

Leadership & Recreation  
on a  
Shoestring Budget



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# Sequencing Challenge Activities

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## BRIEFING, LEADING AND DEBRIEFING CHALLENGE ACTIVITIES

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### Overview of Briefing, Leading and Debriefing

**Briefing** - preparing for the activity/experience. Briefing involves establishing authority, framing the experience, presenting the Full Value Contract, Challenge by Choice, and goal setting.

**Leading** - implementing the activity. Leading will involve providing instructions for the activity, presenting the challenge, maintaining safety, active listening, and conflict resolution.

**Debriefing** - processing the activity. Debriefing involves listening and observing skills that emerged during the activity, sequencing (What?, So What? Now What? Questions for discussion), and wrapping up/summarizing the activity.

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### Briefing Challenge Activities

#### Establishing authority

- ◆ Involves making sure that the group understands who the facilitator is and why that facilitator is important.
- ◆ The facilitator is there to maintain order and safety, provide guidance and instructions, but not to solve the challenges for them.
- ◆ The bottom line is always the

facilitator.

- ◆ The first priority of the facilitator will be to ensure that everyone remains safe throughout the activity.

#### Framing the Experience

- ◆ Description and expectation of what is going to happen during the activities. Sometimes this information must be shared in advance so that participants are prepared.

- ◆ Here And Now Orientation - facilitator's duty to make sure that group stays focused on the activity and each other, not what is going on around them.
- ◆ Visualization - helping the group to visualize what they will be doing before they begin. The facilitator should encourage positive visualization of the success the group will achieve.
- ◆ Defining Language - facilitator will explain terms such as "bumpers up" and "spotting" so that participants are familiar with the terms before the activity begins.

### Full Value Contract

- ◆ Verbal (or written) contract agreed to by facilitator and participants that the following will be upheld:
  1. Agreement to work together as a group and to work toward individual and group goals.
  2. Agreement to adhere to certain safety and group behavior guidelines.
  3. Agreement to give and receive feedback, both positive and negative, and to work toward changing behavior when it is appropriate.

- ◆ In order to honor the contract, all group members must support one another. If this doesn't happen, we discount each other's participation and contributions to the group.
- ◆ The Full Value Contract will need to be brought back to the attention of the group from time to time when the facilitator sees behavior that is not appropriate.

### Challenge by Choice

- ◆ Challenge by Choice is allowing each participant to decide to what level they choose to participate in the activity.
- ◆ No participant is to be forced to participate beyond the level that they choose.
- ◆ When a participant chooses not to fully participate in an activity, the facilitator should continue to involve the participant through giving them a job.
- ◆ Alternate jobs might be spotting, setting up equipment, assisting the facilitator in observing the group, etc.

### Goal Setting

- ◆ Goal setting is important because it is difficult to fulfill the Full Value Contract if the

group does not know in what direction they are going.

- ◆ There are two types of goals: Activity goals and Spiral goals.
- ◆ Activity goals - goals that are expressed within the context of the group activities. Both individual and group goals are to be set either before or during the activity.
- ◆ At the conclusion of the activity, the group will evaluate and discuss whether or not they succeeded.
- ◆ The facilitator's role is to guide discussion with questioning and active listening for goal setting.
- ◆ Spiral goals are those things that the individual participants will choose to work on outside of the group once the program concludes.

### Leading Challenge Activities

#### Giving Instructions

- ◆ First, establish leadership voice by clearly outlining the rules for the activity. Point out any safety appropriate concerns, what equipment will be used, and use of equipment.
- ◆ Allow time for group to ask questions about the activity and provide appropriate responses

without giving them the solution to the activity.

### Present the Challenge and Maintain Safety

- ◆ Some activities will have a scenario that will need to be shared with the group. Scenarios give them a problem to solve.
- ◆ Facilitators can use their creativity to create their own scenarios or use scenarios presented in many challenge activity resources.
- ◆ The challenge should stretch the group beyond their comfort zone and require problem solving, communication and any number of other life skills in order to solve them.
- ◆ Depending on the level of risk, the facilitator may require the group to get approval from the facilitator before proceeding with their plan. This is done to insure safety and be sure that proper spotting is in place if needed.

#### Active Listening

- ◆ As facilitator, it is important to pay attention to the dialogue of the participants and remember
- ◆ As participants plan their strategy, they may have trouble

their comments so that they can be discussed during debriefing.

communicating their ideas to each other. As facilitator, there may be a need to help clarify thoughts by rephrasing or asking questions to help the participants get their message across.

- ◆ Most important will be using the participant's comments, actions, and participation to debrief the activity.

### Conflict Resolution

- ◆ Challenge activities provide an opportunity to expose people to conflict in a controlled manner and provide them with the possibility of a successful experience.
- ◆ Group conflict will be much more pronounced at the beginning of the challenge experience. As members become more comfortable with each other and progress through the stages of group formation, less conflict will occur.
- ◆ The facilitator's role in managing conflict is to make sure that the conflict doesn't overshadow the challenge experience.

- ◆ The facilitator is to monitor and intercede if the conflict begins to make the activity unsafe.
- ◆ Tactics which the facilitator must have in dealing with conflict include the following:
  - Reminding group of ultimate goal of everyone supporting one another
  - Ability to adjust if conflict cannot be resolved - move on to another activity
  - Focus on the group more than completing the activity - what did they achieve?
  - Stick to your principles - focus on the group doing things together.
  - Keep a sense of humor
  - Withhold - don't proceed until group is under control
  - Remove a group member if they create an unsafe environment
  - Don't hesitate to use anger when appropriate - don't let the group get out of control
  - Develop and encourage leadership of different members of the group.

## Debriefing Challenge Activities

### Listening and Observing Events

- ◆ While the activity is proceeding, the facilitator will be using listening and observation throughout the process. As participants work through the challenge, they may ask questions of the facilitator. The facilitator should answer their question as appropriate. Sometimes the challenge may call for the facilitator to not answer so that participants think through the question themselves to solve the problem.
- ◆ The facilitator should be aware of everything that is happening and observant of the participants in several ways: body language, comments they make, how they respond to others in the group, their interaction, etc.
- ◆ The observations of the facilitator will be used during the sequencing of the activity (What?, So what?, Now what?).

### Sequencing the Activity

- ◆ This process involves three steps of discussion about the activity.

◆ "What?" refers to beginning with the facts of what happened during the activity.

- Techniques for recalling the events of the activity: Go around - allow everyone to contribute to the debrief process; Spontaneous - allow participants to speak as they want to with some order (facilitator calls on participant); Memory Game - one person begins recalling the events in the order they took place. When someone else in the group thinks that the information was wrong, they shout "hold it!" and then they begin to recount the event as they remember it.

◆ "So What?" is the movement of discussion from actual facts of what happened to describing how the participants felt about various events that occurred during the activity.

1. The facilitator may use their observations of the group to bring up discussion points. An example might be "How did it feel when members of the group kept saying

- they didn't trust the others?"
2. This step in sequencing allows the group to evaluate their goals and determine if they are achieving those goals.
  3. The "So What?" also encourages participants to reflect on what they did well and areas in which they can improve and work on for the next activity.

◆ "Now What?" is the application of the activity and events that happened to real life situations and/or future challenge activities. Transferring learning is another term for "Now What?".

1. The application can be made to the next activity. "What did we learn from Activity X that will help us to complete Activity Y?"
2. The application can be made to real life situations. "How is this activity like things you experience in everyday life?" or "What techniques did we use today in communicating with each other that we can use in our everyday life?"

3. "Now What?" can be used throughout the day with each activity or at the end of the day as a part of the wrap up. Pulling all of the activities together and focusing on the things that happened and how they apply to life gives a real connection for participants.
4. This phase of debriefing also encourages the evaluation of the team goals and provides an opportunity for participants to set spiral goals - what will they work on personally.

Adapted from:

Schoel, J., Prouty, D., & Radcliffe, P. (1988). *Islands of healing*. Hamilton, MA: Project Adventure, Inc.

# WORKSHEET FOR PLANNING CHALLENGE ACTIVITIES

Challenge Activity:

Purpose/Goal of Activity:

Group Size Recommended:

Age Group:

Supplies:

Instructions for Activity:

Sequencing - list questions for Debriefing:

"What?"

"So What?"

"Now What?"

Needs and Goal Assessment Sheet

Name of Organization or Group

Contact Person

Date of the event

Event time and duration

Location of the event

Map Needed ? Yes No

Number of Participants

Major Reason for Event

Are there participants with special needs ?

What happens if it rains?

**The Needs**

Which of the following elements are important to this group?

Resource Management

Coordination

Balance

Effective Feedback

Confidence

Cooperation

Exploring Diversity

Decision Making

Motivation

Conflict Resolution

Timing

Group Focus

Problem Solving Skills

Team Spirit

Visualization

Play / Fun

Trust Building

Creativity

Achieving Group Consensus

Communication

Teamwork

Others \_\_\_\_\_

**The Goals**

How will we know if we have met the needs of the group?

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The most challenging detail of this event will be:

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## Techniques for Dividing Large Group Into Smaller Groups:

1. **Number off by the number of groups you need.** Ones form one group, twos form one group, etc.
2. **Colored Tokens** – have the number of tokens of different colors in a hat that you want in a group. For example, if you want groups of 5 and you have 20 people, have 5 red, 5 blue, 5 green, and 5 yellow tokens. Each person draws a token and that color is their group.
3. **Pixie Sticks** – same method as the colored tokens above.
4. **Playing cards** – if you need 4 groups and you have 40 people and you want 4 groups of 10, have 10 diamonds, 10 spades, 10 hearts and 10 clubs in a hat for them to draw. Their suit is their group.
5. **Colored pieces of paper** – same method as colored tokens.
6. **January - June birthdays in one team, July - December birthdays in one team.** If teams are uneven, choose a month and ask that month to move to the other team until you have two fairly balanced teams. This will work okay if the teams don't have to be exact!
7. **Boys against Girls** – if even and the activity is not a physical game. Examples would be the Newspaper Costume, Concept Cars, Help Me Rhonda or others that you come up with!
8. **Odds & Evens** – have group number off from 1 to whatever number there is in the group. Odds form one team, evens form the other team. If you need more than 2 teams, you can split the odds into two groups and evens into two groups.

## HUMAN SCRABBLE

**Purpose/Goals:** This activity is used to illustrate how some people are left out of participation, through no choice of their own. The goal of Human Scrabble is to teach participants the importance of inclusion and making everyone feel a part of the group.

**Group Size:** 15-30

**Age Group:** 12 and up

**Supplies:** 1. Index Cards. Write one letter of the alphabet on each card. Be sure to have one "Q" and one "U" in the set. You can duplicate popular letters such as vowels and consonants such as "R", "S", and "T".  
(Note: Masters of letters, 4 to a page, are included which can be duplicated. It is best to run on card stock and for longer wear, laminate!)

### **Instructions:**

1. The object of this game is for individuals to mix and mingle and put their card together with as many other individuals to create words.
2. As words are made, each participant will keep track of their own points. For each letter in the word they create with other individuals, each person who contributes gets that number of points. For example, if three participants have the letters "D", "O", and "G", they would each get 3 points for spelling the word DOG.
3. To create a situation where a few people will have difficulty creating words, take out the "U" and leave in "X" and "Z".
4. Allow only 2 minutes for the activity.
5. At the end of the 2 minutes, have participants add up their points.

### **Sequencing – list questions for Debriefing:**

"What?" If you achieved 20 or more points, stand up. Keep increasing number until only 2-3 people are standing? Then ask each person still stand how many points they accumulated.  
For those still standing, what was your letter?  
What happened as you moved around the room?  
Identify people with the fewest point using the same stand up method above.  
Why was it difficult for you to get points?

"So What?" How did those who got lots of points feel when they saw the letter they were given? What about those with few points?  
How did people respond to those with the "Q" or the "Z"?

"Now What?" How does this activity relate to real life? (Inclusion, Exclusion)  
What are situations that you've been in where this type of thing happens?  
How can we make sure that exclusion doesn't happen in school, clubs, etc?

## THIS?...OR... THAT?

**Objective:** To let people see how different or similar they are to each other. To help people see that they must appreciate and work with differences in order for teams to be effective.

**Procedure:** This is an active game in which people frequently move from one side of the room to the other. Push tables and chairs aside to make an open space. All trainees stand in a place from which they can freely move across the room.

Tell the participants that the object of the game is to "vote with their feet" by moving to the side of the room where they are most comfortable. You will ask them to make an either-or choice and move to be with others who share that choice. (Among 20 choices, there may be a few persons who find themselves moving or staying together.) Use the list of choices supplied or make up your own.

Label one side of the room "THIS" and the other side of the room "THAT". Ask the question, and give the participants the cue, "CHOOSE!" After the first move, repeat the process until all choices have been made.

### Discussion

**Questions:** "What do you identify with more, THIS?...or THAT?";  
"Are you more of a \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_?"

This game gives people a chance to examine their self-concepts and values, and to discover kindred spirits in places they didn't expect to find them. It's a good game to get new team members to know each other at an emotional, value-driven level. People who rebel at pencil and paper exercises generally relate well to this game.

**Materials:** A list of either-or choices.

**Approx.  
Time:** 20-30 minutes

QUESTIONS:      What do you identify with more, THIS?...or...THAT?  
Are you more like THIS?...or...THAT?

	<u>THIS</u>	<u>THAT</u>
1.	a truck	a car
2.	a dog	a cat
3.	the ocean	the mountains
4.	hunting	anything other than hunting
5.	plain M&M's	peanut M&M's
6.	football	baseball
7.	90210	X-files
8.	a truck	a car
9.	winter	summer
10.	gold	silver
11.	a BMW	a Ford Mustang
12.	Coke	Sprite
13.	Movies at theaters	Rental videos
14.	'Apollo 13' movie	'Friday the 13th' movie
15.	working in teams	working alone
16.	talker	listener
17.	motorboat	sailboat
18.	veggie burgers	beef burgers
19.	math class	drama class
20.	hotheaded	level-headed

## See Ya

This game is designed to be a get acquainted activity with a new group. It provides an opportunity to mix the group up and for them to share information about themselves in a non-threatening way while having fun.

Arrange your larger group into smaller groups of 5-7 people. Five is ideal for this activity. It is fine if groups are not all equal, but keep them fairly balanced. As the leader you will give all of the groups the same topic to discuss and determine within their group who matches that criteria in their group. Before the groups discuss the topic, they are to introduce themselves to everyone else in the group and you may give them something else to tell as well.

For example, "Everyone introduce yourself and tell what your least favorite subject in school is and determine in your group who has the biggest shoe size."

Allow time for the groups to introduce themselves, share the information you told them to share, and determine the biggest shoe size. This should take a couple of minutes. Ask to be sure that each group has determined that criteria by having the group raise their hands when they've completed the task. This is an easy visual to tell you when to move to the next step.

Once the groups have finished that step, then you will explain that the person in the group who had the biggest shoe size will be moving to a new group. In order for all the groups to move at the same time, you will use this cue to move them. You will tell the groups that when it is time to rotate the identified person to another group you will say "One, Two Three!!!" and then all the groups will say "See Ya!" Then the identified person in each group with the biggest shoe size will move to a new group, keeping the groups balanced.

If there are two people who have the same size foot or meet the criteria the same, both can move!

You may use the attached list of topics or develop your own list!

## See Ya Topics

Highest number of Brothers/Sisters

Biggest Shoe Size

Smallest Shoe Size

Highest Number of Pizza toppings you like

Highest number of shoes you own right now

Lowest number of letters in your full name

Highest number of baseball card you own

Highest number of dolls/barbies you own

Most creative Halloween Costume (group has to come to a concensus)

Person with the most missing teeth

Person with the longest hair

Person with the shortest hair

Person with the most Red on (or you can choose any color you want)

Person who has been in 4-H the longest

Person who can write with their left hand

## TEAM CONNECT

**Purpose/Goals:** The purpose of Team Connect is to explore goal setting and how to organize a group to achieve that goal. Participants are also exposed to communication skills, teamwork skills, and cooperation.

**Group Size:** Groups of 15 to 25 (as many groups as you have room for!)

**Age Group:** 9 and up

**Supplies:**

- \* Blindfolds
- \* Stop watches or watches with second hand to keep time for each group

### **Instructions:**

1. Divide group into teams of no more than 25 per team.
2. Have groups line up in single file lines away from each other.
3. Instruct groups that they are to move to a designated place and form a circle. Each person in the circle must be connected to the person next to them in some way, for example, knee to knee. No two connections in the circle can be the same. Each group's time keeper will time how quickly the group can accomplish this task.
4. Once the group is connected, the leader will check to be sure no two connections are alike. Time is recorded and the group then discusses how quickly they can accomplish that same task and sets a goal.
5. Teams then line up again in single file line and they are timed again. The same order of the circle and same connections are required!
6. To add more excitement and challenge to the activity, pull out 2-3 individuals from each group and blindfold them. Place them away from their team. The team must come up with a way to communicate with their blindfolded team members to get them back to the group and in place but no talking is allowed – only non-verbal communication. Give teams time with the blindfolded participants to plan their strategy.

### **Discussion Points:**

1. Did the team meet their goal?
2. If so, why did it work? If not, why did it not work?
3. How difficult was it for you to communicate non-verbally with those blindfolded participants?
4. What obstacles were problems in this activity? How did the team work through those obstacles?

## CHALLENGES

Objectives: Youth will be able to

- Understand the importance of human resources
- Work cooperatively as a group

Life Skills: Use of Resources

Time: ½ - 1 hours

Setting: A large area

Materials: none

Do:

- Divide the group into teams of 6 - 10 members. Several groups are needed.
- Instruct each group to come up with a challenge that they can achieve and perform better, faster, higher, etc. than the other groups. For example, a group may come up with one of the following types of challenges: We can build the tallest pyramid, We can stretch out in the longest line while holding hands, Our group can say the Alphabet backwards the fastest.
- All group members must participate in the challenge and the Challenge must be something that all the other groups could possibly do or meet (not something like "Our group has the tallest member").
- Provide time for each group to identify and practice their selected challenge.
- Each group then takes turns challenging the other groups and the other groups attempt to meet the challenges.
- Keep score of how many challenges each group meets.

Reflect:

- How did your team decide on a challenge?
- How did you utilize the skills and talents of group members to reach the group goal?
- What difficulties did your group face and how did you overcome them?
- What resources did your group have? Were they limited?

Apply:

- What situations have you been in where you had limited resources?
- How can you apply what you learned to such situations?

# **“PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER”**

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this activity is to help individuals and teams understand some different aspects of team dynamics.

## **GROUP SIZE**

4 - 8 Groups of 4 - 8 Participants

## **AGE GROUP**

12 and up

## **SUPPLIES**

8 - 100 piece puzzles

## **PROCESS**

1. Divide participants into groups
2. Hand each group a puzzle
3. Announce that the teams are competing to see which team completes their puzzle first.
4. Note: Each group's puzzle is deficient in some way (see list below).

## **DESCRIPTION OF PUZZLES**

1. Without a picture
2. With wrong picture
3. With no edge pieces
4. With all pieces spray painted black
5. 2 with pieces mixed with each other
6. Complete puzzle

## **DISCUSSION**

1. Ask each group what was “wrong” with their puzzle?
2. How did they proceed?
3. Were they frustrated?
4. How does their situation relate to team dynamics or teamwork?

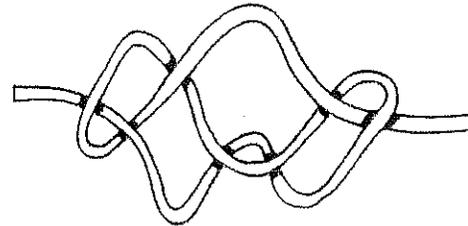


## 2. Not Knots

A natural consensus building activity to follow 2B or KNOT 2B is Not Knots. In this activity, which can be accomplished with only a single piece of webbing (in a straight line, without a water knot), a "doodle" is constructed and the group is given the choice of whether this doodle will create a KNOT or NOT A KNOT, when the ends of the webbing are pulled.

The object here is to provide the group with some tools to use when they cannot easily form a consensus. Typically, upon analysis, about half of the group thinks the doodle will form a knot, and the other half a straight line. If this is the case, ask participants to partner with another person that has a different viewpoint (i.e. one partner from the KNOT side, and one partner from the NOT A KNOT side). By learning how to listen to a person with a different viewpoint, group members learn how to cooperate. After this discussion, ask participants to choose sides, with the KNOT decision folks on one side of the knot doodle, and the NOT A KNOT folks on the other side.

At this point, it is likely that there will still not be a complete consensus within the group. Prior to slowly pulling the ends of the knot doodle, let the members of the group know that you will pull the knot doodle **slowly**, and that they can change sides at any time during the unraveling of the knot doodle (this illustrates the ability to make an initial decision, but still be flexible as more information becomes available).



# Up / Down

## OBJECTIVE:

The objective of this activity is to help groups or teams of people gain experience in teamwork, teambuilding, decision making, trust, and conflict resolution.

## PROCEDURE:

The instructions for the group is to set the pole on the ground. Have the group split into two groups facing each other (in a line or circle). At waist height have them put their arms in front of them and put out their index fingers. This is where you will set the pole, noodle, or hula hoop. They must keep their fingers in contact with the pole at all times. Their fingers must be on the bottom of the pole as well. What will happen is the pole will begin to rise because everyone will be trying to keep contact w/pole and push it up rather than down. After you see this result, remove the pole and give the group a chance to talk about the problems and work out a plan. Remember their fingers are on the bottom and they have to work as a team to set it on the ground. Put the pole back on and give it another shot. It normally takes a few tries to succeed.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. If they don't finish the task talk about the issues with groupthink and teamwork and ask if they would like to try again.
2. Process by talking about the difficulties of having everyone focused and communicating on the task.
3. Many additional analogies can be made to fit the group.

## MATERIALS REQUIRED:

You can use any thing lite, such as:

A foam noodle,

A hula hoop

A tent pole works best because it is long and you can have a lot more people involved.

## APPROXIMATE TIME NEEDED:

15 to 30 minutes

## RESOURCES FOR CHALLENGE ACTIVITIES AND RECREATIONAL GAMES

The following list of books/materials can be ordered off of the internet at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) or [www.barnesandnoble.com](http://www.barnesandnoble.com) . Many of these are also available through the American Camping Association Bookstore. Their internet site is <http://www.acacamps.org> .

- Allen, M. & Kelsche, J. (1991). *101 word games*. New York: Sterling Publishing Company, Inc.
- Barbarash, L. (1997). *Multicultural games*. Champaign, Illinois: Human Kinetics.
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- Cavert, C. & Sikes, S. (1997). *50 ways to use your noodle*. Tulsa, OK: Learning Unlimited Corporation.
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- DiSpezio, M. (1997). *Great critical thinking puzzles*. New York: Sterling Publishing Company, Inc.
- Eskew, L. (Ed.), (1988). *Quick crowdbreakers and games for youth groups*. Colorado: Group Books.
- Hamilton, B. (1986). *Brainteasers and mindbenders*. New York: Prentice Hall Press.
- Maness, R., Shackelford, K. & Washburn, D. (1995). *The playbook*. Memphis, Tennessee: Jacob Bryant Printers, Inc.
- Newstrom, J. & Scannell, E. (1980). *Games trainers play*. New York: The McGraw-Hill Companies.
- Newstrom, J. & Scannell, E. (1994). *Even more games trainers play*. New York: The McGraw-Hill Companies.
- Rohnke, K. (1984). *Silver bullets*. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company.
- Rohnke, K. (1989). *Cowtails and cobras, II*. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company.
- Rohnke, K. (1991). *The bottomless bag again*. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company.
- Rohnke, K. (1996). *Funn stuff*. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company. (Has two other volumes out as well.)