

CHALLENGE

Vol. 14, No. 5

A Herff Jones Impact Resource For Students

May, 2003

MAY CHALLENGE:

Use Teambuilding Games To Increase Leadership Skills

A LOT OF HOT AIR

This game has the purpose of illustrating teambuilding and communication skills. The time required is 15 minutes and the size of the group is unlimited.

A large supply of balloons of all sizes is necessary. Everyone is given a balloon and asked to blow it up and tie a knot in it. The challenge after being placed in groups is to bat the balloons into the air and not let the balloons touch the ground. The catch is that a participant may hit their own balloon only twice consecutively and they must hit someone else's balloon before hitting their own again. After about a minute or so, stop the exercise and discuss what happened.

Questions:

1. Did all of the balloons stay up at the same rate? The point is that some balloons, just like some people, are easier to control and deal with than others.

2. How are the balloons like members of your team? Responses could include: they come in all sizes, colors and shapes, are full of hot air, some are hard to control, you lose some of them, and it takes work to keep them together.
3. Can one person keep all of the balloons up there if working alone? It takes team work. Even though the group tended to run into each other and step on each others toes, no one minded because they were focused on the balloons and the job of keeping them in the air which was the goal of the group.



PAPER CHUTE

The groups must work together to complete this project. The supplies for each team are: 4 sheets of paper (colored paper is great for the visual appeal), tape, 4 paper clips, scissors, and markers.

A stop watch for timing is also needed. A building with 2 stories, gym or football stadium bleachers, or even a higher stepladder are needed for this activity.

There should be 4-5 members of each team. Each team will use the supplies provided to construct a contraption which will take the longest time to reach the ground. It must free fall and be self contained (no strings or other aids attached). The teams may use only the materials provided. The teams will have 20 minutes to complete the task. Each team will have 3 drops and use their best time. The timer will start when the dropper releases the contraption and stop when it hits the ground. The processing should involve discussing how working together, the team developed a better contraption.

This newsletter is a joint effort of Jackie Burch and Herff Jones, Inc.

THE “T” EXERCISE

This is a communication exercise with the purpose of getting the participants off of their favorite subject- themselves- and to learn to listen to others. The time required is 2 minutes, the size of the group unlimited, and no materials are needed.

Place the participants into groups of 5 and have one person stand and discuss him/her self and their interests or goals without using the words I, me, or my. If they use these words they must sit down and another person stands up and starts talking. Many times all of the participants are seated by the time two minutes are up. The exercise shows people how self-centered they can be during conversations.

GET ONE/GIVE ONE

This is a good review exercise at the end of a workshop. It involves all participants in a review session. The time required is about 15 minutes and everyone needs a pen and paper. Each participant lists important ideas or actions that they learned during the workshop. Then they find a partner that they do not know and compare notes. Participants add one thing to their list from their partner.



They continue to change partners when they are told. Music can be played as people move throughout the room.

DEFINING DIVERSITY

This exercise helps to broaden the participant's definition of diversity. The time required is ten minutes. The group size is



unlimited and only pen and paper are needed. This is a good exercise because people tend to think of diversity in terms of race or gender. They overlook less obvious differences such as age, geographic background, etc. This helps participants recognize that every individual is unique and that diversity issues often go beyond the obvious. Participants work with a partner to list the differences between them such as hair color, education level, state of birth, etc. At the end have several of the longest lists read to the entire group. This gets participants to think about the kinds of differences.

STORY BOXES

The purpose is to get participants to reflect on their own history and get to know one another. The supplies needed are a sheet of paper or an index card and a pencil/pen for each participant. Have each participant divide their paper into 6 squares and number them. Have them draw a symbol or picture in each box to answer the following questions. (You can also make up your own questions.)

- What was your favorite toy when you were a kid?
- Who was the teacher who was most important to you (or your hero)?
- What place would you most like to visit?
- What is something that you always wanted to try but haven't?
- What is your dream job?
- What was your favorite movie?
- What do you hope to get out of this workshop or conference?

Have the participants get into pairs and share their story boxes with a partner. Have them switch partners and share again as time permits. To process, discuss what was learned about others and yourself.



“Some people change jobs, mates, and friends, but never think of changing themselves.”