

Team Building Games

Team and leadership activities are great for taking the next step with a group of youth members and offering a challenge. The difference between these activities and divisional games is that they require more than personal skill. In order to accomplish these activities, youth members must co-operate, communicate, organise, decide, and use the skills between them in order to accomplish their goal.

These activities are ideal to develop ranking members and recognising future leaders. They can also make good discussions on team dynamics, and can be used to develop trust and gel a team in preparation for a competition or to develop a sound working relationship amongst NCOs.

It is good to blend your younger youth members into these activities to develop a co-operative division, and a chance for your senior members to take the initiative and lead the group to success.

Included Team Building Games

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Advanced Teamwork & Leadership

- Missions: The St John Secret Service

Earthquake!

Submitted by: Paul O'Connell

Equipment:

- Triangular bandages
- "Civil Defence Kit" (Ropes, stretcher, etc.)
- A 'danger zone' (tipped chairs, tables, etc.)

Directions:

- Break the group into teams of roughly 6 – 10 members.
- Explain to the teams that there has been a major earthquake and that many of the team have sustained injuries.
- Select group members to 'injure'.
- Once some injuries have been assigned, tell the group that you have been advised of aftershocks and teams are in the 'danger zone'.
- They must travel to the 'safe area' (which is could be 15m on the other side of the obstacles) without causing further injury
- Have a discussion on the activity afterwards

Possible Injuries:

- Hearing Earmuffs or plugs
- Sight Blindfold / triangular bandage
- Broken Leg Legs tied together
- Lost Limbs Arms tied to their side
- Unconscious

Variations:

While the team makes the way through the obstacles, another team in the 'safe zone' could pose as a Civil Defence Team. They have until the team arrives to set up a triage station and treat the incoming injured.

The Chocolate Marshmallow Cake

Submitted by: Paul O'Connell

Equipment:

- 1 Bucket full of balls or small items
- Circle marked around the bucket 2m out in each direction.
- Equipment for the team (at your leisure)

Briefing:

"You are standing outside an oversized chocolate cake that has been baked for the Head of Community Programmes and Engagement. However, they prefer marshmallows on

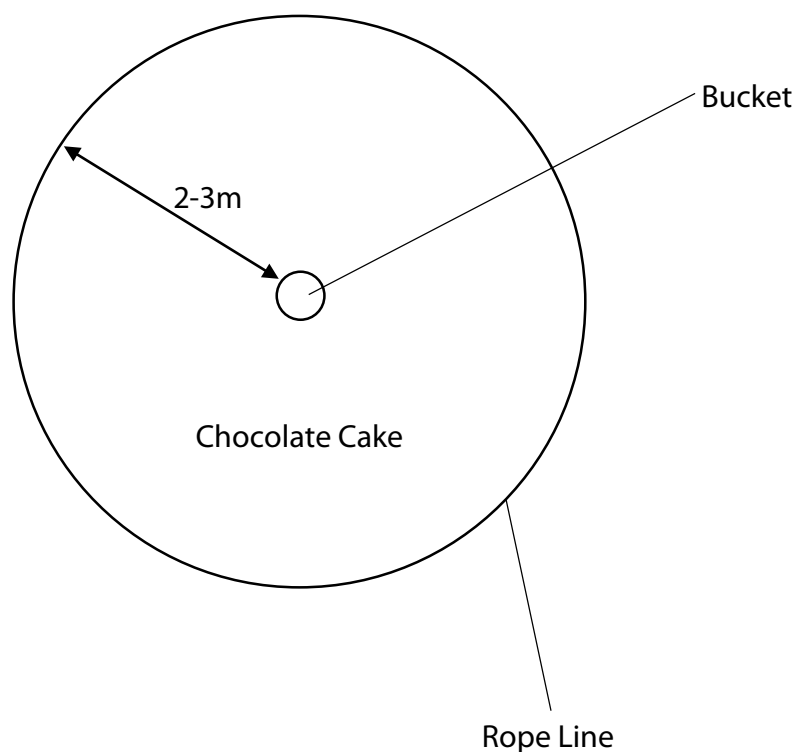
their cake, and during the process of putting the marshmallows on the cake, the container fell into the middle of the cake. You must get the container of marshmallows out of the cake in order to sprinkle them on top. However, you cannot walk on the cake as the Head of Community Programmes and Engagement will not appreciate footprints on her pudding. You may use only the equipment supplied, and anything you are carrying. You must get the container off the cake (out of the circle) before you can sprinkle the marshmallows. Ensure that there are no marshmallow fatalities”

Directions:

- The team may be supplied with ropes, elastic, or anything that you deem to help them (or hinder).

Increase the Challenge:

- Set a time limit before the Head of Community Programmes and Engagement arrives.
- Decrease the amount of equipment supplied for the teams, so they have to use their own shoe laces!
- Increase the size of the circle.
- Race against another team either after the same container, or in a separate one.
- Try a different object such as a chair with coins on them that require greater care so that the coins do not fall off.



Who Burned the Raft?

Submitted by: Paul O'Connell

Equipment:

- Chairs or pieces of cardboard
- Boundary markers

Briefing:

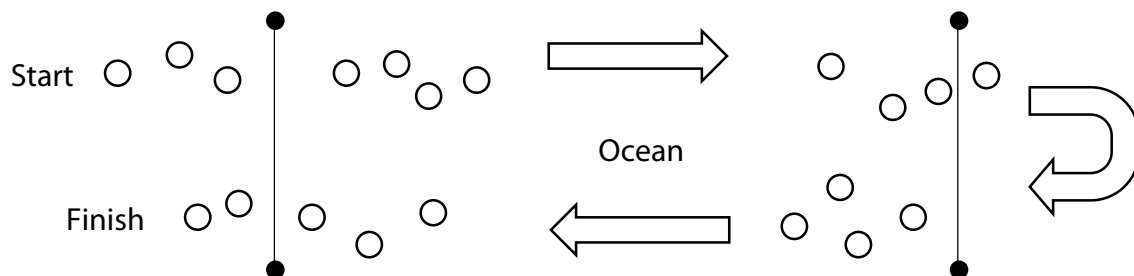
"Your team (family) lives on the opposite side of the ocean and came to this side for a barbeque picnic. You forgot to bring sauce for the sausages, and another family turned up the heat on the barbeque and burned your raft, so you cannot paddle back. In order to get back and prevent people from eating boring sausages, you and your team must get to the other side of the river, grab the sauce, and get back to the other side before the sausages get cold. Since somebody has burned your raft, you must use these waterproof stepping stones."

Rules:

- Each stepping stone has to have a body part on it when in the water, otherwise it will wash away.
- Stepping stones cannot be moved when in the water, but can be picked up and moved.

Increase the Challenge:

- Decrease the amount of stepping stones
- Set a time limit before the sausages get cold
- Add obstacles or 'mines'
- Race against other teams



Do you Trust me?

Submitted by: Paul O'Connell

Equipment:

- None

Directions:

- For this to work you need a senior group of no less than twelve senior youth members just to be safe. This is a great activity for instilling trust in a group, and the realisation of how co-operation of even little efforts mount up.
- One "volunteer" lies on the ground. The rest of the group circle the "volunteer"; five on each side, and one at the head.
- Each member puts two fingers of each hand under the "volunteer".
- The person at the head counts out so that everyone knows when to raise the "volunteer". On the end of the count, everyone slowly raises the volunteer, still using two fingers from each hand.
- Once the "volunteer" is just above shoulder height, hold them up there for a short while, and then bring them down, when the person at the head counts out again.
- It will amaze you and the group how it works, and is a brilliant discussion point on teamwork.

Variations:

- Further the experience for the "volunteer" by blindfolding them.

Safety Precautions:

- Keep yourself free to be the catcher if necessary. It is rare that incidents will occur if the group follows directions that are fully explained, and the manoeuvre is executed smoothly.

The Washing Machine

Submitted by: Paul O'Connell

Equipment:

- 1 blindfold

Directions:

- Players form up in a circle facing a "volunteer" in the circle. The "volunteer" is then blindfolded. Players in the circle put their hands out in front of them, ready to catch the person.
- The volunteer is then told, "Just fall back and let the group catch you." The group is told to stay in the same spot; but can reach out to help others next to them.

- Once the volunteer has fallen, the group can now move them gently around the circle, or in random directions. Make sure the whole group has a go.

Safety Precautions:

- Brief the group that this is not a chance to throw a person around.

Under and Over

Submitted by: Paul O'Connell

Equipment:

- 1 sturdy table per team
- 2 markers of some sort

Directions:

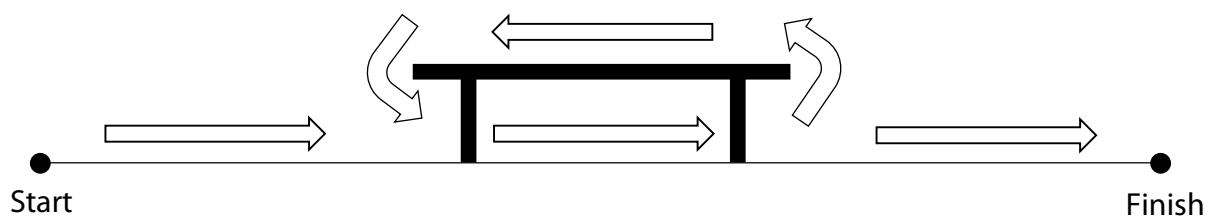
- Divide youth members into large teams of relatively equal strength.
- Teams must get their team across a river one by one
- The cadet travelling across must not touch the ground or table, otherwise they will be sent back to the start
- Other team members are allowed in the river to help the cadet cross the river as long as they are not the one being carried
- Team members crossing the river must not only make it across to the other side but must make it under the table, back over the table, and under the table again.

Increase the Challenge:

- After practice, you may like to race against teams.

Safety Precautions:

- Make sure that there is an adequate number of members in each team to support the person being carried
- Encourage participants to carry people instead of grabbing and stretching uniforms.



Constructive Criticism

Submitted by: Paul O'Connell

Equipment:

- Depends on your chosen activity

Introduction:

- These are teamwork exercises that require the team to construct something or perform a difficult action in order to achieve a goal.

Examples:

- Put up a tent blindfolded.
- Create a rope bridge across these two sturdy trees.
- Get the ball in a bucket onto a roof without touching the building.

Directions:

- Decide on the task they need to accomplish, and what equipment they will need.
- Give the team the equipment, a briefing of what needs to be accomplished with some brief guidelines.
- Provide a time limit.

Summary:

These are great in the fact that they require a large amount of communication, and decisions from the team leader in order to decide what to construct, how to construct it, using the materials provided. Great for camps when you require a large amount of time consumed.

Dr Evil's Secret Lair

Submitted by: Paul O'Connell

Equipment:

- 2 ropes or chalk
- A pair of large gumboots for each team
- Create two parallel lines with a distance of 10m

Briefing:

"You are a team assigned with the mission of discovering Dr Evil's secret lair. On your approach to the lair you were captured by the enemy and put in a cell. One of your team members picked the cell and your team must escape. To get out of the secret lair, the entrance is covered by a sea full of mutated sea bass with lasers on their heads. Luckily one of your team members brought his trusty 'sea bass-proof boots'.

Rules:

- The boots protect the wearer from the sea bass
- As part of the boots special ability, they can only be worn as a pair by one person and only once
- They can only travel in one direction per person
- They cannot be thrown over the pit - otherwise they will lose their special ability

Solution:

- The solution will require at least one or more players to 'piggy-back'

Safety Precautions:

- Watch for unsteady crossings or risky loads.

Increase the Challenge:

- Have only one boot (for real experts!)
- Race against teams

Tarzan Impersonators

Submitted by: Paul O'Connell

Equipment:

- Rope
- Tree
- 4 markers
- Tie the rope so it is dangling from a sturdy branch of a tree (so that someone could swing on the rope without the branch breaking)
- Set up the markers roughly 1.5 – 2m out from the rope in each direction (see diagram)

Briefing:

"You are all Tarzan impersonators and have been walking around seeing the sights. You came across a dangling vine and a little girl has bet you that your team cannot swing across the swamp. A crowd has gathered to watch your flight, so the pressure is on. You must get your whole team of Tarzan impersonators to the other side in order to please the crowd and win the bet. There is one problem: the vine that you are all to swing on is dangling in the middle of a swamp of crocodiles. You must retrieve the vine and swing to the other side without touching the swamp as there are children in the crowd and it will give them nightmares if you are eaten by a hungry croc."

Directions:

- Keep the vine from swinging - the team may be supplied with equipment to retrieve the vine.

Increase the Challenge:

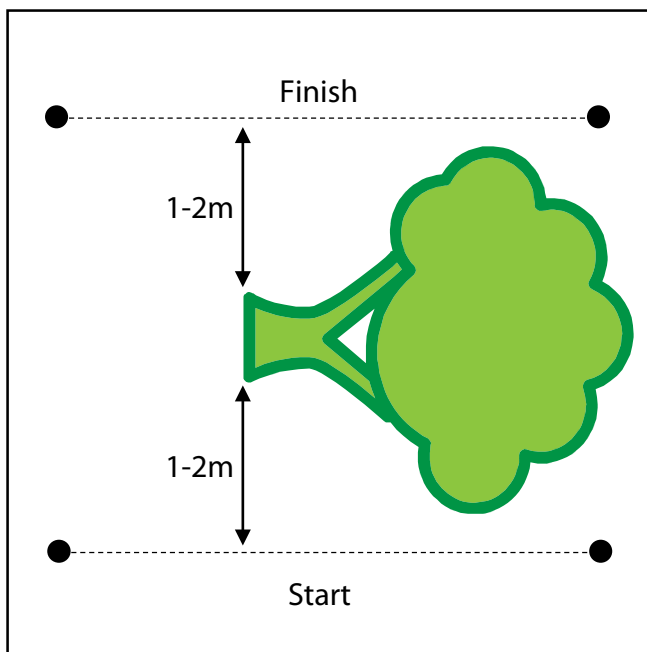
- The solution will require at least one or more players to 'piggy-back'

Safety Precautions:

- Watch for unsteady crossings or risky loads.

Increase the Challenge:

- Have a timed effort between teams
- Tie a heavier rope to the tree so that it is more difficult to retrieve
- Increase the size of the swamp



Advanced Teamwork & Leadership

Missions: The St John Secret Service

Submitted by: Paul O'Connell

Missions are a useful tool for an advanced group to challenge them in various areas. They require a higher degree of leadership, co-operation, skill, and communication. There are no rules for these, as basically anything goes. Missions can require a lot of thought and preparation, and sometimes they don't. However, the more preparation, the better it will be, and the longer the activity will run. They usually work best in teams that compete against each other, but if you have a small group, youth members versus leaders can be fun as well.

An entire manual could be done on possible missions, but there is one process to go through in order to plan your mission.

The Setting:

As with most team activities, there needs to be a scenario. This makes it more interesting and enjoyable for the participants. Some catastrophe or natural disaster usually works best.

| | |
|--------|--|
| Cadet | "What's the point in travelling over to the opposite side of the hall on chairs?" |
| Leader | "Because both sides are an island with radioactive goo in between, the chairs are goo-proof, and the island you are now standing on will explode in 10 minutes." |
| Cadet | "Oh." |

However, missions can have a more complex storyline / plot. We'll say that the participants work for a government agency called the St John Secret Service. They can receive transmissions from HQ anytime, for any purpose, and believe it or not, messages self-destruct once read. The world is now your oyster to throw any task at them in order for them to stabilise world peace!

The concept of a mission is giving a team a themed objective and them fulfilling it. It can be made interesting through several ways, but it is best if they have no choice to do it, or simply due to the fact that they can't wait to get out and do it. Your setting will decide whether the activity will be a success or a failure.

To motivate the team you could have a villain of some sort, usually a leader. It is quite a role playing activity, but you must be careful that it does not get out of hand. The villain

can be a spy, super villain, or something that you have seen out of a movie. You could leave the mission as a surprise, or you could advise the group well before the start of the activity that there is a guerrilla group in the area and advise them to be careful when out and about during the night!

The Motivation:

The next thing you need to do is create some motive for the participants to get involved. This can be done through many ways. "Kidnapping" a youth member is an effective method, but be careful who you pick. You could do this by quietly taking them out during an activity, so that people don't realise that they are missing until they receive a ransom note, or you could go in and capture them yourselves! (An imaginary youth member could work as well.)

The Briefing:

This is when you tell the teams what they have to do in order to succeed. This could be done through a ransom note, PowerPoint presentation from HQ, dropping a radio or cell phone off when you capture a participant, a note explaining the villain's intentions, or if you're really prepared, a video message from the villain!

The Mission:

This is what the cadets have to do. Think about this carefully. The more they have to do, the longer the activity will run, and also, the more clearly explained information they need. This could be...

"We have captured one of your team members. Here is a list of things you need to take to the 'x' mark on the map..."

(e.g. 3 full jerry cans, a stretcher, 3 cups of coffee for the leaders, etc.)

"A bomb is hidden in this hall and will explode in 10 minutes. You must find the bomb, and deactivate it"

"A top St John Secret Service official is arriving in 30 minutes. You must prepare a reception for this visitor including toasts, a three course meal, some sort of entertainment..."

There is a range of possibilities, depending on your 'plot'.

Clues are a good idea as well. Your villain could be very cruel and 'toy' with the team by offering riddles or photos of their next location. The team may only be in a small area, except they have to run around all over the place in order to find their briefing or succeed in their mission.

Points:

Missions do not necessarily have to be goodies versus baddies. Incorporate them into your competition training to encourage a good work ethic when working under pressure. You can also integrate them into badges that you are doing, for example, a natural disaster as part of the Civil Defence badge.

Concentrate on a specific focus for the mission. If you want to work on a leader who needs more assertiveness, design the briefing so that it nominates them as the leader, and make the mission have various tasks to be completed at the same time for the leader to delegate.

Safety Issues:

- Have some sort of signal for the end of an exercise. This is a good failsafe if an accident occurs or to get the cadets minds out of their 'role' as their imaginations can run away on you. Missions can easily get out of hand, especially when participants start capturing leaders in order to swap prisoners!
- Be realistic about fun and the tasks that you expect cadets to do.
- You will probably need to complete an Activity Intention form and a Risk Analysis and Action Planning Form, these can be found in the resources area of the youth website.
- Do not leave participants unsupervised – especially at night
- They must stay as a group
- The more "corny" the scenario, the better. Your villain could have stolen the world's supply of cornflakes in his diabolical quest to make the only morning meal toast.