

Group Juggling

Team Building Event



Creating Transformational Experiences
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Group Juggling

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Be Legendary

Introduction to Be Legendary and www.BuildingTeams.com

Be Legendary was founded to help organizations build successful teams through individual discovery and experience.

A **real** team requires many attributes to be successfully implemented:

- Common Goals
- Leading and Leadership
- Communication
- Trust
- Accountability
- Problem Solving
- Decision Making

As a company, we focus on every aspect of a real team. We have developed team building products and workshops to help your team successfully implement the attributes we have listed above.

We created these products to be as easy as possible to facilitate, yet powerful enough for you to achieve your desired outcomes.

You could have purchased, or may even own, any number of books on team building activities with hundreds of exercises. But, if you are like most of our customers, after looking through the book, you are left more confused than ever, wringing your hands and wondering,

*'Which one of these activities is **actually** going to work!?'*

This is where we come in and we are here to help you every step of the way.

You did not simply purchase this activity; you purchased our professional expertise. You can call and speak with any one of our facilitators about your specific needs, group, and environment. We are here to help make sure this event will work for you and to provide suggestions for tailoring it to fit your team's needs.

There may be times when all you need is to talk to someone and be reassured that the activity **will work**. We are more than happy to do this as many times as necessary until you feel completely confident with your choice and with facilitating the exercise.

This is the same approach we take with our own workshops, so you may want to consider giving us a call for your next training event, retreat, meeting or conference to find out how we can help you.

Make it a great day!

Be Legendary Facilitative Staff

Group Juggling

Complete Instructions to Run a Successful Event



Purpose

Most of our jobs involve heavy amounts of juggling. We also come up against significant barriers, which must be broken through in order to increase performance. In this event participants will juggle as many items, as fast as possible, without dropping them.

This team building activity simulates a working environment where chaos rules, people are going many different directions, and lots of energy and resources are used to keep all the plates spinning.

Participants identify what is needed to break through self-imposed limitations, think creatively, and focus on the most efficient way to complete tasks.



Length of Exercise and Short Agenda

Total time needed is approximately 30 to 45 minutes and should not exceed 60 minutes. The duration depends largely upon how quickly your group accomplishes the task and how much discussion is generated.

- 5 Min. Introduce activity & cover ground rules (if any)
- 15 Min. Activity
- 20 Min. Group discussion
- 5 Min. Wrap up and set expectations – Miracle 10%

The discussion is the most important piece of this agenda as that is where the knowledge learned in the activity is transferred back to life, work, etc.

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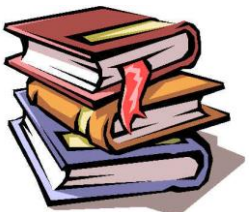
Safety Tips

- Make sure everyone tosses the ball underhand – look at your teammate when throwing and catching.
 - Make sure all objects are soft (if you add any) and will not hurt someone if (when) contact is made.
 - Encourage participants not to toss the object near the face of the receiver.
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Equipment You Will Need

- 10 – 15 soft objects of different size, weight, and shape, such as:
 - Nerf balls
 - Koosh balls
 - Stuffed toys
 - Beach balls
 - Tape balls
 - Tennis balls
 - Footbags
 - Rubber chicken
-



Storyline

It is the end of the quarter and there are many things to be done before the end of the day. You have a number of projects that must be passed to other people in order to be completed. You have decided as a group to get together in one room and try to complete the tasks more efficiently.

Alternative

You have a mountain of paperwork that must be signed by your colleagues, supervisors, and manager. Your work group begins the traditional end-of-the-quarter crunch session and attempts to complete all the tasks before it in one tremendous, concentrated effort.

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Setup

1. Have participants arrange themselves in a circle an arm's length apart.
 2. Everyone puts up a hand and you throw the first object to a person across the circle from you. This person puts his or her hand down and then throws the object to another person in the circle. Each person continues to toss the object to another person who still has his or her hand up. Make sure the participants remember whom they threw the object to as the group is establishing a pattern to use for the rest of the exercise.
 3. When the last person to have his or her hand up receives the object, he or she throws it back to you and the pattern is finalized.
 4. Test the pattern one time to make certain everyone knows and remembers it.
 5. Begin the pattern again, but add a couple of new objects and let the circle finish. Note how long it takes the group to complete the pattern.
 6. Continue to add objects as you see fit. The quicker the group is able to keep up with the objects, the quicker you should add more objects. Once you have added all the objects you wish, tell the group you are going to time their effort.
 7. After you time them once, tell the group to try and beat their record by 25%. Encourage them to brainstorm and strategize ways that might help them become faster.
 - a. If they beat their time by 25%, praise them and tell them to beat it by another 25%.
 - b. If they did not beat their time, encourage them and ask them to try again.
 - c. Either way, this time throw in the rubber chicken as the last item.
 8. Sitting down on the floor, if possible, is a nice way to facilitate the debrief and finish the exercise.
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Variations

- ✓ Have the participants bring gloves (medical gloves, mittens, ski gloves, knitted mittens, etc...) to use as throwing objects. Even the most athletic person will be humbled in the task.
- ✓ Tell participants to use their non-dominant hand to throw and catch.
- ✓ Have the participants say their name as they receive the object.
- ✓ Have the participants say the name of the person they are passing the object to.
- ✓ After establishing a pattern, reverse the order and see how it affects the process.
- ✓ Continue to reverse the order of passing by yelling 'Switch!' during the middle of throwing and see how often the group can switch and still control the objects.
- ✓ If you want to slow down the speed of the activity, use one or two beach balls.
- ✓ Instead of throwing the objects, try bouncing them to the next person instead (Of course the objects you use must bounce!)
- ✓ Substitute small water balloons on a hot summer day, outdoors. It is great fun!
- ✓ Add a ball called a 'Rumor' that can go to anyone at anytime and usually at blinding speed. This is particularly fun if you are using a variation where people are calling out names.

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Dynamics to Watch For:



Questions for Group Discussion

- ✓ Watch for group frustration when there is no improvement.
 - ✓ Watch the group and make sure the balls do not start flying around too wildly.
 - ✓ Does the group only try to get faster, or do they stop to plan a little before beginning again?
 - ✓ Does a leader emerge and is there space within the group plan for a leader?
-

1. Which objects were easiest to catch?
 2. Which items were dropped most often?
 3. What is the maximum number of objects “projects” your team could handle at one time?
 4. Was it easy to concentrate during this activity?
 5. Were you pleased with the performance of the person tossing the objects to you?
 6. What would have improved the efficiency of this task?
 7. If you tried to switch, how difficult was it to change the pattern you were used to?
 8. Were there any problems associated with switching?
 9. Are there times at work when you are required to juggle many items?
 10. What happens when someone drops the ball and a task you were responsible for is not completed?
 11. When something strange, like the chicken, is thrown at you, how do you react? Why?
 12. What can we learn from this exercise?
 13. What is one idea you will take away from this exercise and apply at work or home?
-

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Tips and Tricks from Our Professional Facilitators

- Keep the chicken hidden until you throw it into the circle on the last round. This is really quite funny and the activity will end with everyone laughing. If they see it, it will ruin the surprise.
- Remind participants to "Think Outside the Box". Tell the group to not place constraints on themselves that are not part of the juggling instructions.
- There are an optimum number of balls a group can handle before productivity decreases (about one item for every three participants).
- Focus on how individual increase overall productivity.
- Encourage participants to practice and note how individual skill improvements increase productivity.
- During the debrief you may want to throw the chicken to whoever is talking to keep the discussion light.
- If you need additional objects think about beanbags, plastic fruit, inflatable pool toys, pillows, and even rolled up socks.
- You might want to consider the members of your group before attempting to juggle anything unusual, like a giant plastic spider, rubber snake, or other object that might be offensive.

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Facilitative Tools

The key to a good facilitation is to let **the group** discover and learn what is appropriate for them. As the facilitator, do not try to manipulate the questioning to get the group to observe what **you** feel is important.

Below are some tools to help you with your questioning of the group. These tips will allow the group to discover their own learning without you manipulating the conversation.

Maintenance Tools

Throw-Back:

Team Member: "How can we possibly get through this obstacle?"

Facilitator: *"If it were possible, what would need to happen?"*

Share Observations:

Facilitator: *"It is very quiet. What does the silence mean?"*

Facilitator: *"It seems that not everyone is actively participating. Is there a reason for this?"*

Review Group Agreements:

It is very important to review base rules when the group becomes disinterested, when rule violations are occurring without thought, and when the group is attacking each other personally.

Facilitator: *"Remember the ground rules we discussed as we began to talk about this event." (If there are any)*

Check-In:

If a group is really struggling or people are becoming very frustrated, interrupt the activity and ask:

Facilitator: *"So what are you doing right now that is working?"*

Facilitator: *"What is not working?" "Why?"*

Accept/Legitimize/Deal With or Defer:

Create a safe environment for participation by:

Accepting an idea: Respond neutrally to a participant whose ideas are "out of synch" with others in the group

Legitimizing an idea: Discover the relevance of all contributions

Dealing with an idea: Agree together about how to move forward

Defer an idea by saying:

Facilitator: *"You're not convinced we're not getting anywhere? That's OK, you may be right. Would you be willing to hang on for 15 more minutes and see what happens? Yes? Thanks."*

"The issue you just raised sounds like it is important to you. Can we finish debriefing this event before we move on to discuss your issue?"

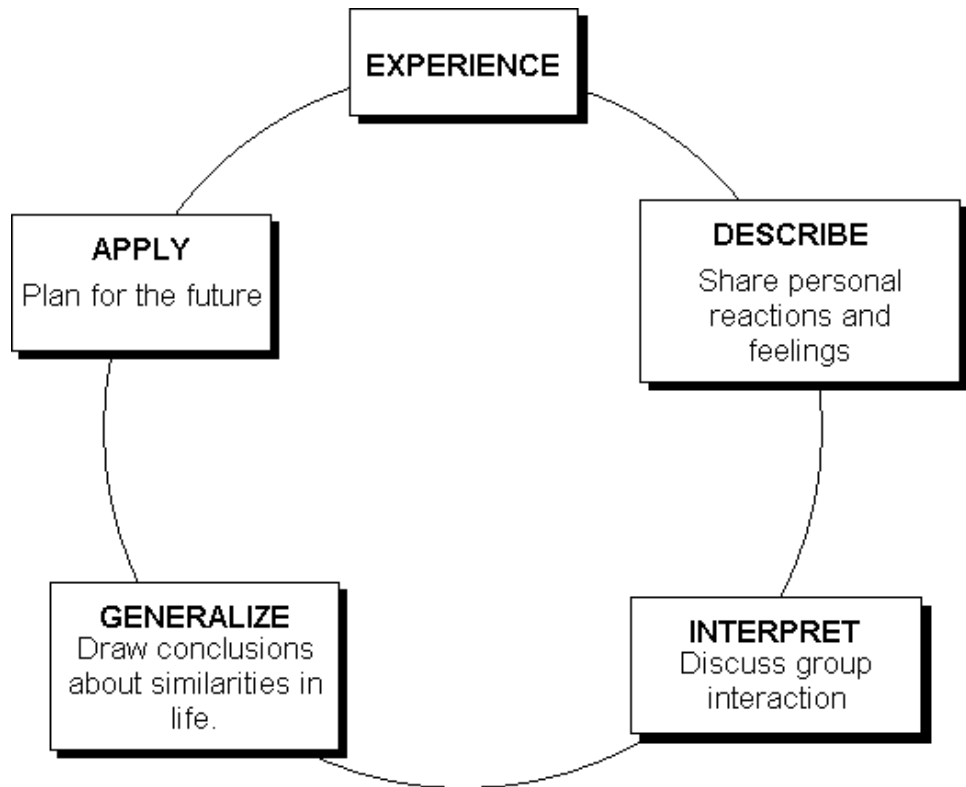
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Clarity Tools

	When You Hear:	Respond With:
Universals	All Every Never	"All?" "Every?" "Never?"
Rules	Should Shouldn't Must Can't	"What would happen if...?": "What causes or prevents...?" "Must?" "Can't?"
Non-Specific Verbs		"How specifically?"
Non-Specific Nouns	We It	"Who specifically?" "What specifically?"
Quantifiers	Too Much Too Many Too Expensive	"Compared to what?"
Statements	I Don't Know That Is Impossible	"Well, if you did know, ..." "If it were possible, what would need to happen?"

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Learning Cycle Stages



1975 Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators, University Associates

Stage 1: Experience

The experience forms the basis for the rest of the cycle. The facilitator presents an activity or game, which is specifically structured to provide an experience from which to draw relevant learning.

Stage 2: Describe

In this stage, the facilitator asks the participants about their feelings and reactions to the experience. The focus in this stage is on the individuals' feelings and experiences. Ask questions such as:

"How did you feel?"

"What did you do?"

"What happened to you?"

Stage 3: Interpret

In this stage, participants discuss what went on between group members during the exercise. Good questions to ask to help process individual reactions into collective ideas include:

"Why do you feel the way you do? "

"What caused that particular result or feeling? "

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Stage 4: Generalize

In this stage, the group generalizes their experience from this exercise and explores how the lessons might be reflected in other areas of their lives. Participants are asked to focus on situations in their personal or professional lives that are similar to those in the activity. The task is to identify similarities and state principles that can be applied to other situations. Some questions to ask include:

"What did you learn from the experience?"

"What other similar situations have you experienced?"

"How does this relate to your work life?"

Stage 5: Apply

Finally, participants are encouraged to decide on a course of action for the future. As a facilitator, ask questions such as:

"What do you want to remember from this experience?"

"What would you do differently in a similar situation?"

The Miracle 10% - One Idea for Closure

The Miracle 10%

This is quite possibly the easiest method you have in your arsenal for assuring participant buy-in regarding the process of change.

In front of the group simply ask:

"Who feels they can improve <insert topic, i.e. communication> by 10%?"

99.9% of the time, everyone will raise their hand. (This is not to say that these people are not already trying as hard as they can. They probably are, but that does not mean there is no room for improvement. Sometimes you need to make the distinction.)

"Does everyone agree that improving 10% is a reasonable goal?"

Everyone will agree. After all you are not asking for a HUGE change, just a small one. Talk about how each person's small contribution adds up to an overall large change.

"There are 15 of you here. So if each person improved 10% that would amount to a 150% improvement. What would work be like with that kind of improvement? How much better would our communication be? (Open up for discussion and create a specific list)

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“So it sounds like everyone agrees that with just a small individual effort to improve, we would all be much happier.”

“Each person then will be responsible for their own improvement. You will each need to hold yourself accountable.”

Set the right expectation.

“We all agree 10% improvement is a reasonable goal but I want you to think for just a moment what that REALLY means.”

“After we leave today, we will be expecting to see a difference in <insert topic>. But a 10% improvement means that 9 times out of 10, you will see me (use yourself as an example) doing the same old stuff I always did.”

“And the one time I actually do the right thing, you may not be around. So you may see me do the same old stuff 15 or 20 times before you actually see me improving. It is important to have trust in me and the fact that I have agreed to work on improving and that I am consciously doing so.”

“Each person here must have that same expectation and when you do catch someone doing something right, make every effort to point it out to the person who did it and to everyone else. It is hard to become tired of praise, regardless of how well you handle it.”

At the end of the workshop, you can have everyone spend 15 minutes writing out how they will improve by 10%. Simply writing “improve communication” or some other generic description is not good enough – participants must describe a specific action they will take that will result in a 10% improvement.

For example, *“When talking with others I will focus on, and listen to, what the person is saying and not on how I will respond.”*

Help participants drill down their goal behavior until they have something specific that they can act upon every single day.