

Teambuilder: “BLIND SITE”

Target Audience: All Teams

Purpose

“Teambuilder” PACEsetters are designed to put a select group of people into a simulated scenario in order to help the individuals grow closer together and identify as a team. The scenarios include stressors (i.e. complicated problems, time limits, resource constraints, etc.) that are used to help make the scenario challenging, fun, and educational. Each Teambuilder is designed in such a way that allows for flexibility and creativity in its execution. Feel free to experiment with them and please share the results with us at the contact information located at the bottom of this page.

Description

A scenario-based challenge which requires teams of 4/5, to elect a leader and then erect a tent to gain shelter from an approaching blizzard. As a result of the severe weather conditions, the team's leader is suffering from frost bite in both hands and is unable physically to help in the erection of the tent. Meanwhile the rest of the team is suffering from snow blindness and as a result cannot see.

Employ

Group Size: 4-5 people per group

Time: 40 - 50 minutes

Materials: 1 x one or two person tent for each team, 4-5 blindfolds (depending on the size of teams)

Introduce this as a task that requires effective verbal communication and planning. Explain the scenario that the teams are arctic explorers who have been caught in bad weather and need to erect a tent to gain shelter. Then explain that, as a result of the severe weather conditions, the team's leader is suffering from frost bite in both hands and is unable to help physically in the erection of the tent. Meanwhile the rest of the team is suffering from snow blindness and as a result cannot see.

State that each team has approximately 45 minutes to erect the tent with all but the team leader blindfolded and that the team leader can only assist the rest of the team verbally. Also state that you will be rotating the leadership so that every participant has a chance to lead.

Give each participant a blindfold (because the team leaders will take turns to be the team leader) and each team a tent. Position the teams a safe distance apart and ask everyone, except the team leader, to put their blind folds over their eyes. Once every team is ready, tell them to start erecting their tent.

During the exercise be prepared to intervene if a participant might be at risk of injury. Remember to rotate the team leader in each group so that every participant has a chance to be the leader.

Allow the group to say when they have finished; if everyone is in agreement ask them to remove their blindfolds.

Debriefing questions:

Ask how it felt to lead in this exercise?

Explore what aspect of the exercise put each of the leaders under pressure?

Ask how it felt to be led?

What leadership lessons can be drawn from this exercise?

An example of how this scenario works can be seen at the following YouTube link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_JqiiIQiDN4