



FROSTBITE!

Type of activity: Energiser; Exercise

Participants: 6-30

Timing: 45-60 minutes

Key themes: Communication, Leadership, Trust, Teamwork, Time Management

Overview

A scenario-based challenge which requires teams of 4/5, (who in this scenario are Arctic explorers who have been caught in bad weather) to elect a leader and then erect a tent to gain shelter. As a result of the severe weather conditions, the team's leader is suffering from frost bite in both hands and is unable physically to help in the erection of the tent. Meanwhile the rest of the team is suffering from snow blindness and as a result cannot see.

Pre-Work

Familiarise yourself with the instructions for erecting the tent, not all tents are the same!

Equipment and Layout

A one or two-man tent for each team; plenty of room – this is best done outdoors. If indoors, you will need a space of approximately 8m² per team.

Running the Activity

1. Introduce this as a task that requires effective verbal communication and planning.
2. Explain the scenario that the teams are arctic explorers who have been caught in bad weather and need to erect a tent to gain shelter.
3. Then explain that, as a result of the severe weather conditions, the team's leader is suffering from frost bite in both hands and is unable to help physically in the erection of the tent. Meanwhile the rest of the team is suffering from snow blindness and as a result cannot see.
4. State that each team has approximately 45 minutes to build the tent with all but the team leader blindfolded and that the team leader can only assist the rest of the team verbally. Also state that you will be rotating the leadership so that every participant has a chance to lead.

5. Give each participant a blindfold (because the team leaders will take turns to be the team leader) and each team a tent.
6. Position the teams a safe distance apart and ask everyone, except the team leader, to lower their blindfolds over their eyes.
7. Once every team is ready tell them to start the erecting their tent.
8. During the exercise be prepared to intervene if a participant might be at risk of injury
9. Remember to rotate the team leader in each group so that every participant has a chance to be the leader.
10. Allow the group to say when they have finished; if everyone is in agreement ask them to remove their blindfolds.

Additional notes

None

Review and Conclusions

Congratulate success

Ask how it felt to lead in this exercise?

Explore what aspect of the exercise put each of the leaders under pressure?

Ask how it felt to be led?

What leadership lessons can be drawn from this exercise?

Ask them what they might do differently if they were to repeat the exercise?

Follow-up

The Belbin Team Styles questionnaire could be used to highlight different strengths and styles within the team.

For further suggestions on follow-up and other team activities, go to www.freshtracks.co.uk or email mail@freshtracks.co.uk