

## Team Building Exercises:

### **Human Knot**

1. Arrange group members in a circle.
2. Tell everyone to put their right hand up in the air, and then grab the hand of someone across the circle from them.
3. Everyone then puts their left hand up in the air and grabs the hand of a different person.
4. Check to make sure that everyone is holding the hands of two different people and that they are not holding hands with someone directly next to them.
5. Explain to the group that they must now untangle themselves to make a circle without breaking the chain of hands.
6. Get participants to take their time in order to limit injuries. Ask the group not to tug or pull on each other and spot participants as they pass over other participants.
7. If group members break the chain, they must then start over again

### Useful Tips

- If you have a large group, split them up into smaller groups. If there are too many people in a human knot it becomes extremely difficult.
- You can give teams a time limit on this activity to make it more challenging. You can also mute/blindfold participants throughout the activity.
- Instead of making groups start over when the chain is broken you can create penalties like blinding or muting a group member.

### Equipment

None

### Summary

Standing in a circle, group members reach across and grab other participant's hands. The group then tries to unravel the "human knot" by untangling themselves without letting go of each other's hands.

### Group Size

8 to 12 ideally. You must have at least 4 participants to play.

### Time

Total time - 20 mins

5 minute briefing and set up

10 minutes to achieve outcome

5 minutes Review

### Learning Targets

- Leadership skills
  - Working together to achieve a goal
  - Supporting and trusting others in the group
  - Persistence
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### **Scrap Tower**

Split the group into smaller teams (3-5 people). The team are given a newspaper and a roll of tape to build a freestanding tower to hold a weighted item off the ground. The team with the highest freestanding tower wins the challenge. Careful planning, identifying roles and responsibilities as well as creative thinking are essential for this exercise.

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### **Blindfold Tent Build**

The team gets 5-10 minutes to practice and sort out a plan for this challenge. They must then use one sighted person to instruct the team in putting the tent up whilst everyone else is wearing blindfolds. Excellent for developing leadership and effective communications skills.

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### **Save the Egg**

This activity can get messy and may be suitable for older children who can follow safety guidelines when working with raw eggs. Teams must work together to find a way to “save” the egg (Humpty Dumpty for elementary school students?) — in this case an egg dropped from a specific height. That could involve finding the perfect soft landing, or creating a device that guides the egg safely to the ground. Let their creativity work here.

Skills: Problem-solving, creative collaboration

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### **If You Build it...**

This team-building game is flexible. Simply divide students into teams and give them equal amounts of a certain material, like pipe cleaners, blocks, or even dried spaghetti and marshmallows. Then, give them something to construct. The challenge can be variable (think: Which team can build the tallest, structurally-sound castle? Which team can build a castle the fastest?).

Skills: Communication; problem-solving

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**\*Toxic Waste:** <http://www.wilderdom.com/games/descriptions/ToxicWaste.html>

**Manufacturing norms section?**

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### **Two Truths and a Lie**

Time Required: 15-30 minutes

**Ice Breaker and/or Communication module?**

Start out by having every team member secretly write down two truths about themselves and one lie on a small piece of paper – Do not reveal to anyone what you wrote down! Once each person has completed this step, allow 10-15 minutes for open conversation – much like a cocktail party – where everyone quizzes each other on their three questions. The idea is to convince others that your lie is actually a truth, while on the other hand, you try to guess other people’s truths/lies by asking them questions. Don’t reveal your truths or lie to anyone – even if the majority of the office already has it figured out! After the conversational period, gather in a circle and one by one repeat each one of your three statements and have the group vote on which one they think is the lie. You can play this game competitively and award points for each lie you guess or for stumping other players on your own lie. This game helps to encourage better communication in the office, as well as it lets you get to know your coworkers better.

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### **Classification Game**

Time Required: 10-15 minutes

#### **Diversity module?**

The classification game can be a quick icebreaker or a more complex activity. For the purposes of this example, we will treat this activity as a quick icebreaker. Before splitting the room into teams of four, explain the concept of “pigeon-holing someone,” **which means classifying someone as something or stereotyping someone**. It should be made clear that this type of classification is subjective and unhelpfully judgmental. Instruct the participants to introduce themselves to those in their team and quickly discuss some of their likes, dislikes, etc. After the introductions, reveal to the teams that it will be their job to discover how they should classify themselves- as a team- into two or three subgroups by using criteria that contains no negative, prejudicial, or discriminatory judgments. Examples of these subgroups can include night owls and morning people, pineapple pizza lovers and sushi lovers, etc. This activity encourages coworkers to get to know each other better and enables them to collectively consider the nature of all individuals within the team.

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