



## Team Building Activities



## Alberta Cup/Team Alberta Challenge Team Builders



### A. Communication/Ice Breakers

#### 1. Name/Sport Game

Players sit in a circle facing into the middle. A ball or ... is passed randomly to each person. As he/she receives the ball they give their name and a sport they like that starts with the same letter as their name. (Carol-curling).

#### 2. Limited Senses

*Equipment Required* – Blind folds for all participants, hockey socks work well.

Create a large clear space with adequate safety precautions. For safety reasons, make sure a number of support people are around. Next give players a number and tell them to keep their number to themselves. Each participant puts on a blindfold. The goal is for the players to arrange themselves in numeric order. Example 1, 2, 5, 8, 13, 15, 19, 27, 89. The participants are not allowed to speak.

Frustration will occur when players use various methods to communicate such as, foot stomping, clapping, tapping, etc. After a length of time some players may give up. If you tell the group that numbers are missing, they may come together quickly. A variation is to have them order themselves by birthdate.

#### 3. Tell a Story

Divide into groups of three. Give the groups about 10 minutes to develop a story line. Each participant tells one section of the story. After each story is told all participants discuss the moral/meaning of the story. Once that is completed the story tellers will reveal what they determined was the moral. Move onto the next group and repeat.

#### 4. Snowball Fight

Everyone writes one interesting thing about themselves on a piece of paper (without their name). Crumple up the pieces of paper and throw them around the room 3 or 4 times. Pick up a "snowball" and open it. The goal is to find the person who belongs to the paper. You **must** introduce yourself before asking if the paper belongs to them. At the end, once everyone has been found, players introduce each other to the rest of the team.



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### **5. How well do you know your teammates?**

This can be used as an initial ice breaker, or at anytime during a season/competition to help teammates to get to know each other. It also can be good to help players to learn a bit about their coaches, trainers, etc.

Each player must give 2 facts about themselves, one true and one false. They cannot be obvious (I play hockey, etc.). The facilitator (coach, team leader, etc) will read out the facts about the player. The team is lined up, and can be blindfolded (so they don't look around to see what everyone else thinks). If you think the fact is true step forward, false step backwards. The leader then tells the group if it was true or false. The game can continue through all the facts, and you can keep track of points to appoint winners at the end, or just play for the fun to learn about your teammates. You can also set it up as more of a jeopardy style game.

### **6. Who Am I?**

Create enough characters for each person participating. Tape on e character to the back of each individual, they then need to go around the room and ask yes/no questions until they figure out who they are.

Example of characters: Hannah Montana, Wayne Gretzky, Britney Spears, The Road Runner, Sidney Crosby, Will Smith, Stephen Harper, Barack Obama, Terry Fox, Hayley Wickenheiser, Cassie Campbell, etc.

### **7. Toonie truth or lie**

Materials – toonie and a cup

Toonie: up – true

down – false

The toonie is placed under the cup prior to the story being told. Each person tells a story and all need to guess if the story is true or false. The game can have consequences for the right/wrong guess by the audience.

### **8. Penny and Dice**

Materials – cup, 1 dice, 1 penny

Shake the dice and coin and roll out. Depending on where each object lands determines your story line.



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Heads – truth about the storyline

Tails – lie about the storyline

1. family
2. music
3. sports story
4. vacation spot
5. team
6. hero

### **9. What's in your wallet?**

Have each teammate open their wallet/purse and find something in it that has a personal story attached that they can share with everyone. You can go as many rounds as you want with this one, it becomes quite interesting ...

### **10. Predicament and solution**

Materials – none

Each player to create a story involving a predicament and a solution. The solution has nothing to do with their predicament. 1 at a time, have each player present their predicament and then have someone else give their solution (one that they had made up initially). \*Some weird solutions and a lot of fun.

### **11. Snowballs in a bucket**

Materials- crumpled up paper, basket/box

Player #1 has their back to the box and throws the "snowballs" over their shoulder into the box. Player #2 is the eyes and communicator for the thrower. How many are successful in the # of throws taken



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### 12. Human Treasure Hunt

Find someone who matches the information below and write their name on the lines provided. You can only use each name once. Try and fill each line with one of your teammates' names.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Name		Answer		Name		Answer
	Is born in the same month as you				Has the same number of siblings as you	
	Can speak more than one language				Has travelled outside of Canada	
	Has been on TV				Can play a musical instrument	
	Has performed on stage				Has climbed on a climbing wall	
	Has won an individual award				Knows someone famous	
	Has been a volunteer				Has a unique skill or talent	
	Has been in a parade				Is an honours student	

### 13. Name Game

Players stand in circle facing each other. Start with one player, gives his name and which way he shoots. The player on the left, repeats the player's name and which way they shoot and then does this for himself. Continue around the circle with each player repeating the name and shooting side for the additional players and coaches until they get back to where they have started (the last player will have to remember 22 names and shooting side). Goal is to develop familiarity with players' names and to develop open communication.

### 14. Stick Balance

Players formed groups of 5. They were given the task of balancing a hockey stick on the index fingers of their right and left hand. Players were placed on both sides of the stick in alternating locations and then had to lower the hockey stick to the floor and then return to the "up" position without dropping the hockey stick. Goal – get the smaller group to work together and develop communication skills. This task was quite easy and didn't really create a challenging task.



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### **15. Name/Fact Game**

Description: Players were asked to introduce themselves to the team and highlight one interesting fact about them. The next player would start by repeating the name and interesting fact highlighted of the player before him. The next player would have to state the name of the two players that were introduced before them along with the interesting fact about each player.

Purpose: For the players to learn the names of all players on the team. Adding the additional personal fact makes sure that all players are paying attention because there is accountability when they need to repeat the order. The interesting facts are usually very humorous and allow the tension to be broken and create laughter.

### **16. Non Verbal Communication**

Equipment:

- Whistle(s) for each team and/or group.

Objectives:

- Establish a method of non-verbal communication with teammates.
- Opportunity to break down barriers between teammates.

Explanation/Formation:

- Players can be divided into partners, teams or groups.
- An activity or task is selected then their partner must come in and try to perform the task. If an error is made, nothing is done. However, if a right movement is performed, the teammate blows the whistle to reinforce the action.
- Whistle reinforcement continues until the actual action is carried out successfully.
- This can be a timed competition between groups or to see how many tasks are completed after certain time allotments.

### **17. 720 Walking Tag:**

This is one of the great original icebreakers for large groups. Have the group form a circle. Naturally, the larger the group the larger the circle. In the center demonstrate with a volunteer how to play the game. One person is "it". The other is trying hard, but not too hard, to avoid being tagged but the "it". The "it" must first spin around twice before walking, not running, after her partner. The partner can only walk, not run, away to avoid becoming "it". Once he is tagged he becomes "it" and must do a 720 (two complete spins) before walking of in hot pursuit of his partner. The object of the game is not to be "it" when time is called, usually after one minute of play. After demonstrating the game have the participant's partner with the person next to them. Let them decided who will start the game as the "it". The more people there are playing the game the more confusion and mayhem and consequently the laughs everyone has chasing each other. Be sure to define the boundaries and keep reminding people to walk – not run.



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## 5. Wanted Posters

### \* Purpose of Activity

- team building
- get players to know each other better
- assist players in identifying the important roles in a team
- assist players in identifying what their own personal strengths are and how those strengths might fit into our team
- have fun

### \* Equipment Required

- poster or construction paper
- felt pens - various colors, writing pens
- masking tape
- large meeting room with space to tape things to the wall
- form that each player, coach, manager and trainer must fill out
- a Polaroid or other photo of each participant

### \* Process to Follow

- upon arrival to the meeting room, each participant receives a form that they must fill out
- once the forms are filled out each player then tapes his form on a poster sized construction paper on the wall
- on the top of the poster, each player will also tape his or her photograph above the form
- once all players have completed the form, taped it to the poster and wall and put their picture on it, all participants names are thrown into a hat
- each player then must draw another players name out of the hat, go over to that player's poster and proceed to introduce that player to the rest of the group

**WANTED**

mug  
shot

Background Information \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Known Behaviors \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Other Points of Interest \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Strengths as a Hockey Player \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



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### **19. Yurt Circle:**

This is a good introductory event for large groups that emphasizes interpersonal coordination. Participants need to depend on others to accomplish the task. The group stands in a circle, almost arms length apart, and holds hands. A count off by one and two designates those who will lean out and those who will lean in. Slowly, coached by the trainer, the “ones” lean out and the “twos” lean in and then vice versa. The more people lean out the more weight must be balanced by people leaning in for the circle to hold its shape. Some people put most of their weight into the circle. Others will be much more cautious. When the risk takers find themselves paired up with their more cautious colleagues the results can be humorous as well as instructive.

Yurt Circle is also a nice closing activity. You will see a lot more leaning at the end of a program than at the beginning. So you might need to caution people not to lean too far. After the group has done the activity you can thank everyone for leaning out and leaning in with each other. After all, that is what teamwork is: supporting your teammates and letting yourselves be supported. Both require trust and full participation.

### **20. Pass the Hoop**

You remember the phrase “passing the buck”. Well, this activity offers an opportunity to pass the hoop. Instead of one person jumping through a hoop, why not try to make it a team effort?

The group stands in a circle, holding hands. One hula hoop is sent around the circle counterclockwise. Another hula hoop, starting from the other side of the circle, is passed clockwise. Passing a hoop from one person to the next takes teamwork because only arms and bodies are used. As people step through the hoops laughter builds till it overflows when the two hoops meet. For more fun, add more hula hoops.

### **21. Balloons**

This activity can provide lots of fun and lots of laughs. Have the group form a circle. Blow up some balloons. Toss them out into the circle and have the group keep them up in the air. Have the group keep them off the ground without using their hands. Try passing the balloons around the circle, again without using hands.

Provide one balloon for each person. Without using hands or forearms, the group finds a way to keep all the balloons off the ground. Have the group pop all the balloons at the completion.

### **22.Speedy memo check-in**

Equipment:

- Miniature basketball or bouncing ball of some type.

Objectives:

- Communication of thoughts, feelings and emotions to fellow teammates.
- Others get to know what their friends/teammates are thinking/feeling.



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Explanation/Formation:

- o Players are asked to site around in a circle formation and face on another.
- o Ball is bounced or thrown to one player who starts it off by describing his thoughts or feeling that he has at that moment.
- o Ball is handed or bounced around to all team members to comment.
- o Coaches decided on question or topic area and how many words or less can be used (Example: 3, 5 or 7 words or less to say their feelings).

### 23. Have you ever . . . ?

Equipment:

- Tennis ball or bouncing ball of some type (same size of tennis ball if possible).
- Enough chairs for everyone except one person.

Objectives:

- Communication of precious backgrounds/interests/experiences.
- Opportunity for moving about and enjoying small game.

Explanation/Formation:

- o Players are asked to sit in a chair in a circle formation facing on another.
- o One individual, who is "it", stands around in the middle of the group bouncing the tennis ball.
- o The person then asks a question (Have you ever . . . ?) if anyone has done something they have also done (when he does this, he drops the ball and looks for an empty chair to sit down in).
- o If the players have done this in the past, they must get up and move to another chair, if not, they remain in their chairs.
- o The person who asked the question, moves to site down in one of the empty chairs.
- o The last person standing up with no chair to sit down in, gets the ball and begins the game all over again by asking another question. Again, the person asking the question must have experienced what he is asking (Have you ever played soccer before?).

### 24. Heartbeat

Equipment:

- Coin of some type (Loonie or quarter or ...)
- Plastic bottle or object individuals could grab without injuring themselves.

Objectives:



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- Develop team spirit and cohesion. Relying on team members to achieve a goal.
- Opportunity to communicate through non-verbal communication.

Explanation/Formation:

- Teams are divided up into two teams (possibly 4 teams) depending on the total number of participants you have.
- Leader (ie. Coach, Group Leader) will sit at one end flipping a coin either heads or tails for one team member from each team looking on.
- All the remaining team members will be looking down at the other end of their team at the last member to see if he/she will grab the plastic bottle/object.
- Each team will be facing one another, approximately 3-5 feet from another. Each team member will cross their arms and join hands and form a “heartbeat signal” or “electrical impulse”.
- If the leader flips “tails”, the first team members will do nothing; however, if the leader flips “heads”, the first team members will squeeze their team member’s hand the signal is sent.
- The person at the end of each team line who receive the signal an are able to grab the bottle first are the winners.
- Scores can be recorded by: (1) the losing or winning team rotating tam members up or down the team line; or (2) leader recording scores on wins or losses.
- Process then starts again with coach or leader flipping a coin. NOTE: Players can cheat after a while if they would like to gamble and possibly squeeze early only after the coin flip has been made. If they guess right, fine; however, if they guess wrong, the whole team suffers with a loss.

### **25.Celebrity name game**

Equipment:

- Blank name stickers or blank sheets o paper that can be taped on an individual’s back.
- Felt pens to write names of famous celebrities (ie. hockey players, movie stars, cartoon characters, politicians, other sport personalities).

Objectives:

- Ice breaker for members to get to know on another.
- Opportunity for members to get to know someone they may not know yet.

Explanation/Formation:

- Leader must brain storm and come up with as many sport celebrity names as there are members in the group.
- Without each player knowing who they are, leader sticks or tapes the celebrity name on the back of each participant.
- Each person must then find out who they are by asking only “yes” or “no” questions to other individuals (Players should first introduce themselves to the other player).



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Example Questions: Am I am male or a female? Am I a sports person?

- o Players should go around and ask 3-4 questions from one person, then go to another individual and ask additional questions. They can try to guess who they are at any time.
- o Game continues until all individuals have gone around and guessed who they are.

### **26. Player introductions**

Equipment:

- Environment where players are together with no distractions.
- Players together in a circle (sitting or standing) facing one another.

Objectives:

- Interview another player (someone they do not know) and have to introduce partner to rest of team.
- Others get to know what their friends/teammates have as interests other than hockey.
- Begin to establish communication links and possible friendships with new teammates.

Explanation/Formation:

- o Players are asked or paired with a partner they do not know.
- o Players together in a circle (sitting or standing) facing one another.
- o Players talk and ask questions to one another about personal backgrounds, histories, families, etc.
- o Players then share partners background to rest of team.

### **27. Skittles introductions**

Equipment:

- Environment where players are together with no distractions.
- Players together in a circle (sitting or standing) facing one another.
- Hand out a bag of skittles and have each athlete take as many as they want (make sure that all get "some" and must wait before eating them

Objectives:

- Once each player has taken from the bag, 1 at a time they are to stand up and say 1 thing about themselves for each skittle they have taken
- Others get to know what their friends/teammates have as interests other than hockey.
- Begin to establish communication links and possible friendships with new teammates.



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### **28. Player “Rap”**

Equipment:

- Players together in a circle (sitting or standing) facing one another.

Objectives:

- Others get to know what their friends/teammates have as interests other than hockey.
- Begin to establish communication links and possible friendships with new teammates through discussion

Explanation/Formation:

Split players into smaller groups (6-8). Have them tell a story by using 5 or 6 words each, 1 word must be the players name.

Give each group 10 minutes and then they can present to the rest of the team

### **29. Neck Magic**

Equipment:

- Environment where players are together with no distractions.
- Players standing together in 2 lines
- The first player in each line is given a tennis ball to begin the challenge

Objectives:

- The first player will trap the ball with their chin and pass it to the second players chin without using their hands.
- If the ball drops, start again at the beginning

### **30. Search and Rescue**

Equipment:

- Environment where players are together with no distractions.
- Players divided into 2 teams
- The first player in each line is given a blind fold to begin the challenge

Objectives:

- The blind folded player will try to find the chocolate bar (or ...?) hidden somewhere in the venue
- Teammates can't use directional (N,S,.. right, left) or touch but can come up with a code to guide them
- First team to get to their “bar” wins



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### B. Trust

**“Integrity is crucial.**

**You can’t enjoy the benefits of partnership  
if you don’t trust your partners. That applies  
to working in alliances or with your partners on the  
factory floor.” Michael A. Schaeffer,  
Pillsbury Brands**

#### 1. Expectations

The players sit in a circle and every player had a piece of paper with their name on it. The paper with the players name on it is passed to the entire team with each player writing what they expect from the player whose name is on the paper.

The idea is to have every player express what they need from every player to succeed. Once it is on paper each group begins its trust walk. Trust Walk

Equipment:

- 25-30 cloth blindfolds (enough for 2 groups).
- Environment to lead them through.

Objectives:

- Develop high level of trust with teammates.
- Opportunity to emphasize communication with teammates and continual talking to players to help out.



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Explanation/Formation:

- o Players are divided into partners. Preferably someone they do not know.
- o One of the partners places a blindfold on (not permitted to see).
- o Partner who can see will lead blindfolded partner outside around various obstacles.
- o Seeable partner must communicate precisely, correctly and frequently to partner so no accidents will happen.
- o Switch and other partner now become blindfolded and go through same procedures.

Variations:

- 1) Partners must lead through non-verbal communication. Leading through physically only.
- 2) Partners lead by verbal communication only. No physical touching is permitted.
- 3) TRUST RUN: At end of trust walk, partner goes to other end of are and will call out for partner to run over blindfolded as fast as he can. Partner must communicate and tell teammate when to slow down. Note ho fast person runs and how much trust is required.

Through this process the group must rely on each other to complete the task in front of them. Awards can be given for the quickest team, the team with the best quality, etc.

## **2. Trust Fall**

Equipment:

- Blind folds (as many as required).

Objectives:

- Build trust with teammates.
- Opportunity to determine level of trust and support from teammates.

Explanation/Formation:

- o One at a time, one person has to fall to teammates. Teammates react and support falling player. Falling player must keep body straight all throughout fall to help support catch properly. He says ready and count 3, 2, 1 and hesitates for a moment and then falls backwards into supporters.
- o Next person does it and proceeds one at a time.
- o After first person goes, he rests on the floor below/underneath (double trust) and he has to be protected by other players (optional).

## **3. Wind the Willows**

Equipment:



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- Blind folds (as many as required).

Objectives:

- Build trust with teammates.
- Opportunity to determine level of trust and support from teammates.

Explanation/Formation:

- One at a time, one person has to fall to teammates. Teammates react and support falling player. Falling player must keep body straight all throughout fall to help support catch properly. The “willow” in the middle free falls and is supported by his/her teammates who have formed a circle around the willow outside. Feet need to be staggered and hands and arms need to be ready to catch and support the player falling
- Next person does it and proceeds one at a time.

### 4. Crowd Surfing

Equipment:

- none

Objectives:

- Build trust with teammates.
- Opportunity to determine level of trust and support from teammates.

Explanation/Formation:

- Players lay on their backs, facing opposite directions with their heads
- One at a time, one person has to be passed down the line (players laying on their backs). The individual is also on his back and tries to be rigid in the passage from 1 end to the other. Teammates react and support passed player.
- Next person does it and proceeds one at a time.

### 5. Cohesion Bucket *(High Risk)*

Equipment:

- 5 Gallon Bucket Pail
- Water

Objectives:



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- Communication/cooperation with teammates to achieve common goal.
- Opportunity to have or determine a leader who can lead other through a group situation.
- To remove all the pairs of shoes and lower the bucket (with water) without spilling.

Explanation/Formation:

- 8 participants in a group at a time. If more, rotate players in and out.
- Players being by being on their backs with legs and feet up (shoes remain on).
- All participants try to get as close together as possible with legs up.
- Place bucket (with water) on feet of players.
- Players have to remove all their pairs of shoes and socks without tipping the bucket. Once this has been done, players one at a time remove themselves from the situation and eventually you will have one or two players left to lower the water filled bucket to the ground.
- The final result is to lower the bucket without spilling to the ground with one players.
- Hope to see good illustrations of cooperation, communication and leadership skills coming out.

### 6. Meal Deal

Teams of 4 must work together to prepare a meal of the coaching staffs' choice. Each member of the group will have specific limitations of what they can provide to the effort.

*Group Leader* – 1 person is the group leader and will have the instructions to prepare the meal, but will not be able to physically do any work to prepare the meal. They must vocally direct the group to achieve the final goal of preparing the meal chosen for them.

*Hands on, no sight* – 1 person will have to be blindfolded. Their task is a hands-on role in preparing the meal but will have to rely on teammates to provide detailed instructions. This individual must then carefully follow instructions from other team members.

*Hands on, no sound* – 1 person will wear earphones from an iPod on with loud music so they will not be able to hear any of their teammates as they attempt to give direction. This person will have a hands on role in preparing the meal but will not have the luxury of hearing their teammates instructions, therefore requiring this individual to pay close attention visually.

### 7. Fireman's Carry

Equipment:

- None
- 

Objectives:

- Communication/cooperation with teammates to achieve common goal.



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- Opportunity to have or determine a leader who can lead other through a group situation.

Explanation/Formation:

- o 7 participants in a group at a time. If more, rotate players in and out.
- o 6 players join hands and the seventh lies face up in their arms.
- o The group carries the player through an obstacle course without dropping him
- o Can make it into a relay race

### 7.Thunderbolt

It is normal to having feelings of anxiety when faced with a new experience and a journey that is uncertain and unprecedented .And sometimes, people in a new setting have a problem “opening up” and truly expressing their concerns. This mixer will hopefully provide a vehicle to discuss any apprehensions and get input and support from the group in addressing these issues.

#### **TASK:**

On the card provided, please complete the following statement. Please explain your concerns clearly and hand in to the moderator. The moderator will ensure that participants do not receive their own card:

“On the Finnish exchange program, my biggest worry is.....”

#### **Activity:**

All cards will be distributed and each participant will select one. A person will then read the content and whoever reads the card will begin discussion and the group will address the concern. There will be a time limit on each discussion.

Once all are done, the moderator will help the group establish goals with an attempt to create a comfort zone and support mechanisms for all involved.



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## Cooperation

### 1. Mall Scavenger Hunt

Contact a mall in your area for use of their site. Split the team into smaller teams. Give each team a list of items they need to find in the mall.

An example can be a picture of several items that has all team members in it. Give bonus points for including mall staff.

#### Scavenger Hunt Items:

ITEM	Points
All team members present and ready to start at 2pm	5
Picture of all team members walking through the mall holding hands	1
Picture of team members spelling out YMCA with a stranger	1
Picture of team members saluting people as they come out of Old Navy	1
Picture of a team member getting makeover at a cosmetic counter	1
Picture of team members with a saleswoman with a name starting with "S"	1
Picture of a team member playing video games	1
Picture of a team member kissing a mannequin on the cheek	1
Picture of a "2 for 1" Sign (Bonus point for salesperson <b>AND</b> a team member in the picture)	1 + 2
Picture of Pink Shoes (Bonus point for sales person <b>AND</b> a team member in the picture)	1 + 2
Picture of any team member with any team staff member (Bonus point for each staff member)	5 MAX
Picture of an unhappy child	1
Picture of all team members together wearing cowboy hats	1
Picture of a team member posing with a poster of a handsome movie star	1
Picture of a team member modeling anything in an animal print	1
Picture of team members with 1 girl per team member (1 point per team member + girl in picture)	4 MAX



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	Picture of a team member getting ketchup and napkins for a stranger in the food court	1
	Picture in Sears – All team members sitting on a sofa	2
	Picture in The Bay – All team members holding a women's fragrance	2
	Picture in La Senza – All team members holding a pair of women's underwear	2
	Picture in Spare Parts – All team members wearing Sun Glasses	2
	Most Creative Picture	5
	What year was the mall built?	5
	Best Team Flag	5
	Be back at the Food court by 3:30pm	5

### 2. Stair Stepper

You will require 1 long set of stairs, long enough that there is at least 1 step per player. The goal is to get the whole team from the bottom of the stairs to the top of the stairs with each player only being able to physically touch the top of 1 step. You will want to consider safety; coaches can be spotters, helmets can be used; can use the railing for balance.

### 3. Shuffle Butt

You will need as many chairs as there are people playing. Make a big circle with the chairs. Select one person to stand in the middle of the circle, leaving their chair empty.

To start the game, one of the people sitting next to the empty chair will “shuffle” into that chair, leaving their own empty. The person, who was sitting next to them, will do the same, shuffling into the empty chair, leaving their own chair empty. This continues around the circle. The pace will quickly pick up, because the middle person can “shuffle” into it. If the person in the middle manages to sit in the empty chair, the person who was supposed to get there is now in the middle. Depending on your team, and what you allow, there can be a fair amount of physical contact!

To up the strategy, a “switch” call can be added. The person whose turn it is to shuffle can call “switch” and the direction is reversed. The person who just moved seats now has to quickly move back to their original seat and the shuffle continues in the other direction.



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At any point, a player may also call out "SHUFFLE BUTT". Every player must get up out of their seats and move to a new chair that is at least 2 seats away from their original seat. The last person standing is now in the middle. The game is continuous, and no one is eliminated.

### **4. Inhuman Knot**

Group Size: 2 Groups of 10

Set Up Time: 3 minutes

Duration: 10-15 min

Props: Five ropes (each 5 feet long) for each group of 10 people.

#### Objective

First, create a tangled mess of your ropes then trade your tangled mess with another group's and see if you can untangle their mess (while they work on yours).

#### Set Up / Preparation

You need one 5-foot section of rope for every two people. I use 1/8 inch diameter nylon rope.

People will be working in teams of 10. Setup the activity in advance of the group by placing 5 ropes on the ground in the shape of an asterisk. (\*) Each team of 10 will have their own set of ropes in the shape of an asterisk.

Team members pick up an end of a rope with one hand. Once you pick up a rope you can't let go of it until the activity is over.

Each team of 10 will now take 3 minutes to tie a big knot in the center of the ropes. Keep working on making the knot more tangled until time runs out. Remember, no letting go of the rope!

After time is up, lay your ropes (your tangled mess) on the ground and let go of the ropes.

Teams will now rotate to another team's knot and pick up a rope. Now work together to untangle the knot without letting go of the rope.

#### Rules

Once you grab the end of the rope you have to hold on with that same hand until the activity is over.



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### **5. Human Knot**

Six to twelve people can participate. Eight is a great number. The level of difficulty goes up considerably as group size increases. We often will do the exercise with six in each circle, then follow it with eight in each circle. You can process how complexity on a team tends to increase with group size.

Circle-up the members and have each person raise their right hand. Instruct them to reach across and grab one person's hand. Make sure not to grab the person's hand on either side of you. Now, reach the left hand up in the air and again grab one person's hand. Not the person on either side or the same person you already have. Now they will be in a big knot! Explain that the challenge is to untangle into one circle, with no crossed arms, without letting go of hands. (Sometimes you may end up with two interlocking circles or two separate circles.) Remind them to be careful when stepping over arms, especially knees to noses. Then, step back and watch them work. Then, step back and watch them work. If, after awhile, little progress has been made, offer to give the one re-grip. Often times this clears up the problem and they continue with renewed enthusiasm. Pay attention to the attitude of the group and use your judgment when giving re-grips. When the team accomplishes the task, celebration abounds!

#### **Safety Tips:**

- Stretch the upper body before this initiative.
- Do not allow "inter-digitation" (when finger are intertwined).
- Be extra careful when someone is stepping over others arms. A knee can easily crunch a nose.
- The facilitator should follow the movement, spotting when anyone is moving and anticipating the team's moves.
- Allow anyone to change their grip if they are uncomfortable, but not to gain an advantage.

#### **Processing Points:**

- Problem solving skills
- Team celebration
- "Accomplishing what looked like the impossible"

### **6. Trolleys**

Group Size: 2 Groups of 10

Set Up Time: 3-5 min

Duration: 10-15 min

Prop: Duct Tape

Objective/Setup - normally done using two long wooden boards. The team stands on the boards and then each team member holds onto a rope attached to the board. As opposed to using boards, lay down 2 strips of duct tape, approx 8 ft in length, sticky side up. Map out an obstacle course using pylons, approx 50 m. Course involves moving forwards and sideways. Allow one trial run and then race the teams with consequences for the losing team .



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### **7. Skip Rope**

Group Size: 2 Groups of 10

Setup Time: 2 min

Duration: 10-15 min

Prop: 2 Ropes – approx 20-25 ft long

Objective/Set Up: The object of the game is for each member of the team to jump rope 10x. If anyone trips up the rope, or stops the rope from moving fwd, the team must start all over again. The first team to get through every member 10x without a mistake wins. 2 Groups of 10 play off against one another. Identify 2 members who will initially swing the rope for the other 8 members to jump in – either all at once or in smaller groups – allow each team 2 min to plan strategies.

### **8. Build a Pyramid**

Players were given a task to build a pyramid. The group is left to decide on how they will construct the pyramid, give no feedback, allow the group to attempt to work and communicate together to come up with a solution to the task. Allow about 5-8 minutes for group discussion and then allow them to attempt their pyramid. Continue to allow the group to work through their task and allow for adjustments to the initial plan. Goal – get the group to work together in a none hockey related item, develop communication skills, determine who takes charge of the situation and if they will be respectful of each others' input (only one person talking at a time).

### **9. Electric Fence**

Equipment:

- 2 long lengths of rope or twine of some type.

Objectives

- Teammates cooperating to achieve objectives(s) together.
- Opportunity to brainstorm together to come up with solutions.

Explanation/Formation:

- Each rope is tied to stationary objects (ie. pole, tree, etc.) and are tied parallel to one another approximately 2-3 feet apart. The trees can be 8-15 feet apart depending on the length of your rope.
- Assume these ropes consist of an electrical wire fence that extends above and below the rope. The only safe opening is between the ropes.
- Group members are then asked to work together and determine how to get all team members through the opening in the fence without being electrocuted.



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- o You want to safely get everyone through to the other side. If one player happens to touch the rope, they are severely electrocuted.

### **10. I am a big piece of the puzzle**

Materials: 1 bristol board [color: red], 1 package of cut out puzzle pieces, package of markers, 2 glue sticks.

Description: Players receive their own puzzle piece along with a marker. The player writes their number in the middle of the puzzle piece and on each corner write the attributes that they are going to contribute to the team everyday to help the team be successful. Once all players are completed, they must work as unit to glue the pieces onto the board so that all the pieces are interlocked and the puzzle is complete. The board will be glued on the dressing room wall during the competition.

Purpose: Emphasizing that the each player is a big piece of the puzzle if this team is going to be successful in the competition. It also emphasizes teamwork and cooperation.

### **11. Make A Jersey**

Materials: markers, 20 t-shirt

Description: Each player will receive one t-shirt each. Players are divided up into two teams for the team uni-hockey tournament on the team-training weekend. The two teams names were: Team Hulk & Team Spiderman. The two teams needed to create a jersey for their team that looked the same for all players on their team. They needed to have their last name or nickname across the shoulders and their team number, as a regular jersey would look. The players will use these newly created team jerseys for the gym activity.

Purpose: teamwork and cooperation.

### **12. Mini-Olympics**

Materials: Players need their helmets, gloves, skates and stick. The coaches need a stat sheet and pen.

Description: All of the coaching staff is in charge of one of the five stations. The five stations include:

1. Skating Ramp
2. Accuracy Shooting
3. Quick Hands
4. Stick handling obstacle course
5. Hardest shot

Players compete in teams of 5 and accumulate points for performance and finish amongst the five teams.



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### **13. Transformers**

This activity is often done as the precursor to another warm-up, Animal Name-Sound-Motion. Have the teams come together so that they can see you and each other and still maintain some space between each other. Ask each team to form the letter "H". After a minute or two of milling around, the team members will figure out how to arrange themselves in the shape of that letter. Lead the teams in applauding each other's success introduce the next task for each team to do in turn.

- Form a zipper, zipping and unzipping
- Arrange yourselves in the shape of a helicopter
- Become a cannon ball fired from a cannon

The ingenuity and speed that teams display in this activity can be surpassing.

### **14. Climb the Mountain**

Equipment:

- Numerous hockey stick shafts cut off at blade to have full length shafts remaining.

Objectives:

- Teammates cooperating to achieve goal(s) together. Develop trust in one another.
- Players supporting everyone on team to get through regardless of physical size and weight. Promote team concept.

Explanation/Formation:

- o 2 players begin by each holding one end of a hockey shaft at the ends. They place the shaft at an arbitrary height.
- o The first player must now climb on and then over the shaft and then drop to the ground by himself or with the help of team members holding the shaft.
- o After two participants go over the first shaft, they then form another walk plank, 1-2 feet away from the first pair with another shaft. They must select a different height from the first pair.
- o One at a time, 2 other players will now walk over 2 hockey shafts and then set up another and so on.
- o Continue so all players have set up a walk plank, each pairing at varying heights of difficulty. Once everyone has proceeded through the stick walk, first two participants walk over stick rout and continue until a predetermined time or distance as you move along.



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### **15. Mine Field**

Equipment:

- Blind folds (as many as required).

Objectives:

- Build verbal communication with teammates.
- Opportunity to break down barriers between teammates.

Explanation/Formation:

- All individuals are blindfolded first. Divide players into partners and separate partners as far away from each other as possible.
- Individuals are then given a word, phrase or sound that pairs up with their partner (who they don't know). Examples: Peanut – Butter, Teeter – Totter, Stop – Go, Ice Cream – Sundae.
- The coach will start the activity and they all begin to call out their word or sound that they were assigned and try to match up with their partner. They then can take blindfolds off and introduce themselves.
- Variation: This can also be done with sounds.

### **16. “Chuck the Chicken”**

Equipment:

- Rubber chicken or ...

Objectives:

- Build verbal communication with teammates.
- Teamwork to win a race

Explanation/Formation:

- Players are put in a circle. 1 player chucks a chicken and starts running around their team circle
- The other team must run to the chicken, form a circle around it and throw it
- Once they throw it the other team stops its run and prepares to get the chicken, form their circle and ...
- Runs scored based on the number of times the runners circle the group



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# **Leadership**

## **1. Circle of Communication**

### **PURPOSE**

- For use as ICEBREAKER
  - people get to know each others names
  - have some fun
  - challenges people to think about what is happening within the game/group and how it might apply to the reality of our group's task/work.

### **TIME REQUIRED**

- 20 – 30 minutes
  - 10 – 15 minutes for the game
  - 10 – 15 minutes for debrief

### **MATERIALS**

- Approximately 2 balls per person in the group
- 12 – 24 balls of varying sizes, but not bigger than a small football – tennis balls, soft balls are good

### **INTRODUCTION**

- Inform the group that you have a challenge for them
- Ask the group for two volunteers
- Ask the two volunteers to leave the room so that they are out of sight and sound of the activity. Let them know that you will come to get them in a few minutes.

### **DETAILS**

- Have the group form a circle
  - You should stand outside the circle



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- Inform the group that their challenge is to create a pattern of throwing the ball which enables each member of the group to touch a ball once as it makes its way around the circle
- The best way to initiate the pattern is for each group member to raise their hands in the air. Once they have caught the ball and passed it to someone else they put their hands down to their sides
- 

YOU MUST REMEMBER WHO YOU GOT THE BALL FROM AND WHO YOU GAVE IT TO.

- Throw the ball through the group
- Once the ball has been caught and thrown by each group member and returned to the start person, ask the group to through the pattern one more time to be sure that the pattern is remembered. Do not raise your hands this time. Each person should call out the name of the person they are throwing the ball to. Eye contact should also occur before the ball is thrown.
- With this pattern in place, now inform the group you will be adding more balls into the challenge (vary the size of ball). Hand each new ball to the start person who will introduce them into the cycle.
- inform the group that they now have the opportunity to make any rules they feel could enhance their success in getting all the balls into play.
- With the rules in place begin feeding the balls to the starter person. Be sure to inform that person that when the balls come back to them, they must keep them in play.
- Once the balls are in play, bring the two volunteers that have been “outside”, in to get involved in the challenge. Also let them know that you are not “setting them up”.
- Once they get to the edge of the group, inform the group in a loud voice. . “YOU NOW HAVE TWO NEW MEMBERS TO GET INVOLVED IN YOUR CHALLENGE”. Say this only once! The two new members should be “passive” in that they must wait for the group to accept them and give them invitation into the group and inform them of the rules of play.
- Give the group time to incorporate the two new members in whatever fashion they choose.
- When the group has incorporated the two new members, inform the group that you are going to remove two other members from the group, then do it!
- While the group is dealing with the removal of the two members, have on of the removed members to re-enter the group and institute change. This challenge is to *verbally* and *physically* get the group to reverse direction.
- Once this is done, bring the challenge to its conclusion.
- 

DEBRIEF PURPOSE AND QUESTIONS

PURPOSE

- To have a group appreciate what the exercise means relative to our task and mandate as a group
  - importance of good communication
  - importance of listening and working together
  - importance of orientating new members as to purpose of group and their mandate & direction and “way of doing business”
  - importance of appreciating how difficult it is to change the way a group does business, who we need to start out together on the right foot – together
- 

QUESTIONS

- what were some of the strengths demonstrated by out group



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- how did the two new people feel entering the group after the challenge was already in play
- how did the group feel about two new people coming into the group
  - did anyone notice
  - build on what people say here, ie. two people noticed but the majority did not . . . why and what impact did this have on those that noticed the new people on the outside and not being able to enter
- what might the different sized balls represent
- how did it feel when two members were removed from the group
- how did the two members feel when they were removed
- how did it feel when one member introduced change
- what feelings were aroused
- was anyone not affected by the people movement
- what was it like keeping track of what was happening in the group
- what linkages can we make between this exercise and our work as a committee

### 2. Flip Flop

You will need 1 large blanket or 2 medium sized blankets.

Start the game by having your whole team stand on the blanket, or if you have 2 blankets than have your team split in half and have them stand on each blanket. The object of the game is to have your team flip the blanket over without anyone being allowed to step off the blanket. If you choose to have 2 blankets you can make it into a race, to see which group is faster.

This game is going to show how well the kids can work together as a team, and it will also show you who your leaders are.

In order for the blanket to be flipped over, the team needs to stand at one end of the blanket, maybe even caring one another and then slowly begin to flip it over with little adjustments at a time.

### 3. Team Pedestal – Milk Crate





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Equipment Required: Sturdy milk crates, duct tape and a stop watch

Description: Divide the team into two or three groups. If each group has more than seven players, you will need to duct tape two milk crates together, side-by-side, for each group. The group members must stand on the milk crate with their feet off the ground. Group members may use any method to balance, including holding onto each other's arms, shoulders and clothes. The team that stays on its crate the longest wins the challenge.

## **TEAMBUILDING . . .the building blocks**

**Several important building blocks must be present to have successful teambuilding. It is important that the coach use appropriate activities that develop the principle behaviors of effective teams.**

**Teamwork all start with belief. Believing is the key to great accomplishments! Players and coaches must be prepared to work hard. The secret to success in life is for man to be ready for opportunity when it comes.**

The 11 building blocks to a successful team are:

**1. *Accept Your Roles***

- not everyone can be the goal scorer
- teams require many roles to be filled

**2. *Clear Objectives and Agreed Upon Goals***

- values clarification exercise
- you must have something you are trying to accomplish
- Why are we here?

**3. *Openness and Confrontation***

- honesty



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### **4. Support and Trust**

- emotional and physical safety

### **5. Cooperation and Conflict**

- how do you deal with problems
- coaches and players

### **6. Sound Procedures**

- decision making

### **7. Appropriate Leadership**

- shared leadership
- opportunities

### **8. Regular Review**

### **9. Individual Development**

- all team members must be "growing" and developing
- a solid program is based upon doing the little things right

### **10. Sound Inter-group Relations**

- working and playing together
- successful teams all care about each other

### **11. Good Communication**

- open and honest
- trust
- emotional safety
- 

Three universal questions that an individual should ask of his coach, players and teammates are:

1. *Can I trust you?*
2. *Are you committed to excellence?*
3. *Do you care about me?*

## **Building a Team Identity**

Materials: Post it notes, pens, whiteboard/wall



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Description: Each player is given three separate post it notes. On each piece of paper, each player writes the three biggest strengths as a player that they will contribute to the team during the competition. After each player has stuck their post it notes on the wall, the coaches will group the same characteristics together and create a display similar to a bar graph. The players will get to see a visual of the consistent strengths that the team has. Ideally, these strengths match up with the team identity and vision that they coaches created prior to selection camp.



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### **GAMES TO IDENTIFY WHAT A TEAM IS?**

#### **1. THE PUZZLE GAME**

**\* Purpose of Activity**

- ice breaker or warm-up activity
- the value of communication in a team
- the idea of creativity to accomplish tasks
- the idea that teamwork is important to success
- to have fun

**\* Equipment Required**

- 2 to 4 children's puzzles ( 4 to 8 large pieces per puzzle )
- enough puzzle pieces for each team member to have one
- enough puzzles are needed so that your team is broken down into smaller groups, each having to complete a puzzle

**\* Process to Follow**

- communicate to players that the task is designed to have them communicate and mingle with team members and that they will have to identify which puzzle group they will belong to
- communicate that all players will have to work closely with other players to ensure that they can complete their puzzle
- the first group to win by completing the puzzle wins a prize



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### **3. BALLOON MESSAGES**

#### **\* Purpose of Activity**

- to have players begin to identify all the things that are important in having a team
- to have players understand the personal and individual accountability required to be a team.
- to have fun

#### **\* Equipment Required**

- enough balloons so each team member will get one
  - includes players, coaches, trainers and manager
- large enough room or space for players to have to chase a balloon
- balloons filled with helium would work well in a bus or confined space
- if in a meeting room, ensure that balloons have a string attached, so participants can get them

#### **\* Process to Follow**

- coaches and managers must fill appropriate number of balloons with a message or question that each participant will be required to answer
- each player in turn must get a balloon and pop it getting the question and answer it back to the larger group
- sample questions might include:
  - What is a Team?
  - How can I contribute to the team?
  - What are my/your strengths as a player?
  - What can I contribute to the team?
  - What am I willing to do to contribute to the success of the team?
  - What can I contribute to help make our team a successful team?
  - What is success?
- Coach must do a debrief with the team to reinforce the value of individual efforts and accountability to the team



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### 3. Team Reframing Scenarios:

Equipment:

- Flip chart paper or some paper to record suggestions.

Objectives:

- Teammates cooperating together to come up with positive outcomes.
- Opportunity to “reframe” (turn negative into a positive).

Explanation/Formation:

- Players can be divided into partners, teams or groups (2 groups work best).
- 2 negative scenarios are provided to the groups (1 per group).
- Group members are then asked to work together and brainstorm on potential positive solutions to the negative situation.
- Groups appoint leaders and they present their group reframing solutions to all participants. Discussion follows.

Scenarios:

- 1) You and your family have planned a month long family holiday for the last 2 years to Greece and Rome. You shoot 25 rolls of film (24 exposures each) with your camera. When you get home, you find out there has been a camera malfunction and none of the pictures have turned out. What are you going to do?
- 2) You have planned for years to purchase a beautiful home situated on a lakefront lot. After finally having enough money to do so and after years of saving, you purchase the home of your dreams. Two weeks later, the Hells Angels bike gang move into the house next door to yours. What are you going to do?