion requires him/her to move and work with another group. Your current Staff Representative must report within 3 minutes to a facilitator in order to receive their reassignment. A new Staff Representative will be arriving soon to fill the vacant position.



Conflict Resolution
Advanced Activities



Life Happens!

The supply department mistakenly gave you something that you had not ordered, and there is no money in your expense account to cover the cost.

In order to correct the matter, you must turn in all your poster board and all of your colored paper at this time, regardless of whether it is in use or not. These supplies will not be returned to you.



Conflict Resolution
Advanced Activities



Life Happens!

People have been heard grumbling, and rumors have been going around.

Although your current Staff Representative has been doing an excellent job, apparently some of your group members are unhappy that they were not chosen as Staff Representative. In order to be fair and to resolve this problem, the current Staff Representative is being asked to vacate the position. Your group needs to choose another individual to attend all future special meetings. There has been a request that your group send someone who has more experience listening than talking.



Conflict Resolution
Advanced Activities



Life Happens!

You have just experienced a power outage.

The entire facility is running on emergency lights only, and you are being informed that within 2 minutes the generator will quit, and the entire building will be in complete darkness. You only have one flashlight, and this (imaginary) light should be given to a person you would like to be able to “lead” your group during this emergency. All other individuals in your group need to put on blindfolds (OSHA requires these during power outages). A facilitator will inform you when the power is back on and you can take off your blindfolds. The power outage is expected to last at least 10 minutes. Your group should continue with your assignment to the best of your ability during this difficult time.



Conflict Resolution
Advanced Activities



Life Happens!

You have just been informed that the phone system is being worked on and updated.

Unfortunately, you are all in different offices within the organization’s two buildings. This means that you will not be able to communicate with each other verbally from this point forward, and need to limit ALL communications within your group to written (mail or email) communication ONLY!! A facilitator will inform you when the phones are back in working order. They are expected to be out of operation for at least 10 minutes. Your group should continue your assignment to the best of your ability during this difficult time.



Conflict Resolution
Advanced Activities



Life Happens!

Your group was scheduled to get organization-required shots last week.

Unfortunately, your entire group experienced a strong reaction to the flu shot. Your dominant arms (the ones you got your shot in) are now so very, very sore, and you are all unable to use those arms, or even your dominant hand or fingers. This reaction is likely to remain debilitating for at least 10 minutes. A facilitator will need to assess your medical situation before any one of you will be allowed to begin using your dominant arm for any work purposes. Your group should continue with your assignment to the best of your ability during this difficult time.



Conflict Resolution
Advanced Activities



Life Happens!

(Write your own Life Happens! card)



Conflict Resolution
Advanced Activities



Activity: **Creating the Ideal**

Location Card #1

Left Side of Face



Conflict Resolution
Advanced Activities



Activity: **Creating the Ideal**

Location Card #2

Right Side of Face



Conflict Resolution
Advanced Activities



Activity: **Creating the Ideal**

Location Card #3

Left Leg



Conflict Resolution
Advanced Activities



Activity: **Creating the Ideal**

Location Card #4

Right Leg



Conflict Resolution
Advanced Activities



Activity: **Creating the Ideal**

Location Card #5

Left Torso



Conflict Resolution
Advanced Activities



Activity: **Creating the Ideal**

Location Card #7

Left Arm



Conflict Resolution
Advanced Activities



Activity: **Creating the Ideal**

Location Card #6

Right Torso



Conflict Resolution
Advanced Activities



Activity: **Creating the Ideal**

Location Card #8

Right Arm



Conflict Resolution
Advanced Activities



Left Hand



Conflict Resolution
Advanced Activities



Left Foot



Conflict Resolution
Advanced Activities



Right Hand



Conflict Resolution
Advanced Activities



Right Foot



Conflict Resolution
Advanced Activities



Activity: Creative Products, Inc.

Overview

Creative Products, Inc., brings a challenging simulation to your group. It is designed to help develop skills in intragroup planning and problem solving, and to reveal the effects of collaboration and competition on intergroup relationships. *Creative Products, Inc.*, takes your group through a relatively real situation. A company must cut costs and layoff workers. The workers must find a creative way to appeal to management and create an alternative.

Set Up

Props

- 1 *Creative Products, Inc.* (CP) General Situation Sheet per participant
- 1 CP Team Development Sheet per participant
- 1 Nametag per participant
- Blank paper
- Pens
- Masking tape

Print copies of the handouts from the *Conflict Resolution: Advanced Activities* software.

Each participant will receive a copy of the *Creative Products, Inc.*, (CP) General Situation Sheet, a copy of the CP Team Perception Sheet, a nametag, blank paper, and a pencil or pen.

Each management team will need a copy of the CP Personnel Information Sheet, CP Management Problem Sheet, and CP Management Salary Sheet.

Each employee team will need a copy of the CP Personnel Information Sheet and a copy of the CP Employee Problem Sheet.

Provide the group with an easel, flip-chart paper, markers, tables, and chairs.

Instructions

1. Participants form groups of 8–12 and subdivide each group into two teams (a management team and an employee team).
2. Each team goes to a separate location in the room where all of the relevant information will be distributed. You may have many teams, so plan your space accordingly.
3. Each team reads all the information and agrees on a role for each member from among those listed. As a team, they must decide on a solution to the challenge facing CP.
4. Each team must also develop a strategy for gaining acceptance of the proposal from the other team in the small group.
5. Members should wear their role nametags at all times.
6. Each team chooses one or two representatives who will meet with the other team representatives to determine a course of action for CP.
7. Members of each team sit behind their representative during the meeting.
8. After the negotiation session, representatives rejoin their teams and complete the CP Team Perception Sheet.

Sample Story Line

Creative Products, Inc., founded in 1985, is a small family-owned specialty product manufacturer. The company's success, then and now, is directly related to innovative approaches to design in addition to solving the manufacturing problems of a product line new to the whole nation. Both managers and workers have put in many long hours, often sacrificing their personal time to get the company off the ground and keep it competitive.

A significant downturn in the national and local economies has been experienced recently and is expected by most experts to last for another three to five years. At Creative Products, Inc., it is becoming

Activity: Creative Products, Inc.

increasingly obvious some adjustments will need to be made if the company is to survive.

Confronted with the current economic conditions, management is about to conduct an analysis of the entire situation. However, Creative's president just attended an executive seminar on human relations at a nearby university. The president wants employees to review the company's difficult situation and present ideas on how to deal with the problem. It appears that unless the company can achieve cost reductions of approximately \$30,000 per year, it will not be able to remain financially viable.

Safety

You may want to remind the group that emotional safety is as important as physical safety.

Reflection

The attitudes, perceptions, assumptions, agendas, and visions we bring to the table play a significant role in directing the future of a group. Take some time to explore the following questions in your debrief.

Discover

- What was your reaction or response to the group's decision?
- What did you notice about how groups approached the challenge? What did they do to move toward resolution?
- If conflict emerged, explain how it surfaced and how it was resolved.
- What is the impact of competition on conflict and problem solving?
- What was your experience during negotiations? What behaviors and words do you think influenced your experience?

Connect

- What attitudes or assumptions contributed to collaboration and a win-win solution?
- Can you think of a situation in the past or coming up where the lessons you learned here will be valuable?

Create

- What are three key points you will take from this exercise?
- How will you apply them in your life?
- What key elements that you can control are critical to working through conflict? What are some ways to develop the ability to use these key elements?

*Thanks to University Associates for this activity. Found in **1980 Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators**, edited by J. William Pfeiffer and John Jones, John Wiley & Sons, NY.*



Conflict Resolution

Advanced Activities



Activity: Creative Products, Inc.

**Personnel Information Sheet:
Management Staff**

Name: Claude Jones
Position: President
Age: 58
Employment: January 1985
Comments: One of the company's founders. Health questionable

Name: Marcel Jones
Position: Executive V.P. & Manager of Manufacturing
Age: 32
Employment: June 1988
Comments: M.B.A., B.S. in engineering design. Son of Claude Jones

Name: Pat Sadowski
Position: Marketing Manager
Age: 53
Employment: February 1995
Comments: Increased sales markedly in first two years with company

Name: Paul Jones
Position: Managerial Trainee
Age: 24
Employment: March 1999
Comments: M.B.A, bright and creative but insensitive to others. Adopted son of Claude Jones' brother. Has already lost two jobs due to inability to relate to others

Name: Marcia Phelps
Position: Controller
Age: 38
Employment: January 1985
Comments: One of the group who started with the company

Name: Alfonso Rodriguez
Position: Accountant
Age: 32
Employment: October 2003
Comments: Still in training under Marcia Phelps

Activity: Creative Products, Inc.

**Personnel Information Sheet:
Hourly Employee List**

Name: Casper Michelson

Position: Machinist

Age: 62

Employment: January 1990

Comments: Reputed to have solved original problems related to manufacturing of Creative's leading product. Visibly slowing down due to age and health.

Name: Quentin Salter

Position: Set-up Man

Age: 35

Employment: November 1996

Comments: After a slow start has become one of hardest-working employees. Limited intelligence and imagination

Name: Mary Levine

Position: Packaging

Age: 57

Employment: June 1990

Comments: Always a reliable worker. Has a son in Hawaii. Has expressed concern about effect on her job of new packaging machinery considered last year

Name: Stella Marquand

Position: Tool & Die

Age: 28

Employment: July 1998

Comments: Associate's degree from Lamar Tech. Bright, creative. Has already brought about money-saving innovations

Name: Fred Chun

Position: Maintenance

Age: 47

Employment: August 1990

Comments: Faithful but not overly intelligent. Some suspicion that his son's accidental death last year has resulted in beginning stages of alcoholism.

Name: "Mugsy" Fredericks

Position: Machinist

Age: 40

Employment: February 1998

Comments: Can really get the work out. Is as productive as tow average machinists. Somewhat resented by other workers for pressure his performance puts on them.

Name: Alice McGovern

Position: Mold Specialist

Age: 41

Employment: April 2000

Comments: Held in some disregard by other workers due to her fast-paced personal life outside of work. Possesses a skill crucial to the company's manufacturing process. Would be difficult to replace.

Name: Hal Banks

Position: Electrician

Age: 55

Employment: December 1997

Comments: An average worker. Perceived as falling behind in technical knowledge required by his position. Becomes eligible next year to participate in the company's retirement plan, which is considered to be a very good one.



Conflict Resolution

Advanced Activities



Activity: Creative Products, Inc.

Management Problem Sheet

The preliminary analysis conducted by the company's management indicates that the company has no choice but to reduce its work force if it is to survive. The analysis has been a careful one, with other alternatives explored thoroughly. Accordingly, the problem facing management is to decide who must go. Its thinking is that the work force will have to be reduced to no more than five or six people.

In the time allotted, decide which employees are to be terminated and how, and outline the strategy you will use to "sell" Creative's employees on this approach.

Representatives of Creative's employee group are scheduled to meet with Claude and Marcel Jones later in the day to discuss the company's situation and plans.



Conflict Resolution

Advanced Activities



Activity: Creative Products, Inc.

Employee Problem Sheet

There has been general recognition among Creative's employees for the last few months that the company has been in trouble and that something will have to be done. A particular concern among you is that management will decide to reduce the size of the work force, placing either you or some of your colleagues or friends out of work. You suspect that there is a great deal of slack in top management and that management salaries are highly inflated.

In the allotted time, consider how the problem facing the company might be resolved and outline the strategy you will use to "sell" management on this approach.

Claude Jones has asked for two representatives of your group to meet with him later in the day to discuss the situation facing the company.



Conflict Resolution

Advanced Activities



Activity: **Creative Products, Inc.**

Management Salary Sheet

Name of Manager	Annual Salary
Claude Jones	\$52,000
Marcel Jones	\$40,000
Pat Sadowski	\$33,000
Paul Jones	\$17,000
Marcia Phelps	\$31,000
Alfonso Rodriguez	\$19,000

Activity: **Creative Products, Inc.**

Team Perception Sheet

Your Team Name _____

The Other Team Name _____

Instructions

Below are two lists of several adjectives that might be used to describe your team. In each list, for each adjective, circle the number that indicates the degree to which you believe it is descriptive of your team (7=completely descriptive; 1=definitely not descriptive).

Your Team

Honest	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Open-minded	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Self-serving	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Intelligent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Irrational	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Fair	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Emotional	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Conservative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Friendly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Reasonable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Inflexible	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Cooperative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Defensive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Aggressive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unrealistic	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Instructions

Below are two lists of several adjectives that might be used to describe the other team. In each list, for each adjective, circle the number that indicates the degree to which you believe it is descriptive of the other team (7=completely descriptive; 1=definitely not descriptive).

The Other Team

Honest	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Open-minded	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Self-serving	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Intelligent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Irrational	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Fair	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Emotional	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Conservative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Friendly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Reasonable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Inflexible	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Cooperative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Defensive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Aggressive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unrealistic	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Activity: **The Deep Divide**

Overview

The Deep Divide challenges teammates to work through a series of tasks that require coordinated effort and communication for success. Four teams race across a deep divide using a series of mats and stationary islands strategically placed inside the divide. Teams must work together and share resources to make it across.

Set Up

- 6 20-foot ropes
- 2 18"x22" mats
- 12 12"x12" mats
- The All Aboard Platform

To begin, create a rectangle with the ropes (20'x40'), folding back the corners of the rectangle so the ropes do not actually touch at the corners.

Inside this rectangle place the All Aboard Platform in one area and the two 18"x22" mats side by side in another area. (They do not have to be equally distanced from any one side.)

Instructions

1. Divide the team into four groups, each beginning on one face of the outside of the rectangle.
2. Each group must cross to the opposite side as quickly as possible without stepping on the floor/ground.

The following rules apply:

1. Each group has 3 jet stand (2 for smaller groups) that may be used to safely traverse the divide.
2. Rope boundaries and islands may not be moved.
3. A maximum of three feet may be on one jet stand at a time.

4. The chimney-pipe islands are safe, but once utilized they must always be occupied by two people within a reasonable time (one person stepping on while the other is stepping off) or the island becomes uninhabitable.
5. If a jet stand is released at any time (i.e., if you lose touch with the mat), it is lost.
6. Groups must begin on one side and exit on the opposite side without stepping outside the rope boundaries of the divide. (In other words, they may not walk around.)
7. The stones (mats) cannot be scooted across the floor.
8. No jumping, leaping, or otherwise unsafe movement is allowed for safety reasons.
9. If any rule is broken, the group must begin again.

Sample Story Line

You are on an expedition to repair four technology stations that have malfunctioned. Your team decided to split into four groups to explore the area and see if you could find the equipment faster, since disaster will strike if you don't complete the work within a specified time. Each of the four groups found a station, but unfortunately, they found one they are not trained to repair. The four groups have arrived simultaneously at the edges of a deep canyon. You discover the group facing you has found the station you are trained to repair, and it is quite close to where they are located. There is no time to go around; you all must get to the equipment ASAP because time is running out. Fortunately, each group brought three jet stands that will enable you to walk on air. These little jets, however, can support no more than three feet. They stay active as long as you engage the starter, but if you release the starter (let go of the mat), the little jet stands will crash to the bottom of the canyon. You also suspect that what appears to be a mirage rising out of the ground might actually be one of the mystical chimney pipes you've read about in your study. These mystical pipes become real and useful when stepped on, but once stepped on, must always be occupied or they will disappear.

Activity: **The Deep Divide**

Safety

To help in the safety of this activity, remind the group of the following safety tips:

- No running, leaping, or any other form of unsafe movement is allowed.
- Remind participants to be careful when stepping on and picking up mats.

Reflection

Group goals often take priority over organizational goals. When this occurs, there is the opportunity for conflict over resources, assignments, priorities, personnel, and time. In addition, if the competitive spirit is encouraged or simply arises on its own, more challenges arise. Moving beyond conflict requires attention to the higher vision (big picture) as well as teamwork and leadership skills.

Discover

- What skills were important to the success of this task?
- How did you support your team? Did you have a plan?
- How did you arrive at a group decision regarding which ideas to use?
- At what points were attention and awareness of others at their peak?
- How did you and the team respond to the variance in the distances you had to travel?
- How did you build rapport with others outside your group?

Connect

- What components of communication were essential for this activity to be completed successfully?
- What were some of the resources you used? How did you manage the use and care of these resources?
- Cooperation is important, how did your group excel with this component?
- What contributions did each member make?
- What important skills were used to help move the group through conflict or to avoid potential conflict altogether?
- Think of an example at work, school, or home that is similar to this activity, one where individual or department goals may take primary focus. Explain.

Create

- What did you discover or learn here that will enable you to be more effective in similar situations? Be specific in telling us how you will implement these new skills.
- Provide an example of when you have experienced team members having unequal responsibilities. What did you learn here that could help in real-life situations similar to this example? What is required of individuals in similar real-life situations?

Activity: Digital Treasures

Overview

Digital Treasures is a team-oriented scavenger hunt with a camera. Following clues and riddles, teams must track down and take pictures of the exact same objects presented by the facilitator. The angle, distance, and orientation must be as close to the original as possible, and everyone must be involved in the process. *Digital Treasures* is an easy yet powerful activity that allows participants to learn to compromise and collaborate, and to understand how to evaluate the priorities needed to work together. In addition, it teaches participants to become aware of the conflict management styles and techniques used by members of their group.

Set Up

Props

- 1–4 Digital cameras or Polaroid cameras
- 4–8 Printed images shot on location in the work area
- 1 Set of treasure hunt clues per group

Prior to the event, the facilitator must identify four to eight locations within a specified area (indoors or outdoors). At each location, the facilitator must take a close-up digital snapshot of something that is only recognizable once someone is at the site (e.g., just a corner of an object).

Treasure hunt clues should be created to help the groups find each location. For example, the clue could be a riddle or a word puzzle. It is more difficult for groups to find locations when they are unfamiliar with an area. Take this into consideration when writing clues. Each treasure hunt clue list should be ordered in such a way so that groups are not at the same location at any given time.

Instructions

1. Divide your group into teams of 4 to 8 and distribute one camera and camera instruction manual per group.
2. Remind participants to keep the cameras safe throughout the activity.
3. Inform participants they will be on a most unique scavenger hunt—a hunt for still images.
4. Before the teams take off with cameras in hand, participants have an opportunity to study the original 4–8 snapshots taken earlier by the facilitator.
5. Participants must use the clues sheet to find the location where each picture was taken, and then take the exact same picture paying close attention to orientation, zoom, angle, and distance.

The following rules also apply:

1. Groups must take pictures in the order of clues given to them.
2. They can only work with their own team.
3. Photos may not be taken of the originals provided by the facilitator.
4. Groups must return by a specified time (of your choosing). When the groups return, allow time for them to share their work with each other.
5. At each location, the group has an assignment that relates to collecting information from whoever is around that will help them understand how those people deal with conflict, including how they avoid it, how they confront it, how they feel about it, and what they do to resolve it.

Sample Story Line

You are a group of sleuths on the case of an unresolved conflict. You are trying to piece together the recent facts associated with an incident, now in the history books of this school. You will be able to resolve this case if you can recapture the images of that day. To do this, you need to understand the nature of conflict as seen through the eyes of those present on that day.

Activity: Digital Treasures

Safety

General safety precautions apply. Remind groups not to run from place to place, and to take care of the cameras!

Variations

You may wish to eliminate the cameras and take this approach. Challenge teams to find an object at a specific location instead of capturing the image. The description of the object should be a bit ambiguous to encourage conversation regarding which object it could be. For example, the description may read “yellow, soft, and useful.” In this location you may place a yellow flower, a banana, and a yellow sponge. Each team must then decide which one is the object being described.

Reflection

This activity has the potential to bring out conflict in a variety of ways. First, there is the potential conflict over translating clues when there is more than one meaning to something. Personality and perceptual differences will surface. The intuitive thinkers will respond quite differently than the sensory-oriented people. There is also the potential for conflict over the pictures taken, and what constitutes an “exact” replication of the originals. Is “close enough” good enough?

Discover

- What was this experience like for your team?
- If conflicts or differences in style arose, how did your team move beyond them in order to be successful?
- What leadership skills supported your success?
- Did you have differences of opinion as to what counted as “identical” photos? How did you resolve this conflict?
- What strengths did you bring to the group? What strengths did others bring? How did the group benefit by having all of the strengths?
- How did you build rapport with others in order to ask them about conflict? How easy was it to gather data?

Connect

- What did you learn about conflict from others?
- What did you learn about yourself with regards to your style? What did you learn about others?
- How is this activity similar to other life situations? Explain.

Create

- How will you apply what you have learned from this activity?
- What is most important to you when working through conflict?
- If you were to constantly employ this belief in your work, school, and relationships, what would the quality of your life be like?

Activity: **Diminishing Circles**

Overview

Diminishing Circles challenges participants to become aware of personal patterns, beliefs (limiting or otherwise), and reactions around issues of scarcity and how those reactions affect cooperation and collaboration. In *Diminishing Circles*, the team begins with an abundance of circles in which they can stand. Throughout play, the circles are stripped away, forcing participants to move together into smaller circles until only one circle remains.

Set Up

Props

- Varying sizes of rope, string, or webbing
- In the Mobile Team Challenge course, you can use the Big Foot ropes (without the sliders), the 20-foot ropes, the 12-foot ropes, and the 75-foot rope as props.

Create circles of various sizes using rope, string, or webbing and lay them out in the area of play. The number of circles depends upon the number of people in play.

Create enough circles of various sizes so that everyone can easily stand within a circle.

Instructions

Create various sized circles and spread them around your play area. In general, you want most of the circles to be about 5–10 feet apart.

Invite the participants to “get in a circle.” (This phrasing is important. They will interpret the phrase as “go stand in a circle of rope.”)

The facilitator will announce “a change” (e.g., one boat is swept away or multiple boats are capsized and people are thrown overboard) and remove one of the circles. Everyone must leave their circle. Everyone must always get into another circle when “change happens.”

The following rules apply:

- Both feet must be inside the circle and at least one foot must be on the ground.
- Participants may not move circles.
- There is no way to prevent the removal of circles by the facilitator.
- No running or otherwise unsafe behavior is allowed. This includes hoisting anyone on shoulders.

If the circle is too small, encourage them to challenge their assumptions. Repeat the instructions: “Everyone must always be in a circle.”

Sample Story Line

You were on a cruise with your team when a storm hit. The ship was struck by lightning and caught fire. All of you managed to escape uninjured and found your way onto a lifeboat, raft, or a buoy. Unfortunately, the sea is rough. When big waves come, all boats capsize and must be righted so that people can climb aboard. You must swim to another lifeboat and get on board for safety. The water is ice-cold, and if any part of your body is in the water it will get frostbite.

Safety

- In order to prevent collisions, make sure people walk as they move from circle to circle.
- Make sure participants do not try to lift other participants; at least one foot on the ground is a rule.
- As the challenge increases, spot participants who might be at risk of falling from the circle.
- Take care when moving not to step on other participants’ feet.

Activity: **Diminishing Circles**

Variations

Try these variations for a change of pace.

- Allow all the circles to be moved and manipulated.
- Require both feet to be on the ground.
- Have only the displaced participants relocate.

Reflection

When resources are removed, it often brings up scarcity issues for people. (If there is not enough to go around, then I might lose.) This activity invites participants to become aware of their reactions (“There isn’t room for me”) and how they respond to those reactions. The goal is to invite people to shift to abundance mentality so those reactions become open, creative, and positive (“Join us!” and “There’ll be another space—who wants me?”). It is easy to see how one set of reactions leads more easily into conflict and the other more readily toward collaboration. In addition, limiting assumptions creates conflict where there may not be conflict.

Discover

- What thoughts or feelings did you have when the first circle was removed? How did this reaction lead to conflict or collaboration?
- What key behaviors in your group’s effort allowed you to succeed without conflict?
- What unspoken rules, beliefs, and attitudes did you have?
- What were the areas for potential conflict in this activity?

Connect

- How does this activity parallel your work, school, or home life?
- How did your decisions and commitment to the team enable you to avoid potential conflict?
- What skills and characteristics were key components to your working without conflict?
- If you encountered conflict, what skills and characteristics supported your ability to move through that conflict? Did you collaborate or manage the conflict?
- Can you recall a time in life when you experienced diminishing resources or limiting beliefs and assumptions? Recall what happened, what supported your movement through that time, what you valued about yourself during the process, and what you valued about the organization or others at the time. How did you and others successfully resolve conflicts during that time? What enabled you to shift to “common ground” or move past limiting beliefs?

Create

- How did innovative thinking play a significant role in the group’s success? What conditions were necessary for such thinking? What supported the thought process?
- Think of a current situation where you might apply some of what you learned here. Are there situations where cooperative/collaborative efforts might lead to innovative ideas that would take you far beyond imagined goals? Can you be specific?

Activity: Islands and Bridges

Overview

In *Islands and Bridges*, participants recognize how shared resources, group mission, trust, and leadership are necessary components of effective teamwork. To be a successful group, members must look beyond the reflex of competition and find that collaboration is the strongest means for achievement. Two teams must work to cross a haunted swamp from different points in the swamp. Each has resources the other needs to be successful, and no one can be left behind. This activity is perfect for addressing issues of trust, collaboration, and perceived competition.

Set Up

Props

- 4 7-foot aluminum beams
- 16 Nubs (4 for each beam)
- 8 18"x18" rubber mats
- 3 12-foot ropes
- 1 75-foot rope
- 1 MTC 1/4" hex screwdriver
- Blindfolds (optional)

1. Attach the nubs on both ends and both sides of each beam at different distances from the end of each beam (thus creating the "shortest" to "longest" beams for this activity). To do this, attach 2 nubs at a distance of 3 inches (the lengthwise measurement of one nub) from each end of the first beam (this will create the "longest" beam). The second beam has two nubs at 6 inches from each end, the third at 9 inches, and the fourth at 12 inches from each end of the beam (creating the "shortest" beam).
2. The general design is an island in the middle of a swamp; bridge pylons are laid so that three of the beams must be used to reach the island from each side and one beam must be used to reach the far shore. Create a rough circle with the 75-foot rope. On each side, lay out mats (pylons) so that three beams

are needed to travel from land (delineated by a 12-foot rope) to the island. In order for the "bridge pieces" (beams) to fit into the pylons (mats), the ends of beams must touch and the nubs must be fully on the mat.

3. On one side, set up the mats using the two shorter beams using the longest beam as the last stretch before reaching the island. Leave the two shorter beams on the edge of the swamp on this side. On the other side of the island, set up mats using the two longest beams so the group can use just these two beams to reach the island. Leave the longer beams on this side of the swamp.
4. Finally, set up two mats which lead from the island to the mainland. These mats require the shortest beam to reach the mainland.

For a detailed view of the setup, refer to the pictures on this page.

Instructions

The team is divided into two groups. They come to this activity at the same time, each one beginning on opposite sides of the swamp. They are each given instructions separately, but they have the same goal. The team needs to get to the mainland area. They can not step into the swamp; they must create a bridge in order to cross. They have two beams as resources. They must first get to the island and from there get to the mainland.

The following rules apply:

- Beams must be on edge (1 1/2-inch side up).
- Mats (pylons) may not be moved.
- Beam ends **must touch** on the mats to extend the bridge.
- Nubs must also be completely resting on the mats to extend the bridge.
- The only things that will support the weighted beams are the pylons (the land is too soft at the edge of the swamp).

Activity: Islands and Bridges

- Team members must be in physical contact with one another while crossing, and they must all cross together.
- If a member of the team falls/steps off or disconnects from the team, consequences happen. At the discretion of the facilitator, the team must start over, someone gets blindfolded, loses the ability to speak, or any other creative challenge set by the facilitator.
- Stepping on the pylons is optional (facilitator's choice).

The pylons lie just below the surface of the water, which makes them risky platforms. As an added challenge, tell your group that they may not step on the pylons.

Sample Story Line

You have been on a long journey and are heading back toward the mainland. You arrive at the edge of a murky swamp filled with very territorial, nasty beasties who find human flesh extremely tasty. In addition, nasty bugs inhabit the swamp area. Although they spend most of their time on the water's surface, when disturbed they fly up and bite causing temporary but horrendous hardships. Fortunately, someone has been here and left bridge pylons securely built in the swamp which will enable the team to construct a bridge that can be used to get to the island and then to the mainland. The land around the water's edge is very soft, so the bridge pieces must rest on the pylons in order to support your weight. In order for the bridge to be secure, the nubs on the bridge pieces must sit securely on the pylons and the bridge ends must touch on the pylons. For safety, of course, the team decides to cross together, always remaining in physical contact.

Facilitator: At this point, follow the instructions as presented.

Safety

Safety is critical in every activity you do. *Islands and Bridges* requires a critical eye toward safety because of the physical nature of the activity. At any point during

the activity, participants can ask for more support to ensure a safe experience. Once you address these concerns, share the following safety guidelines with the group.

1. If you think you are going to fall, step off.
2. Blindfolded participants need to be spotted at all times. Ask the group to "spot" the beams when passing them, being careful to keep them below the shoulders.

Reflection

This activity often raises issues around fairness ("We were set up to fail!" or "We don't have the right resources to succeed and they do!") and competition ("Why should we share with you!" or "Ha! Ha! We're ahead!"). Such conflict arises when individuals and departments maintain a small picture vision of the goals rather than the big picture, the whole organization's vision. In this activity, both teams must work together. One team needs the long beam from the other in order to cross to the island. But the other team needs the short beam in order to get from the island to the mainland. If they work together, they both succeed; if they don't, neither team can succeed. In addition, there are all the issues related to supporting one another on the beam, loyalty to your small team vs. the big team, trust, leadership, communication, problem solving, and personality/perception.

Discover

- What was your initial experience and how did it change over the course of the event?
- What factors were important in resolving the conflicts related to resources and cooperation?
- What was absolutely essential to the success of each team?
- What factors led to "competitive thinking" and what factors supported "cooperative/systems thinking"?
- What leadership skills surfaced that supported overall success and movement through conflict?

Activity: Islands and Bridges

Connect

- How did the others affect your team's results and what does this have to do with conflict resolution?
- How did you enroll the other team? What ways did you build rapport and move beyond conflict?
- How does "loyalty" to your group or group identification play into conflict? What builds loyalty and group identification? How do you transfer that to the larger group/organization?
- Think of a similar situation at work, school, or home where two groups seem to be competing for limited resources (one where competition is not the purpose). What factors play into competition and what factors support cooperation?

Create

- How can you apply what you learned during this exercise? What specifically will you do?

Activity: Levitation Challenge

Overview

Levitation Challenge is a notoriously difficult activity that initially seems quite simple. The team must lower the levitation pole from waist level to the ground without anyone becoming disconnected from it at any time. What appears to be an easy task will cause ultimate confusion as people play the blame-game when the pole goes up, up, and away! *Levitation Challenge* gives participants an opportunity to recognize how easy it is to “find fault” when they’re doing their part and a project is not moving forward.

Set Up

- 1 Levitation Pole per 6-10 people.

If you are using Mobile Team Challenge equipment, use the Levitation Pole(s) provided. If not, you may substitute a long dowel, tent pole, or collapsible antenna. Have participants form two equal lines facing each other, standing about a foot and a half apart.

Instructions

With both hands, ask participants to point at the person across from them, index fingers extended at about waist level. Place the levitation pole down the top of the participants’ outstretched index fingers so everyone is in contact with the pole. The group’s challenge is to lower the pole to the ground, with the pole remaining straight and parallel to the ground, without anyone becoming disconnected at any time.

The following rules apply:

1. At no time can anyone lose contact with the pole. If a participant loses contact with the pole, he/she is obligated to call “disconnect,” at which time the facilitator removes the pole and the team must start over.

2. The pole must rest on top of the fingers. Fingers cannot be bent or otherwise used to hold the pole in place.
3. No other body parts or objects can be used to secure the pole.

Typically, the pole will rise into the air until it is too high for most people to reach. Participants will be frustrated at the levitation effect, and will no doubt start over several times before any progress is made. Have patience and remember to reflect on this experience to bring about the most effective learning.

Safety

This activity can lead to some heated moments. Be aware of the frustration level of the group and remind them that emotional safety is a critical component of teamwork.

Variations

You can make things easier by asking participants to use only one hand or one finger.

Reflection

When a process or task appears to be very easy and turns out to be quite challenging, frustration easily sets in. Lack of understanding, confusion, and irritation often result in fault-finding and blame. (After all, someone has to be causing the problem!) Such conflict is a result of the paradigm, the mindset, and the need to be in control.

Discover

- What was your experience during this activity?
- What happened when you discovered this challenge was more difficult than you expected?
- How do our expectations impact how we approach situations?

Activity: Levitation Challenge

Connect

- Where have you experienced this level of frustration in work, school, or life?
- What valuable insight did you gain about yourself?
- How will you utilize this insight at school, home, or work?
- How does frustration impact conflict?
- How did your group move beyond frustration?

Create

- What is your biggest “take away” from this activity?
- How will you apply this learning in your life? Work? Family?

Activity: **Move On Through**

Overview

Move On Through introduces participants to the challenges of balancing quality with the demand for quantity. Working as two separate departments on a custom product, participants must develop an efficient way to mass-produce products without sacrificing quality. Planning and communication are essential for both departments to succeed.

Set Up

Props

- 2 Spiderweb stands
 - 1 Thru-Put Panel
 - 1 4-foot crossbar with joining plates
 - 1 5/32" MTC hex screwdriver
 - 1 Collection of raw materials and production tools. Print a sample list of raw materials and production tools from the *Conflict Resolution: Advanced Activities* software.
 - 2 Tables (optional)
1. Remove the end caps from the top of the Spiderweb stands (store in the outside pocket of the Spiderweb bag and remember to replace them afterwards).
 2. Slip each side sleeve of the Thru-Put Panel over the top end of the Spiderweb stands and pull the panel taut.
 3. Slide the top crossbar through the top sleeve of the panel. Rest the crossbar on top of the two Spiderweb stands and secure each side with the joining plates.
 4. Place one table on each side of the panel.

You will also need to collect a set of raw materials and production tools for building the company product, and create one example of the finished company product for reference. Create a simple product that requires participants to pass the partially finished products several times through the panel before completion. Think of your product in phases: Plan materials so phase one must be completed on one side before phase two can be completed on the other. For example, a Popsicle

stick must be colored on one side before it is glued on the other. Strategically locate half of the raw materials on one side of the panel, and the rest on the other.

Instructions

The team is divided into two equal groups and positioned on opposite sides of the panel. Each side has a unique set of raw materials for product creation. One sample of the finished product (designed by the facilitator) is shared with the group. Your company has an order from a customer who has indicated that if you can produce X number (facilitator's choice) of the shared product by a specified deadline, they will purchase all of them. If you don't make the deadline or the quality is poor, they won't purchase any. Your team has decided to accept this contract.

The rules of production are as follows:

- a. Technical tools and equipment (e.g., scissors, glue, etc.) may not be passed to the other side of the panel, but must be used on the side they are on. Materials may not be thrown.
- b. Raw materials may not be passed to the other side.
- c. Products and partially assembled products may, however, be passed from side to side.
- d. Participants may not go around, under, or over the divider. Participants may think to pass someone through the panel in order to put people where they are needed. This is a creative solution. If they decide to pass someone through the panel, be sure they use proper and safe passing techniques. Do not, however, give them safety instructions unless they come up with the idea. If you do, they will miss the opportunity to think critically for themselves. You must read the safety section of this activity before you allow people to be passed through the panel.
- e. Set a time limit and a quantity quota before beginning. Check the groups' work as they complete the products.

Activity: **Move On Through**

Sample Story Line

You are members of a production company. A customer has made a request for a large number of a customized product which they need now. The sales representative met with your manager, who decided that your company would take the contract. This is a risky deal; they have faxed a contract that indicates they will pay top dollar for all of them if you can meet the deadline, but they will owe nothing if you do not meet the deadline with the quality product. The manager has just arrived on the production floor, briefed you about the deal, and told you to stop all other work and get this job done. You have 45 minutes.

Facilitator: At this point, follow the instructions as presented.

Safety

If the team decides to pass an individual through the panel, the most important safety consideration will be the lifting and spotting of that person. Be sure that only comfortable and willing volunteers are passed through the panel. During the pass, the participant must be lifted face-up toward the ceiling, remaining as stiff as possible to make the process easier. Stop play and make everyone on both teams a part of the lifting process. As the facilitator, dedicate yourself or a responsible participant to the head and neck region of the person being lifted. This is the most important area of the body to keep safe. As the person is being passed through, make sure both teams are staying in control and being safe. When the person has made it through, the receiving team must slowly lower the feet down first, and gently bring the person into a natural standing position.

Play with common sense and dedication and keep everyone safe!

Other safety tips include:

- Make sure people do not throw supplies or tools at any time.

- Make certain that people are ready to receive materials when they are passed.

Variations

One variation in this activity is to change the type of product you wish to have each team produce. Utilize resources that are easily accessible and gentle on the pocket book.

You may also try challenging your group by not showing them the finished product and only providing written or verbal instructions on how it should be assembled.

Reflection

Sometimes conflict can begin before a project even gets started. In this activity, the sales representative and the manager made a decision that affected the whole team, but the team was not included in the decision. Such leadership often creates conflict, which can subtly impact the success of a venture. Some groups are not impacted by such leadership and simply rise to any challenge. Further conflict can arise due to process design, resource management, resource availability, stress, human resources, and workers' skill levels. Good leadership, creative problem solving, teamwork, flexibility, and planning are all profound contributors to moving through conflict or working without conflict. Explore the following questions with your team after the activity.

Discover

- What was your experience at the start of the event? How did your team respond to the challenge?
- What behaviors and thought patterns helped your team move forward toward success?
- What challenges did you experience and how did you respond?
- What was important for moving beyond conflict during this event? What did you do or how did you work together in ways that supported working without conflict?

Activity: Move On Through

- What forms of leadership surfaced that were effective in your overall success? How did planning help?

Connect

Imagine that you are the manager of such a group and a sales representative comes to you with such a request.

- How would you respond to the sales representative in ways that would move beyond conflict either between you and the sales rep. or you and your staff?
- Where else in your life have you faced a similar challenge?
- How did you respond?

Create

- What will you do next time when faced with a similar situation?
- If you were to be the leader of a group of people, what would you instill in them to work as a team?

Activity: **Operation Transfer**

Overview

Operation Transfer challenges your team to work quickly and carefully to move six cups of water from the center of a circle to the outside perimeter. The team must communicate effectively and put aside differences in order to succeed. Patience, planning, and coordinated effort are among the many topics addressed in this activity.

Set Up

Props

- 1 Brass ring (The smaller the ring, the more difficult the task will be.)
- 1 75-foot rope
- 4-6 20-inch ropes
- 1 Black hard-plastic panel
- 1 18"x18" mat
- 6 Small cups
- Water
- Plastic tarp or newsprint (optional)
- Blindfolds (optional)

If you plan on facilitating this activity indoors or in an outdoor location where you cannot afford a mess on the ground, cover the floor with a plastic tarp or newsprint.

First, attach the 20-foot ropes to the brass ring using a 1/2 hitch knot. View the video and images for help with this knot. Space the ropes evenly around the ring. You will have multiple rope ends, each 10-feet long, when you are finished. Depending on your group size, you may add or subtract ropes as needed. Everyone should have their own rope end. For example, if you have 16 people in your group, you will want to attach eight lengths of rope to the ring. However, if you have only 8 people, four lengths are ideal. Another option is to play with enough rope ends for half of the participants, and ask the other half to serve as the "leaders" during the process.

Create a circle approximately 16 feet in diameter with the 75-foot rope (if you are using a floor covering, it should spread throughout the circle and a little beyond). Place the ring with the ropes attached in the center of the circle. The ropes should stretch out past the outside edge of the circle.

Next, rest the hard-plastic panel on top of the ring. Place one cup of water in the center of the plastic panel and the remaining cups of water on the floor/ground next to the panel.

Instructions

The challenge is for the team to move all six cups of water from the center of the circle to the outside edge using only the "retrieval system" provided, and without any of the water spilling. The instructions are as follows:

1. No one may enter the circle at any time.
2. Each rope must be staffed by a different team member.
3. Those not managing a rope (if any) are the leaders. (In this case, those managing a rope end may only speak when spoken to, and they can only answer direct questions from the leaders.)
4. You may blindfold some people and have other team members give them instructions (optional).
5. If any of the water is spilled during transit, that attempt has failed and that cup is removed from play.
6. When a cup is removed or spilled, the facilitator enters the circle and places the next cup on the black plastic panel.
7. Cups may only be removed one at a time.

Sample Story Line

Water from the fountain of youth has just been discovered on a remote island. They've found only one spring, but fortunately there is just enough water for your study. Your team has been sent to find the water and bring back as much of it as possible. There is, however, one small problem. The spring rests in the middle of a

Activity: **Operation Transfer**

quicksand pit, so you cannot travel to the water's edge for samples. You've been able to create a makeshift device that will allow you to retrieve the precious liquid. However, the retrieval device is crude and must be operated with care so no water is spilled. You must work together if you are to succeed. Good luck!

Facilitator: At this point, follow the instructions as presented.

Safety

Here are a few additional safety tips to consider during this activity:

- Spot anyone that you have blindfolded.
- If using plastic to cover the floor, take care to walk around it to reduce the risk of a slipping injury.

Variations

As previously addressed in the set up section, you may wish to add or subtract ropes to change the dynamic of the activity. If leadership is your focus, designate enough rope ends for half of the group, and assign the other half the leadership role. The leaders must talk the rope handlers through the process, and may not touch the handlers or the ropes at any time.

Another very successful variation is to blindfold each member of the team that is managing a rope end. Assign a sighted team member to each of the blindfolded participants as a coach. Coaches may not touch rope handlers or the rope at any time. In this instance, you may wish to alter the story line to involve workers and supervisors or students and teachers.

Try making the circle bigger, changing the size of the ring, or using an egg or beans instead of water.

Reflection

Both natural and situational conflict can come up in this activity. The physical challenge (natural conflict) presents the opportunity to use creativity, planning, shared vision, and a coordinated team effort to move beyond the conflict. In addition, there is an opportunity to develop interpersonal/leadership skills between leaders and rope managers that support success beyond conflict.

Discover

- What are your thoughts or feelings about your results?
- What potential conflicts did this activity present? How did your team work together to move beyond them?
- How did your plan come together? What natural conflicts arose when you implemented your plan?
- Were adjustments needed in your plan? How did the team know to make these, and how did you specifically respond? Did your response move you toward or away from further conflict? What specifically enabled movement beyond conflict?

Connect

- Think about life situations that might be similar to this, where there are natural conflicts arising when you go to implement a plan. What kinds of conflicts arise that require collaborative adjustment? How do you get the necessary feedback in these types of situations to make the decision to adjust? What worked well here and what would it look like in a work or life situation?
- Can someone provide an example of a situation (present or past) where, after a plan had to be adjusted in midstream, the response from the team could either increase or decrease conflict? How would you apply your experience here to that situation?
- Feedback was crucial for success; where did it occur and how? How was feedback given that resulted in collaboration instead of conflict? What made it easy to listen to the feedback?

Activity: Operation Transfer

- The water provided an opportunity for feedback during this activity. What kind of feedback was it and how was it valuable? What role did listening play in giving and receiving feedback? How does this support working beyond conflict?

Create

- What might the water represent in a real conflict situation?
- How might you manage future conflict or challenges as a result of this exercise?

Activity: River of Relations

Overview

River of Relations challenges participants to think critically about conflict, and recognize that there are several solutions to any challenge. The group must cross an area using only the props provided, and discuss conflict along the way. The true value of this activity unfolds in the end, when participants share their insight with one another.

Set Up

Props

- 2 12-foot ropes
- 1 12"x12" mat for each participant
- 1 18"x18" mat for every 2–3 participants, with no less than 4 and no more than 7 in play at any given time.

Create the play area by laying the two 12-foot ropes on the ground about 30–40 feet apart. This will mark the banks of the "river."

Next, space the 18"x18" mats out in zigzag formation from one end of the river to the other. Place the remaining 12"x12" mats on the ground outside of the play area.

Instructions

1. Pass out 2–4 index cards and a writing utensil to each participant. Ask each participant to write "Conflict" at the top of two of the cards. Instruct participants to write a conflict they are facing, or one they know about, on each "conflict" card.
2. On their remaining two cards, ask participants to write "Solution" across the top and then write one solution they could apply to each conflict they have identified.
3. Participants select 4–7 "general" challenge/problem categories so each conflict on their cards will fit in a general category (e.g., coming to consensus, personnel issue, control issue, insufficient information, and

insufficient resources/time). The individual conflict cards are each sorted in piles according to the general challenge in which they are likely to arise (if more than one option is available, choose one). The cards are then placed on the 18"x18" mats, each one representing the general challenge/problem.

4. Participants get a 12"x12" mat which represents their solution(s). The team must cross the river using their solutions as stepping-stones, while remaining in physical contact with one another. The conflict on each island must be resolved by the team using the solutions that are appropriate for the conflict. They must all agree that the solution actually is a solution for the general category they are approaching, and that the specific solution used to step onto the island, will actually resolve (or move toward resolution of) the conflict.
5. Before the group begins, be sure to point out the following rules:
 - a. Solutions may be used more than once.
 - b. If you fall into the River of Relations, you will be swept downstream. Your team will have to return to rescue you before they can continue. (There is a prevailing current that always takes you back to the original shoreline!)
 - c. If you let go of a solution (mat), it will be swept downstream (optional).
 - d. You must have physical contact with your team
 - e. You must go to each island (optional).

Sample Story Line

You have come upon the River of Relations and must reach the other side. There are four islands that you can use to cross the river (good news), but each island holds "spirit energy" that creates conflict and discord the moment you set foot on it (bad news). In order to keep bedlam and anarchy from arising on your team, you must subdue the spirit energies immediately upon stepping onto the island. Fortunately, you have conflict solutions with you. If you use them appropriately, they will subdue the spirit energy on the island long enough

Activity: River of Relations

for you to pass. The solutions must be specific for each island's conflict. (If you want to make sure they go to all four islands, have them collect something of value at each island.)

Facilitator: At this point, follow the instructions as presented.

Safety

For this activity to be played safely, ask the participants to avoid jumping, leaping, running, or other unsafe movement. Tape may be used to keep the islands and stepping-stones from slipping.

Variations

Conflict cards and solution cards can be read in order, shuffled independently and read for different conflicts, or each conflict read, followed by all the solutions.

Reflection

Solutions for one conflict or challenge can often be applied over and over again. In fact, the more we use a conflict management skill, the more likely it is to become second nature to us. Creative solutions can be used in more than one situation. Sharing solutions can be valuable, but not all solutions will work in every

situation. A key component is to ask others for their solutions and be willing to "step into" them in order to move closer to resolution. Explore some of the following questions in your debrief:

Discover

- What did you discover about the nature of conflict?
- What did you discover about your solutions?
- What did the team do to be successful? Could you have done this alone? How did the team make it easier?

Connect

- What did you discover about yourself in relation to solutions?
- What qualities were needed from you and other team members?
- Were there solutions that needed tweaking in order to make them work?
- What did you have to do in order to resolve each conflict on the islands?

Create

- How will you apply the learning from this exercise in other areas of your life?
- Who are some of the key people in your life that you need to connect with in order to move through some of life's challenges?
- What is one key point you wish to focus on related to working through conflict?

Activity: Slide Over Babe

Overview

Slide Over Babe is a challenging activity that requires effective team planning, communication, and patience. The group is divided into three teams that must coordinate the movement of precious fuel within a newly discovered gold mine. At each station, teams must effectively transfer fuel and fuel containers from one platform to another without spilling. You will find that teams will enjoy the challenge and learn about one another during the process.

Set Up

Props

- 4 7-foot aluminum beams
- 16 Nubs
- 8 20-foot ropes
- 4 Gliders
- 1 Set of tools
- 2 12"x12" black hard-plastic panels
- 4 Cups (paper or plastic)
- 1 Pitcher of water
- 1 Empty bowl or bucket

1. Lay the beams on edge so they are 7 feet long, 3 inches high, and 1 ½ inches across. Slide the gliders onto the top of each beam so that each beam has one.
2. Attach nubs on both sides of each end on each beam approximately ½ inch from the ends. Thread a 20-foot rope through each of the corner holes of all four of the gliders. This will leave two 10-foot lengths of rope from each corner hole.
3. Set two beams parallel on the ground in your work area. On the far end, the beams should be approximately 12 inches apart so that the black square panel sits flush inside the gliders. Here is the tricky part. The beams must gradually get further apart from each other (imagine a V shape) from end to end. To measure the correct distance on the opposite end of the beams, turn the black plastic panel at a diagonal so that only

opposing corners are able to rest on the gliders. You may have to work with this a bit to correctly position the beams.

4. Set up the second set of beams identical to the first, positioning them at a right angle to the first set. You should now have four beams creating a wide V in the play area, all correctly distanced from one another. In the center of the V, where the two sets of beams connect together, make sure the sets are at least 2 feet apart.
5. At the far end of both sets of beams, place a black square panel between the two beams, resting atop the gliders. (This is used to transport water in from station to station.)
6. The meeting point of the four beams is called the middle station. Position the cups in this location. Place the pitcher of water at the far end of the first pair of beams, and the bowl/bucket at the far end of the second pair of beams.

Instructions

1. Divide your group into three equal work teams and assign one to the starting, middle, and ending stations of the activity. The goal is for teams to work together to transport as much water as possible from the pitcher to the bowl/bucket along the transportation mechanism. The transportation mechanism includes the ropes, platform, and the beams on which the platform slides on.
2. The first challenge is for the group to get the cups to the water source (the pitcher of water at the far end of the first set of beams). Once again, the cups may only be transported through the system. They may not be thrown or handed to any other team.
3. Once a cup reaches the middle station full of water, it must be transferred by the middle team to the second conveyor system. It must then travel to the end station where it can be poured into the bowl/bucket. However, before a cup can be transferred to another conveyor system or removed from the system, the transportation platform must be in the docking area. This means the black panel and gliders must be within 1 inch of the

Activity: Slide Over Babe

end of the beams. After the water has been successfully emptied into the bucket, empty cups must be sent back the same way they came through the system.

Please review the following rules with your group before you begin.

- Conveyor systems must be powered by everyone on the team. Make sure everyone has an active role in the process.
- Rope ends may not be traded among teams.
- Participants may not move beyond their immediate work area.
- If a cup falls off the conveyor, the water (product) inside is lost. Teams may retrieve any fallen cups and start them again from the center station.
- More than one cup may be sent at a time.
- No one may touch the black panel during the activity. (Touching is allowed only if a group needs to “reset” after a failed attempt.)

Note: You may wish to have a “fill-line” to inform participants when they have successfully completed the task. Or impose a time limit to keep groups focused and driven toward the goal.

Sample Story Line

During a morning expedition, one participant from your team discovered an abandoned gold press. Upon examining the press, you found a lot of gold still left in it. In order to get it operating again, you must supply it with the needed fuel that lies on the other side of the gorge. A conveyor system built by a team that came before you appears to be intact. Another group has found the fuel and now they just need containers to carry it in. The containers are between the two conveyor bridges. Your task is to successfully pass the fuel between each station using the small containers. Good luck.

Facilitator: At this point, follow the instructions as presented.

Safety

Prepare your group by addressing the following safety concerns:

- Participants in the middle station may be quite close together. Remind them to take care in their movements, and to keep one another safe.
- Since water is involved, make sure to facilitate this event where spillage is not an issue. You may substitute dried beans or rice if necessary.

Variations

Place a time limit on this exercise to add pressure to the group.

Reflection

Collaboration and working effectively as a team are enhanced when communication is open and active, and when members share a common goal or vision. Explore the following questions as you process the *Slide Over Babe* activity:

Discover

- What was the team’s goal in this activity? Was everyone on the same page with this goal? How do you know? What role did team members have with the success of the activity?
- What did you value about each member’s contribution? What did the team do as a whole to show this appreciation? How was timing an important factor in this activity?
- How did the team maintain this precise timing? Where is timing an important factor in conflict resolution?

Connect

- When there are three separate groups working toward a common goal, how does one make sure everyone has all the information? As time progresses, does this remain important? Why or why not?

Activity: Slide Over Babe

- Feedback is immediate in this activity; how valuable is it? How was feedback received and used in this activity? During conflicts at school or in your personal life, how does feedback play a role in the resolution? How do you personally gather feedback and from whom? Where does the trust factor enter into this acquisition and use of feedback? What is involved in building trust?
- When working on a project at home, school, or work and you need the cooperation of others, how do you get it? What does cooperation look like? What did it look like in this activity?

Create

- What new insights do you have about teamwork and coordination? How will you apply this insight in your life?

Activity: **Tangrams**

Overview

Tangrams is a challenging activity that has a long history, and has now been adapted to fit seamlessly into the team-building world. In *Tangrams*, small groups work together to replicate a series of shapes using the provided puzzle pieces. This is not a race or a competition, but these two characteristics usually surface. Groups must work together toward a shared vision, play through frustration, and cooperate to find success.

Set Up

- One set of *Tangram* puzzle pieces per group. If you are using Mobile Team Challenge equipment, use the custom made *Tangram* pieces found in the kit. If not, you may print the design from the *Conflict Resolution: Advanced Activities* software.
- A selection of Shadow Image sheets per group. You may invent your own or choose from those found on *Conflict Resolution: Advanced Activities*.

Instructions

1. Creatively divide your team into small groups of 3–5 participants using one of your techniques, or look to *Inspire! Ice Breakers & Openers* (Volume II) for suggestions.
2. Each group will need one set of the *Tangram* puzzle pieces and a set of Shadow Image sheets for reference.
3. Be sure each small group gets the same set of Shadow Image sheets.
4. The instructions are very simple: Small groups must exactly replicate the patterns found on the Shadow Image sheets using the *Tangram* puzzle pieces.
5. Groups must use all of the available pieces for each pattern.
6. You may wish to place a time limit on each attempt should you decide to challenge your team to recreate multiple shadow images.

7. Allow your group to do what comes naturally, and resist the urge to tell them this is not a competition or to coach them along.
8. Typically, participants assume this is a race, and competition is born into a situation by instinct. This is fantastic “grist for the mill” when discussing the process in the reflection component.

Sample Story Line

Your team must deliver important messages to the City of Agreements. The officials fear the messages might fall into the wrong hands, so they used a top-secret process which blackened the document and divided it into odd shapes. The City of Agreements has a machine that will read through the blackening chemicals, but they do not have the secret code for assembling the message. You have traveled over mountains, down rivers, and through jungles and have finally arrived at your destination. Just as you are about to ring the doorbell to the city, a strange little creature steps out of nowhere and hands you a figure, whispering “The message must appear like this or it cannot be read.” And then the creature disappears.

Facilitator: At this point, follow the instructions as presented.

Safety

General safety precautions for moving around the room and caring for one another apply.

Variations

Many variations exist for the *Tangram* puzzle pieces. Try these two examples. Provide the team with four sets of *Tangram* pieces and 6–8 shadow shapes. As a team, they must assemble all of the messages; the machine can read messages as soon as they are assembled (freeing up the pieces for another message). *Tangrams* can be

Activity: **Tangrams**

used as part of a scavenger hunt to receive additional clues as each puzzle is completed. You may also challenge your group to make a square with the pieces using them all.

Reflection

Team members who visualize easily and have high spatial intelligence will discover they are an incredible asset to their group and/or team. Learning style differences and performance style differences are likely to create conflict during this activity. Some people may want to look at the pieces and create different compositions in their mind; they will need the pieces to stay still. Others, who need to see it physically, will want to manipulate the pieces trying different patterns. Some people will immediately see that certain things will not work; others must actually try to put a puzzle piece in place before seeing it will not fit. This is a wonderful opportunity to talk about individual strengths and how they are used in a group setting.

Discover

- What processes did you go through in order to succeed at this event?
- How did everyone contribute to this success?
- How do you recognize when you are truly listening to others and when all ideas are being valued?
- How did the group decide to work on this task?
- Was planning important for this event? Why or why not?

Connect

- What role did “the big picture” have in this activity?
- Are there other examples where the solution is found by examining pieces and being flexible (shifting one’s thoughts/perceptions/decisions after a closer look)? Describe a few of these examples.

Create

- How will you integrate the value of getting “the big picture,” closer examination, collaboration, flexibility, and seeking solutions using all resources (everyone) in work, school, or personal lives?
- Give specific examples; create bold images of what this would look like.
- What did you learn that will help you confront conflict in daily life?
- Which behaviors allowed the group to move toward success faster and easier?
- How can these help to create solutions when there is conflict?



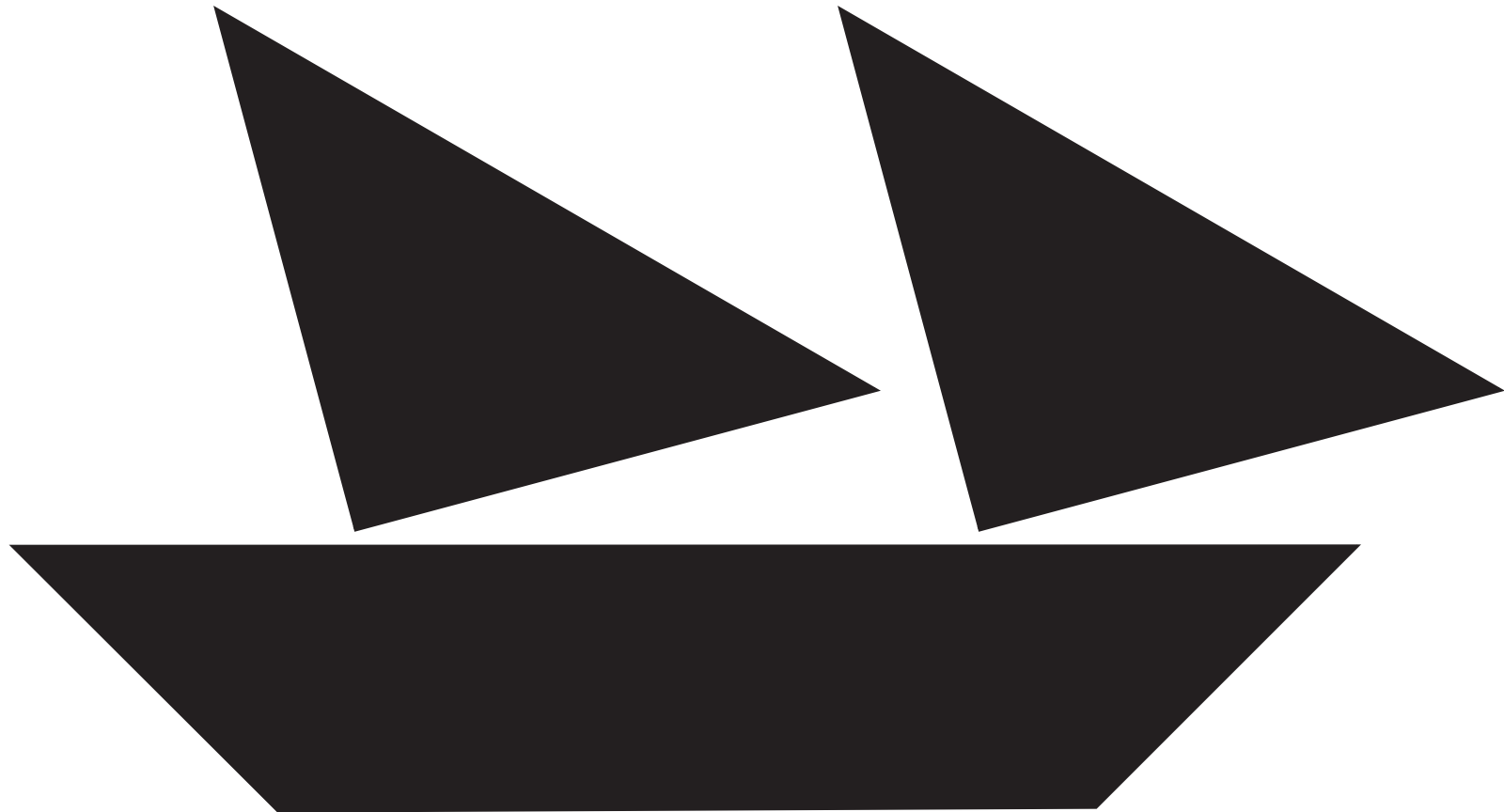
Conflict Resolution

Advanced Activities



Activity: **Tangrams**

Shadow Puzzle: Boat

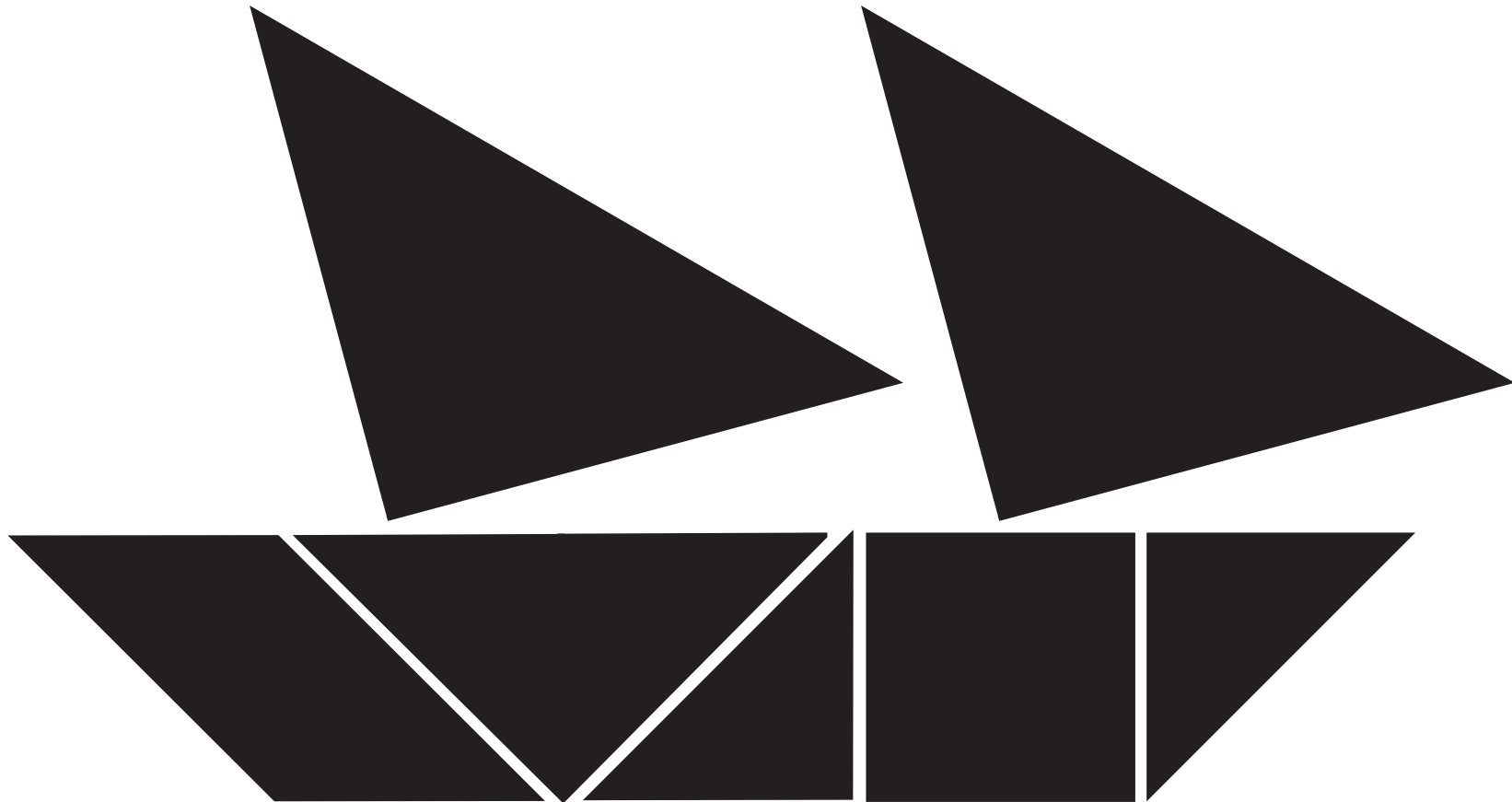


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Activity: **Tangrams**

Shadow Puzzle: Boat (solution)



Activity: **Tangrams**

Shadow Puzzle: Person



Activity: **Tangrams**

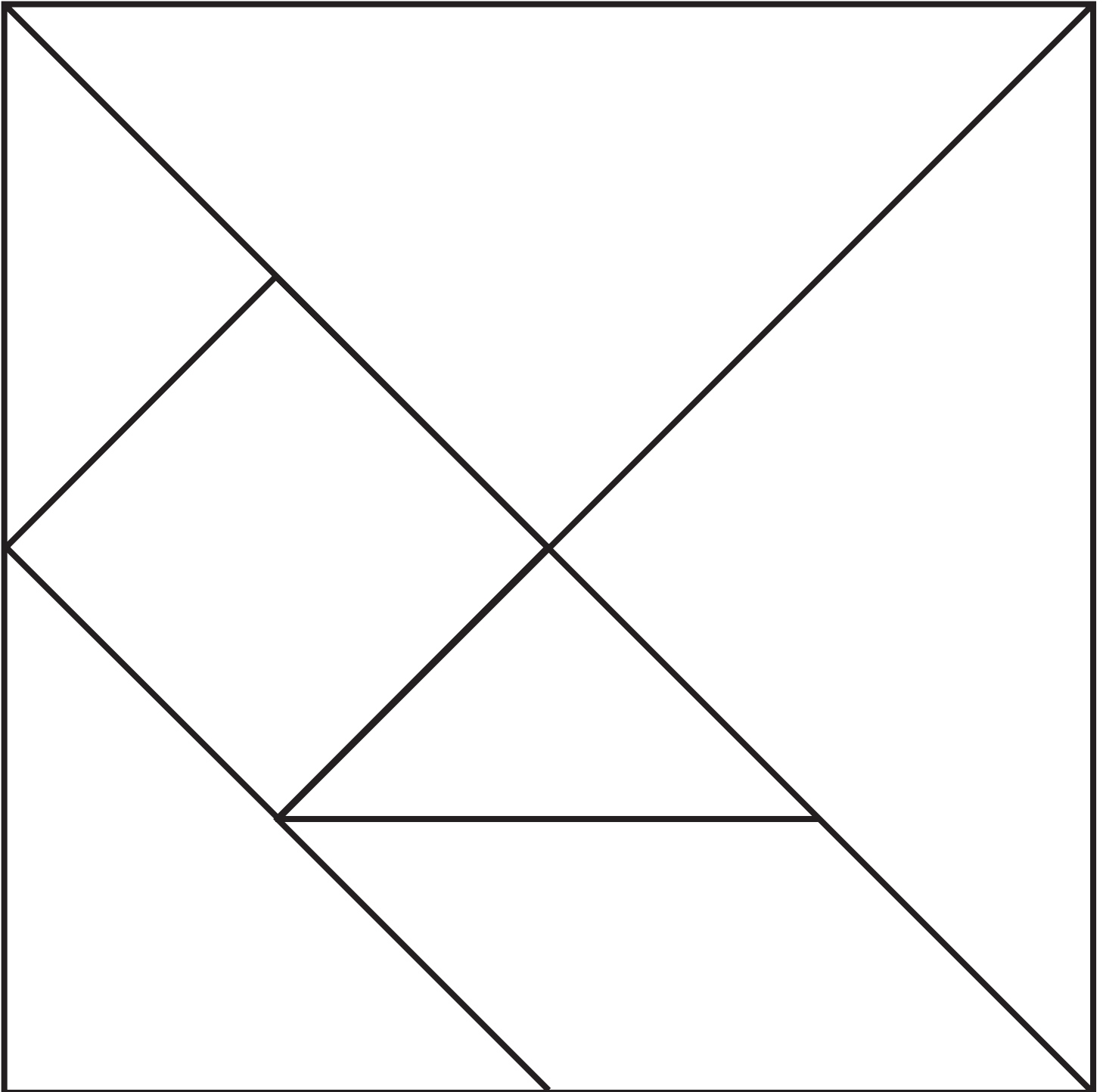
Shadow Puzzle: Person (solution)



Activity: Tangrams

Template for Tangram Pieces

You have the option to cut these pieces out to use for the Tangram activity. Print template on card stock paper for best results.



Activity: **Trap Door**

Overview

Trap Door will challenge your group physically and mentally as they work to switch positions on an elevated square. In this activity, participants must switch places with a partner across from them without stepping off the square or becoming disconnected from the group. This activity is a fantastic tool for teaching the importance of planning, cooperation, and trust in complicated situations.

Set Up

Props

- 4 7-foot aluminum beams
- 4 Angle brackets/feet
- 1 3/16" MTC hex screwdriver
- 4 12"x12" mats
- Blindfolds (optional)

Equipment for this event comes in the MTC Standard, Performance, and Performance Plus kits.

Begin by laying the four 7-foot beams on the ground in a square and fastening them together with an angle bracket at each corner. Use the top slot of the aluminum beams. Be sure the box is located on a flat surface so it is stable and does not rock. Place a mat under the corner of each square to keep the square from sliding. If the box is moved to a new location or is repositioned, it is necessary to check the tightness of all angle brackets to ensure safety.

Instructions

1. Ask participants to look across the square and identify a partner. Eye contact is an easy way to form partnerships quickly. If there is an uneven number, it is acceptable to have a group of three, but none of them should be on the same side as one another.
2. If you have more than 15 people, you may wish to

divide your group in half. The first group works on the square while the other monitors, spots, and observes. Switch the groups when contact is broken, someone steps from the square, or the group completes the challenge.

3. After partnerships have been formed, participants must step onto the square together while remaining in physical contact with each other.
4. Next, inform participants that they must all move to where their partner is standing without stepping off the box or disconnecting from their teammates.

The following rules also apply:

- a. If anyone steps off, they must all start over.
- b. Participants must remain in physical contact with their team at all times. If the team breaks contact, they must begin again from their original positions.

Sample Story Line

Your team has stumbled upon an abandoned trap entrance that will lead to a chamber of knowledge and riches. The entry system is weight-sensitive. Once it has been weighted, it must stay weighted in order to open with the specified key order. The entryway is coded so it will only open if the team is standing on the borders in a specific order. Unfortunately, you all jumped on before you knew this. Now you must switch places and get in the correct order to reap the rewards!

Facilitator: At this point, follow the instructions as presented.

Safety

Spotting is important in this activity. As the facilitator, you should spot those who appear out of balance and/or designate half of your group to spot at a time. Also, allow participants to opt out if they choose not to participate. Ask these participants to help spot and continue to be part of the activity.

Activity: Trap Door

Reflection

Conflicting goals, close quarters, and lack of leadership contribute to chaos and increase the possibility of conflict. Planning, leadership, cooperation, and patience are all important skills needed to move through conflict or move forward without creating conflict.

Discover

- Describe what you experienced as a participant during this activity. What factors contributed to this?
- Describe your group's performance.
- What skills were used to complete this task successfully?
- Where did trust enter into the process? How was trust developed? How would you use these steps in relationships beyond the present team? How does trust contribute to conflict resolution?

Connect

- How did the decisions occur in your planning process?
- Where did you or others compromise or seek cooperation in this task?
- Where was support needed and how was it delivered? How did the support affect the outcome?
- What important skills and insights did you bring to the activity? What characteristics did you see others bring?

Create

- Think of a situation at home, work, or school where a similar situation has arisen or might arise. What did you learn here that you can use there? How will you transfer the lessons? What will you say or do?

Activity: Trust Me

Overview

Trust Me is a classic activity designed to help participants develop a bond of trust and commitment. Participants lean back into the supporting arms of a partner, relying on their partner to keep them safe both physically and mentally. Partners switch and are exposed to both sides of the activity as the “truster” and the “trusted.”

Trust Me also serves as a prelude to the trust activities *Willow in the Wind* and *Group Lift*.

Instructions

1. Bring your group together and address the requirements for this activity. As the most fundamental requirement, explain that everyone must be committed to one another and take this seriously to avoid incident.
2. Next, you will need to demonstrate the different player positions in this activity. First, demonstrate the proper leaning position with the help of a volunteer. Volunteers should stand tall and straight, feet together, with their arms crossed over the chest, holding onto their shirt. The preferred position is arms crossed, hands locked and pulled in to the chest. This position reduces the risk of injury by flying elbows. However, participants may choose the method that is most comfortable. Ask participants to practice, on their own, standing where they are.
3. Next, introduce and demonstrate the proper spotting position with a volunteer. Be very clear in your explanation of this position.
4. The spotter stands directly behind the leaner. The spotter's feet must be shoulder width apart, one foot back and one foot forward, with the back foot acting as a brace. Spotters must remember to keep their knees slightly bent. Hands must remain up at all times, palms open and elbows slightly bent. The palms of the hand should be approximately 4–6 inches or closer from the leaning participant's back. Once again, ask participants to practice this position on their own without a partner. Offer feedback and help ensure everyone understands the position. Be sure to address the spotter's primary areas of concern--the head and neck.
5. Now ask participants to break into pairs, aligning by height as much as possible, and introduce the specific communication required in this activity. The commands are simple, meaningful, and name-specific in order to eliminate confusion and possible accidents. The commands are as follows:
 - a. When the leaning participant is ready, he/she asks, “Ready, _____ (name of spotter)?”
 - b. When the spotting participant is in proper position and ready to catch, he/she replies, “Ready, _____ (name of person leaning).”
 - c. The person leaning then passes control to the spotter by saying, “Trusting, _____ (name of spotter).”
 - d. The spotter responds, “Trusting, _____ (name of person leaning).”
6. When the leaning participant hears this final command, he or she will have full confidence that the spotting participant is in position, hands within 4–6 inches from the upper back. The leaning participant then leans back, pivoting on the heels, and commits her/his weight to the spotting participant. The spotter then returns the leaning participant to a neutral standing position.
7. Allow each group several attempts, and make sure they switch roles at least once. Remind group members to be safe and follow the instructions on each attempt.

Safety

1. First and foremost, participants must be introduced to the challenge and have the opportunity to choose whether or not to participate. It is important that no one is coerced into participating. A serious commitment to safety is also equally important.
2. Observe participants to make sure they are using proper body position and appropriate communication.

Activity: Trust Me

3. Assess the group for their readiness and willingness to trust one another.
4. Back up individuals if you think there is a safety concern. This means standing behind them in order to help spot if needed. Assume they are capable of spotting effectively, but be prepared in case they are not. For example, a very short person pairs up with a tall person or a very heavy person with a lightweight individual.
5. Make sure there are no “screamers.” These are spotters who stand about twelve inches away from their partner, preparing to “give them a thrill.”
6. **Stop jokes and sarcastic comments** as soon as they occur. Trust takes many small steps to build, but can be broken in one.

Variations

The following are two very successful variations of *Trust Me*. In fact, they may be considered “next steps” to trust building in your group, and can be used successfully in the following sequence.

Willow in the Wind is the next step in building group trust. Ask your group to form a tight circle of approximately 8–15 participants per circle. Each participant may choose to take a turn stepping into the center of the circle. Those around the circle stand in the proper spotting position; the participant in the center assumes the leaning position. After repeating the commands, “Ready,” “Ready,” “Trusting,” and “Trusting,” the center person leans back keeping the body stiff like a board and his or feet in one position. The group *gently* passes her/him around the circle (rotating). You can invite the “willows” to close their eyes if they like. The same communication system is required before any leaning participant begins: “Ready,” “Ready,” “Trusting,” and “Trusting!”

In *Willow in the Wind*, there are a few **extra safety concerns** to keep in mind. First, make sure there are no

holes in the circle and that the distance the person will lean is less than 8 inches to anyone’s hands. The facilitator should stand behind any spotter that she/he feels might need additional support. Make sure the person in the center is not panicky and that they are comfortable communicating their needs.

Group Lift is an activity where the group lifts each willing participant off of the ground and up into the air. This is recommended for highly functional groups dedicated to each member’s safety.

Ask participants to stand in a tight circle in the spotting stance, just as they did in *Willow in the Wind*. A volunteer steps to the center of the circle and assumes the leaning stance. Using the same communication system, the volunteer leans back. This time, the spotter directly behind the volunteer lowers the upper body and the rest of the participants move in under the body with both hands, lifting the volunteer into the air (using their legs, not their backs). The volunteer should only be lifted as high as the shortest person’s arms in the group can reach. Make sure that one member of the spotting team supports the head and neck region at all times. After a brief time, spotters lower volunteers to the ground feet first, and support them until they are standing in a comfortable position.

Additional Safety Concerns

1. Make sure that all volunteers understand what is required, and have no preexisting back problems that may be aggravated by this activity.
2. Make sure the person leaning has an opportunity to position spotters as they feel fit (e.g., who touches where and who carries the greatest weight).
3. Make sure there are a sufficient number of participants to do this safely (generally 8–10 for every person being lifted).

Activity: Trust Me

Reflection

Trust is a valuable factor in developing relationships and moving through conflict more easily and quickly.

Discover

- What factors are important in building trust? Which ones surfaced during this activity?
- Trust is built in small steps, and it is developed over time. How did this occur in this activity?
- What did support look like in this activity and how did it contribute to your success?

Connect

- What communication skills added trust during this activity? Where are these skills used at work or in life?
- In situations of conflict, what role does support from others play in the resolution of the conflict? What does it specifically look, sound, or feel like?
- When have you had support in your life? Describe this support.
- When have you supported someone and what did you experience while giving support?

Create

- How can you bring more trust and support into your life?
- What can you do to create a more trusting environment?

Additional Topics to Explore

- Sometimes, getting others to trust us may be difficult. It may have *nothing* to do with our ability to be there for

them and *everything* to do with the other person's fear.

- Past experiences, all the way from childhood, form the foundation for trust.
- Sometimes, we may not be sure we can support someone, but we are willing to risk doing so. When we discover how easy it is, our anxiety diminishes.
- How much easier is it to support a person when a whole team pulls together to do so?
- When there is only one person supporting you, it is a much bigger risk than when the whole team is there for you.
- Some projects cannot be supported by only one person. If it is supported by only a few people, it may cause great strain on the individuals or the system. When a whole team or organization comes together to support an initiative, the initiative seems to fly effortlessly.

Facilitation Note

These activities should be done before doing any activity where spotting is needed. This allows participants to help keep one another safe and establishes a shared language that the facilitator can use when spotting is needed. If participants show true panic or are unable to lean even partially in any of these activities, the facilitator should consider it a "red flag." Trust for such a person is a *major* issue, and it may surface as an obstacle in other activities.

Group Lift also serves to show a group how to "carry" and pass a person as a team. This is useful when doing some low ropes-course initiatives.

Activity: Tubular Frenzy

Overview

Tubular Frenzy challenges your team's ability to think critically, be creative, and work through differing ideas for success. The team must attach a series of rings to a post without entering the circle around the post or touching the rings at any time. This activity creates excellent conversation about decision making, stress, and creativity.

Set Up

Props

- 1 Spiderweb stand
- 5 Brass rings (various sizes)
- 1 Eyebolt
- 8 20-foot ropes
- 1 75-foot rope
- 1 5-10 lb. sandbag

Begin with the Spiderweb stand. Using the T-nuts in the stand, attach the eyebolt about halfway up the stand. The T-nut can be found at the bottom of the stand. Slide it up for the correct positioning. Next, hang the rings on the eyebolt and use the 75-foot rope to create a circle around the stand 10 feet in diameter. Place the sandbag on the arm of the stand and eight 20-foot ropes on the ground outside of the circle.

Instructions

This activity challenges the team to find a way to thread all of the rings onto the stand at the same time using only the ropes as a resource. The following rules apply:

1. Participants may not step inside the circle.
2. Participants may not touch the rings.
3. All participants must be involved in the process.
4. All the rings must be lowered at the same time.

Consider a time limit to increase the challenge for your group.

Sample Story Line

Your team has been traveling west in covered wagons. At nightfall, everyone circles their wagons around a center pole that gives enough light for all to get their evening chores done. Tonight there is a storm brewing and the wind is getting stronger by the minute! Knowing that this center pole is anchored deep into the ground, everyone needs to get their wagon staked to this pole before the storm arrives. You have been given rings in which to anchor your wagons and they must go over the pole (the pole must be in the center of the rings).

Facilitator: At this point, follow the instructions as presented.

Reflection

Our reaction to a lack of time and limited resources often results in chaos, and chaos usually causes conflict. This activity provides participants with an opportunity to discover that open communication, feedback, planning, and cooperation can result in a shared vision, order in a work situation, and an efficient work environment.

Take some time to process the following questions with your group.

Discover

- What was your initial reaction (thoughts, feelings) to the activity? What resulted from these reactions? What do these types of reactions have to do with creating conflict in our lives?
- How did your thoughts, feelings, and reactions change over the course of the event? Which of these changes contributed to efficient planning and the overall success? How did these changes impact conflict or potential conflict?

Activity: Tubular Frenzy

Connect

- Can you recall a time at work or school where you reacted to limits on time or resources in positive and effective ways, just as you did here? What did you value about yourself and others then? What supported your ability to react as you did? How did it facilitate cooperation and collaboration?
- Describe very specifically how cooperation and collaboration were important in this activity. What specific perspectives, behaviors, and attitudes were vital for this collaboration?
- If your initial reactions were “panicky” and then become more effective, what caused the change? How can you develop the considered reaction to be your initial reaction in the future?
- Getting all the wagons staked was important. When did it become apparent it needed to be a team effort?
- How did you make sure all wagons were staked? How did feedback come into play?

Create

- What personal assets were important for the team’s success? How can these same assets be used when working on a task or project at work or school?

Activity: Tunnel of Traps

Overview

Tunnel of Traps is a classic communication activity that requires participants to send clear messages, instructions, and commands in order to keep their teammates safe and successful. The play area is littered with obstacles, including live mousetraps. Teams of three work to navigate one blindfolded member of their trio through the tunnel of traps without stepping on any of the obstacles. This activity will have teams re-evaluating the assumption that communication is an easy thing to do well!

Set Up

Props

- 2 12-foot ropes
- 1 Blindfold for each participant
- 30–50 objects (You may use lightweight mousetraps, stuffed animals, balls, or any other creative and safe obstacle.)

Use the ropes to create the play area. Lay them out, 15–20 feet apart, and evenly scatter the objects between the ropes. If you are using lightweight mousetraps (like those provided in the MTC Conflict Resolution Kit) make sure you set them with care.

Require participants to wear closed-toed and closed-heeled shoes if you are playing with live traps.

Instructions

1. Divide your group into teams of three, and evenly direct teams to opposite ends of the play area. Provide one blindfold per person.
2. Next, ask participants within each team to take on a role for the first of three rounds. Role 1 is the “truster,” role 2 is the “communicator,” and role 3 is the “observer.”
3. The truster is blindfolded and guided safely to the edge of the obstacle field.

4. The basic premise is that within each team, the communicator must guide the truster from one end of the tunnel of traps to the other without setting the traps off (stepping on the objects in the play area) or touching any other player.
5. The truster is blindfolded, and only verbal cues may be used by the communicator to direct her/him through the tunnel. The communicator may not enter the tunnel or move from the side that he/she started from.
6. If a truster touches an obstacle or another player, the truster may remove his/her blindfold and safely leave the play area. At this point, you may choose to allow the same player to try again (and time begins again), or impose new restrictions on the process. For example:

A truster loses his or her ability to speak, a communicator loses his or her ability to speak (or other chosen communication), or 10 seconds is added onto the time

7. The observer may not speak or interact with the other members of their team. The observer’s job is to gather data about what is and isn’t successful, and to keep track of how long it takes the truster on her/his team to make it through the tunnel. The observer may move around the play area to gather data, but may not interact or interfere with what is going on.
8. Ensure teams switch roles so everyone has a chance to engage in each role.

Sample Story Line

Your team has been selected to accomplish an extremely important and sensitive mission collecting data that will help others communicate effectively in high-risk environments where time plays an important factor. The data has been located deep inside a tunnel that is wired to keep it from the world. Past attempts to gather the data have provided vital information. The tunnel is pitch black and light sensitive. There are traps on the floor of the tunnel that, if triggered, cause mishap and misfortune.

Activity: **Tunnel of Traps**

The traps are visible on a radar screen and these can be set up at the entrance to the cave. They cannot, however, be taken into the cave. Reading the radar and communicating trap locations requires the full concentration of only one person. Data will be sent back via a highly sensitive collection device that is attached to those in the cave; it must be recorded as it comes in.

Facilitator: At this point, follow the instructions as presented.

Variations

Each team may have three opportunities to get their best time, changing roles each time and taking time to plan between each session. Then they can share their accumulated "data" on communication and conflict.

Safety

Remind group members to keep one another safe both mentally and physically. It is extremely important that participants put all joking aside and work from a place of trust in this activity. Keep the following in mind:

1. Blindfolded participants should walk slowly and in control while moving about the play area.
2. If using real mousetraps (lightweight mousetraps), make sure everyone is wearing closed-toed and closed-heeled shoes.
3. Participants must walk not run; no crawling or other forms of travel.

For sanitary reasons, it is recommended that you use separate, freshly washed blindfolds for each participant.

Reflection

Effective communication requires a match between the communication given and the listener's learning/receiving style. Matching your communication style to the needs of the person with whom you want to communicate can be vital in moving through conflict or in working without raising conflict.

The following questions are designed to aid you in your debrief of the activity.

Discover

- What was your experience as the TRUSTER? The COMMUNICATOR? The OBSERVER?
- Which role did you prefer most?
- What data have you brought back to share with others about communicating, especially in high-risk environments where time is a factor?
- What did you need from the guide in order to succeed?

Connect

- Observing partner, what did you notice going on during this activity?
- How is trust developed, and of what value is it to relationships and working in ways that allow you to move through conflict or work without conflict?

Create

- What valuable relationship skills did you learn and use to support your ability to negotiate without conflict or move through it when it arises?
- Can you give an example of something happening at school, work, or home right now (or coming up) that you could use these skills with? How will you specifically use what you've learned?

Activity: Tunnel of Traps

Here are some additional questions to use if you wish to explore more with your group:

- When you were in the tunnel, was there an internal dialogue going on inside your head? If so, what was it about and how did you deal with these thoughts, insights, or feelings?
- Where did feedback become important for the group? What did the feedback give to you? What made it easy to listen to the feedback?
- How was support offered throughout the activity?
- What choices were made about the path to follow and how did you make those decisions?
- In our lives, we have experiences where trust is sometimes blind. Please give some examples of this. How can the skills you used in this activity help to build trust and bring value to the relationship?

-