



GET TO KNOW YOU ACTIVITY

Aims of the activity

An introductory activity which enables participants to mix, mingle and learn some interesting facts about one another. Works especially well with large groups and useful for celebrating diversity.

Group Size: 20 +

Time: 10-15 minutes

Equipment or props: None

Venue: Large space

Risks / Control measures: Participants should walk to their respective groups so they are aware of other people. Promoting social inclusion - if the students are asking questions of you or each other as they respond to each category that is a good thing and it is important to let this happen.

Brief description

Ask your group to organise themselves into smaller groups, based on different criteria (such as number of siblings, favourite colour, etc.)

Key notes

1. Ask the large group to separate themselves into smaller groups which you are about to announce. Call out a "category" using any of the suggested questions below (or make up your own).
2. Allow participants enough time to say hello and mingle and chat before announcing the next category (anywhere from 5 seconds to 30 seconds, depending upon the category).
3. Once everyone is organised into their groups, ask each group to identify itself (optional). Make a brief comment or ask each group a question.
4. Keep things moving by asking participants to walk around before announcing the next category.
5. Repeat steps one and two. Continue with the categories while observing how the students are interacting with each other.

Two categories

- Fold your arms across your chest. Is your right or left arm on top?
- When you clasp your hands together and fold the thumbs across the top, is your right or left thumb on top?
- Which leg do you put into your trousers first?
- Which eye do you prefer to wink with?
- Can you roll your tongue? (yes/no)

Three categories

When licking an ice cream cone...do

1. Twirl the cone clockwise
2. Twirl the cone counter-clockwise
3. Lick up and down?

If you could be a London taxi cab, sports car or 4x4 Land Rover what do you think you would be?

Many categories

- What is your favourite season?
- How many siblings do you have?
- What colour are your eyes?
- What's your shoe size?
- What type of shoes are you wearing?
- What's your favourite colour?
- What's your star sign?

Review Ideas

Your Outward Bound course is an exciting opportunity to get to know yourself better, learn something new about your friends and get to know others. Why is it important to interact with other people, especially while you are on your Outward Bound course? Open mindsets / Social awareness / Accepting differences / Living in a multi cultural country / Mixed demographics.



KEYPUNCH

Aims of the activity

A problem-solving initiative, to highlight the value of continuous improvement (Plan, Do, Review process) successful act of repeating a task multiple times.

Group Size: 10-30 (can split main group into 3 groups to add a competitive element to the activity)

Time: 45minutes – 1 hour (5 mins set up, 5 mins initial briefing, 30- 40 mins of activity time / 4 attempts, 10 mins discussion)

Risk / Control measures: Appropriate venue choice .i.e. grassy field.

Equipment Required: One boundary rope approx 30 metres long, 30 rubber spots (or carpet squares or paper plates) numbered 1-30, one cone or more cones. Stop watch.

Summary

Participants must touch the randomly placed numbers, in sequence, one at a time in the restricted area within a given time frame. Multiple attempts being allowed.

Set-up

Before the group assembles, spread out the numbered spots within the boundary rope so that consecutive numbers are spread far apart from one another. To the casual observer, these should seem to be placed in a random fashion. This will form your keypad. Place a cone as a starting/ending point approximately 10metres away from the keypad.

Activity Instructions

1. With your group assembled and standing behind the starting point, explain to the group that there is a computer virus and the team must punch in the correct code or the entire data base will be lost! Optional variation in briefing to create a greater sense of role play by shaping the story line: 'a computer virus has infected the entire network of the organisation/ government and your team has been flown in to disarm it'.
2. In order to disarm the computer system, only one member of the team can enter the "restricted area" press the keys (spots) on the keyboard in sequential order from 1 to 30, and get out of the restricted area in the quickest possible time. If any keys are touched out of order, the board is "re set" and the group must begin again at number 1.
3. The group has a total of 4 attempts to disarm the computer virus, time for each attempt beginning when the first person in the group moves past the starting cone on their way to the keypad and ending when the last person arrives back at the cone.
4. At the end of 30 minutes, the best time banked BY THE GROUP will disarm the computer.

Key notes

1. The first attempt will be much longer as the group has not even seen the keyboard up to this point. Successful groups often use either the first or second attempt to truly study the situation and attempt multiple solutions while letting the clock run.
2. Key learning points for the group: they realize that all can be involved rather than just one person; that they can touch the keys with hands as well as feet; most significantly, that they can slow down and use one of their attempts to study and practice. (Don't tell them this; this is for you to know and for them to discover).
3. Key team skills: making sure all ideas are heard; involving all members in the process and solution; solving a problem under pressure.

Review Ideas

Front load the review by talking about PLAN (The structure and information about the task), DO (Action), REVIEW (Improvements to be more successful next time) as a team / individual how do you approach a task and what processes are important to consider:

What was the initial reaction of the group? / How well did the group cope with this challenge? / What skills did it take to be successful as a group? / What creative solutions were suggested and how were they received? / Did everyone listen to each other's ideas? Communication methods / What roles did people play? Leadership qualities / What key factor led to an improvement in time? / How motivated were participants to continually improve the time after initial success at the task?



FUN GROUP GAME - GIANTS, WIZARDS AND ELVES

Aims of activity

Fun chasing game with suspense, laughter and exercise. An engaging game to spark groups to be physically and mentally alert.

Group Size: 12 +

Time: 15 – 20 minutes

Equipment required: A large space, three ropes to mark a central line and the safe zones.

Risk / control measures: Important consideration: Participants should be dressed for exercise i.e. appropriate footwear and physically warmed up for short bursts of fast running

Brief Description

A creative team variation of "Rock, Paper Scissors"

Giant (arms up, roars) beats elf

Elf (hands to ears); elf beats wizard

Wizard (waves wand & "kazaam"); zaps giant.

Key notes

- Teach everyone the following three characters:
 - **Giant** - Tip-toes, raise hands above head, curl fingers, growling sounds
 - **Wizard** - Crouch slightly, wave and point a magic wand, shouting "kazaam!"
 - **Elf** - On haunches, hands cupped for big ears, shrill screeching noises
- Give people plenty of practice by calling out the characters and having them instantly become that character - offer lots of positive encouragement for dramatic effort.
- Form two teams - each team convenes to decide on a character
- Teams then line up facing each other (use a rope on the ground to separate teams).
- Have 2 metres between teams on central zone/line.
- Facilitator dramatically announces "1....2.....3.....", teams adopt their poses, revealing their identity
- Immediately, the winning characters (team) must chase the losing team and try to capture (tag) as many as people as possible. Integrity is key.
 - **Giant wins by 'squishing' an Elf**
 - **Elf wins by 'outwitting' a Wizard**
 - **Wizard wins by 'zapping' a Giant**
 - **(Identical characters are a draw)**
- The losing characters try to reach a "safe zone" (e.g., over another rope) about 10 – 15metres away without being captured.
- Teams then reconvene and decide on their next character.
- Continue until one team entirely consumes the other or in an allotted time frame.

Variations

- Superheroes, e.g., Spiderman, Superman, Wonder woman

Review ideas

How do you get ready, making sure that you are fully aware mentally and physically of what is happening around you? Important to get the most out of an experience / lesson or socially.

What motivates you as an individual?



COMMUNICATION ACTIVITY - USING SOUNDS

Aims of the activity

Releases energy. Loud, fun, chaotic, then gradually order and unity. To highlight effective ways of communicating within a team (explore this in the review).

Group size: 10 +

Equipment: Blindfolds (optional)

Time: 10-15 minutes

Risk / Control measures: Be prepared to shepherd people away from danger. Usually people are very safe with many not moving very much and focusing on listening and calling out to others.

Note: Consider possible cultural issues if animals are used (sacred or offense sounds)

Brief Description

Participants are blindfolded and assigned a sound. The challenge is to use these individual noises in order to meet up with sounds of the same kind.

Key notes

- Hand out blind-folds and help people to blind fold one another. Alternatively, ask for eyes to be closed.
- Explain that each person will hear a whisper of a sound needing to be made. Move around the group, giving each person the name of a sound to be generated for example from the list below.
- The challenge will be to find all other sounds of one's own kind.
- No-one can talk, and can only make the sound they have been given.
- Usually very loud chaos ensues, gradually order and unity emerges as everyone finds one another from the sounds.

List of possible sounds (suggest that you have approximately 3 types of sound)

- **Wolf** / Cat / **Pig** / Kangaroo / **Snake** / Lion / **Crow** / Monkey / **Frog** / Ant
- Ocean / **Fire** / Wind / **Earth (Rocks)**
- Clap / **Stamping feet** / Clicking fingers / **Whistling** / Creaking door

Review

Why is communication so important? Discuss approaches to verbal and non-verbal communication (expression of body language).

What three techniques can you use to effectively communicating with each other when a team?

When you are on your Outward Bound Course it will be important for everyone in your group to express and share ideas i.e. it is not just about the loudest individuals being heard.

- Sending
- Receiving and
- Understanding (Three components to effective communication)



TEAM EXERCISE - HELIUM STICK

Aims of the activity

Deceptively simple but powerful exercise, for learning how to work together and communicate in small to medium sized teams.

Group Size: 6 to 12 (2 rods or hoops in use at the same time).

Equipment: Long thin cane / rod or hoola hoops (group can see each other).

Time Total time: 25 minutes

- 5 minute briefing and set up
- 10-15 minutes of active problem-solving (until success)
- 10 minute discussion

Risk / Control measures

Group needs to keep control of the stick – brief students to watch out for eyes and face.

Brief description

Form two lines facing each other. Lay a long, thin rod on the group's index fingers. Goal: Lower to ground. Usually in reality when they start the activity it rises.

Activity instructions

- Line up in two rows facing each other.
- Introduce the Helium Stick- a long, thin, lightweight rod or cane.
- Ask participants to point their index fingers and hold their arms out.
- Lay the Helium Stick down on their fingers. Get the group to adjust their finger heights until the Helium Stick is horizontal and everyone's index fingers are touching the stick.
- Explain that the challenge is to lower the Helium Stick to the ground.

Key notes

The catch: Each person's fingers must be in contact with the Helium Stick at all times. Pinching or grabbing it is not allowed - it must rest on top of fingers.

Reiterate to the group that if anyone's finger is caught not touching the Helium Stick, the task will be restarted. Let the task begin....

- **Warning:** Particularly in the early stages, the Helium Stick has a habit of mysteriously 'floating' up rather than coming down, causing much laughter. A bit of clever humouring can help - e.g., act surprised and ask what are they doing raising the Helium Stick instead of lowering it! For added drama, jump up and pull it down!
- Participants may be confused initially about the paradoxical behaviour of the Helium Stick.
- Eventually the group needs to calm down, concentrate, and very slowly, patiently lower the Helium Stick - easier said than done. After 10 minutes the groups may start to lose interest / positively enforce focus and purpose.

How Does it Work?

- The stick obviously does not contain helium. The secret is that the collective upwards pressure created by everyone's fingers tends to be greater than the weight of the stick. As a result, the more a group tries, the more the stick tends to 'float' upwards.

Review ideas

- What was the initial reaction of the group?
- How well did the group cope with this challenge?
- What skills did it take to be successful as a group?
- What creative solutions were suggested and how were they received?
- What would an outside observer have seen as the strengths and weaknesses of the group?
- What other situations (e.g., at school, home or work) are like the Helium Stick?

TEAM CHALLENGE - STEPPING STONES

Aims of the activity

To introduce the idea behind working together as an effective team.

Group size: Suggest groups of 10 – 12.

Equipment: 12 x (1 each) Wooden blocks approx A4 paper size or mats / carpet samples.
Markers of some kind i.e. 2 x ropes

Time: 3 minutes to brief activity to students, 10 – 15 minutes activity time, 5 minutes to review. **Venue:** Space with flat floor or ground.

Risk / control measures

Should be wearing suitable shoes

Brief Description

The whole team must travel safely across from one side of the river to the next, away from danger. Use stepping stones as a way of bridging the gap.

Activity instructions

Your team are stranded one side of a river and surrounded by the flood water.

You must get out of there quickly.

Using the stepping stones provided as your resource, your whole team must travel from one side to the other while crossing the river to safety.

Anyone who 'falls in' must start again (add a dimension of drama – river is hot chocolate and these stepping stones are marshmallows – appropriate to the age group).

There must always be contact made with stepping stones otherwise they will float away or sink.

Key Notes

Ramp up the level of challenge; if members of the team fall into the river then they must start again.

Use a technique of removing the use of an arm or of sight to make the team more aware of individual needs within the group. **Team / Task / Individual** link back into a review later.

Positive rewards – if the team are losing stepping stones then can be positively rewarded by being handed back stones (marshmallows) for individuals contributing to the team's success – i.e. helping hands or encouragement. This can be done discreetly.

Review Ideas

1. On your Outward Bound® Course, resources are going to be important in helping to have the best overall experience and for your group to be successful. Respecting resources, self and others and equipment is fundamental. How many (resources) stepping stones did you lose? How is the team going to get to the Outward Bound centre (the coach is a resource) etc....

2. What ideas were expressed as to the best way of doing it? How did you choose which ones to use? Who was directing or leading the team and were ideas heard?

3. What was it that you did that contributed to your success or lack of it? Planning vs. Doing (balance) experiential learning by reviewing what are you going to take away.

4. Your course will involve lots of times in which you have to work together and help each other.