

TEAM BUILDING

Activity Packet



Leadership for Organizations, Clubs, & Students

Student Activities Office

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Notre Dame, IN 46556

Icebreaker Activities

All my friends

Materials: (optional) Discs or other ways to mark a place in the ground

Activity Description: Have the group stand in a circle, and designate one person to be “it.” This person starts a statement with “All my friends…” finishing the statement with some attribute, such as what people are wearing (jeans, shorts), where they are from, what TV shows they enjoy watching, etc. Everyone that has that attribute and can agree with the statement must leave their spot, moving to another spot in the circle that is not directly next to their original spot. The last person left without a spot is now “it” and must come up with another statement.

I’m blanket on your name

Materials: blanket or wall

Activity Description: Break group into two. Hide teams behind a blanket or a wall. On the count of three, one member of each team jumps from behind the blanket/wall. They need to identify the name of the other person. The first to do so correctly wins, and the loser joins the winner’s team. Game continues until all people are on the same team.

Questions and Answers

Materials: Blank note cards (enough for group)

Activity Description: Have each member write a question, any question, on a note card. The other half of the group (or everyone does both) writes an answer to a question. It does not have to make sense, and the point of the game is to make sure it doesn’t. This is a fun way to loosen up the group and get things going.

Human Knot

Activity Description: Use small groups of 6-10 people for the first round. For added challenge, you can try again with a larger group. Participants stand in a circle facing each other. Every member of the circle inserts their right hand and grabs someone else’s hand. Then they insert their left hand and grab a different person’s hand. Once everyone’s hand is intertwined, the group works together to untangle without letting go of each other. The object is to have the group standing in an untangled circle.

*Source for all preceding: Creating Excellent Organizations (Office of Campus Activities) – Drexel University

Team Building Activities

Gumdrop Sculpture

Use: teamwork, problem solving

Materials: gumdrops, toothpicks

Activity Description:

- Create a gumdrop sculpture ahead of time using candy and toothpicks. You might use a familiar sculpture or something that has meaning for the group, like the Main Building or a football.
- Divide the group into small groups of 4 people:
 - Viewer: may view the sculpture and talk with the Messenger only.
 - Messenger: may not view the sculpture and may listen to the Viewer and talk with the Builder only.
 - Builder: may listen to the Messenger and may not talk to anyone.
 - Observer: may view everything and may not talk to anyone.
- To begin, the Viewer and the sculpture should be in a separate room. The Viewer may leave that room to describe the sculpture to the Messenger. The Messenger will then relay that information to the Builder who should be in a separate room. The Messenger may receive and deliver as many messages as needed. The Observer should observe all interactions and be ready to discuss upon completion. Set a time limit for the Builders to complete the sculpture and stop the activity at that point, no matter who is finished or not.
- Sample Processing Questions:
 - How close did everybody get? Colors count!
 - What was easy or challenging about this?
 - What worked well to overcome this challenge?
 - How did the Viewers feel? Was it hard to give instructions without seeing what was needed? Or was it liberating? How did you feel about the lack of concrete feedback about what was happening to your careful instructions?
 - How did the Messengers feel? Was one-way communication difficult? Was it frustrating to envision one thing and see the Builder doing something else?
 - How did the Builders feel? Was it easy or hard to construct something with only verbal instructions and without being able to ask questions? Or did anybody feel liberated by having only instructions to follow?
 - Does anybody have personal reactions or challenges to share?
 - What does this activity tell us about our communication styles? What are the benefits of two-way communication?
 - Would it have been easier to construct something resembling the original structure if questions were allowed? What would you have done differently? What if only a certain number of questions or words were allowed? Would you have known what to ask? Would it have helped?

Loop the Group

Use: teamwork, encouragement

Materials: hula hoop, large space

Activity Description: The group stands in a circle, holding hands. One person receives a hula hoop to hang off their elbow. The object is for everyone in the group to maneuver themselves through the hula hoop then pass it on to the next person without letting go of each others' hands. You do need a lot of space for this since you don't want the hoops getting caught on anything while the people are going through them. You can require them to complete the task in a certain time frame and then shorten that time the next few times they try.

*Source: Creating Excellent Organizations (Office of Campus Activities) – Drexel University

Space Boots

Use: group planning, trust, group process, stereotypes,

Materials: masking tape/chalk/rope to make 2 lines, pair of large boots/construction paper

Activity Description: Create 2 parallel lines approximately 15-20 feet apart using the tape/chalk/ropes. All participants stand behind one of the lines. The scenario is that a group of scientists and explorers are traveling on Mars. They have encountered this river of lava (the space between the lines). The Martians left one pair of "space boots" (the group will have to use their imagination for the boots, or use a large pair of galoshes)." The groups must get everyone across the river to meet their departing space ship.

Rules:

- Both boots must be worn one time, in one direction, by each participant.
- Once a person has put them on they can walk one time across the river but cannot walk back. The boots can only contain one foot at a time and you have to wear both boots (so no three legged races).
- The group cannot "throw" the boots since there is no gravity and they would fly away.
- They cannot walk around the river because they have to meet their ship and the river is too long.
- They cannot jump across the river because it's too far.
- A penalty for starting over: there is "cosmic space dust" that can render a person blind or mute (facilitator decides who this person is).
- For safety concerns make sure you spot those going across, and don't allow people to climb on shoulders.
- During processing, focus on the planning element, the trust that is needed, how different characteristics come into play (such as size, gender, stereotypes). Discuss how it feels when we mute others sometimes just because of their differences, and we don't realize that we do it.

*Source: Creating Excellent Organizations (Office of Campus Activities) – Drexel University

Fallout Shelter

The possibility of a nuclear war has been announced and the alert signal has been sounded. You and the members of your group have access to a small basement fallout shelter. When the attack warning is announced, you must immediately go to the shelter. In the meantime, you must decide what to take with you to help you survive during and after the attack. You are outside the immediate blast areas. The greatest danger facing you is from radioactive fallout. In order to help in your decision-making, rank the following items in order of their importance to your survival in the shelter.

- ___ one large and one small garbage can with lids
- ___ broom
- ___ containers of water
- ___ blankets
- ___ canned heat stove
- ___ matches and candles
- ___ canned and dried fruits
- ___ liquid chlorine bleach
- ___ vaporizing liquid fire extinguisher
- ___ flashlight and batteries
- ___ battery-powered radio
- ___ soap and towels
- ___ first-aid kit with iodine and medicines
- ___ cooking and eating utensils
- ___ Geiger counter

Fallout Shelter Facilitator's Guide

1. Containers of water: The average person would need at least 1 quart of liquid per day. Each person should be allowed to drink according to need because studies have shown that nothing is gained by limiting the liquids below the amount demanded by the body. Two weeks is probably the maximum time needed to stay in the shelter. After that, other sources of water can be found.
2. Canned and dried fruits: Enough food should be on hand to feed everyone for two weeks, if possible. However, most people can get along on about half as much food as usual and can survive for several days without any. Therefore, this is not as important as the water.
3. One large and one small garbage can with lids: Next to water and food, the next most important concern is sanitation. Poor sanitation will attract disease and vermin. The small garbage can can be used as a toilet and the large garbage can can be used to store garbage and human wastes until they can be taken outside and buried. Burial of the garbage is important to prevent spread of disease by rats or insects.
4. First-aid kit and iodine and medicines: Useful if anyone gets hurt or falls ill, should include medicine for anyone with chronic illnesses. The iodine can be used to sterilize water.
5. Battery-powered radio: Useful for obtaining information about what is happening outside the shelter and for information on when it is safe to come out. Useful for contact with outside world.
6. Soap and towels: Useful and important for sanitation.
7. Liquid chlorine bleach: Useful for sprinkling in the toilet to keep down odors and germs; it can also be used to sanitize any water that has become cloudy and thereby might contain bacteria.
8. Matches and candles: They would help illuminate the shelter and thus make it more comfortable, particularly because there is not likely to be any natural source of light or electricity available.
9. Blankets: They would be used for heat and comfort; they would be of important but moderate use.
10. Flashlight and batteries: Useful for illumination.
11. Cooking and eating utensils: Useful in preparation and serving foods, but not essential.
12. Broom: Useful for brushing radioactive fallout off anyone who had to leave the shelter for emergency reasons before he or she reentered.
13. Canned heat stove: Useful if a heat supply is needed. However, it can be used only if there is adequate ventilation for the fumes; it could be dangerous.
14. Geiger Counter: Unnecessary. It could be used to check level of radiation outside the shelter to determine when it is safe to emerge, but the same information and more can be obtained from the radio. Also, fallout particles are visible and the radiation from them is given off quickly, so danger from radiation could be reduced by waiting twenty-four to forty-eight hours after the large particles have stopped falling.
15. Foam fire extinguisher: Useful for fighting fires outside the shelter but could not be used within the shelter because of danger from fumes.

Sample Processing Questions

- Can you and your team list twenty things that you recall learning here? It could be facts, figures, names, or steps in a process.
- Now can you categorize the items on your list? List your top five?
- How does what we learned here relate to our work back on campus?
- What applications does this information have for you as you perform your job?
- What explains someone's ability to influence or persuade team members to accept an idea?
- What are some effective ways of dealing with conflict within a team?

*Source: The 1999 Annual, Volume 1 – Training