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Virtual Team Building Games Over Webcam

Abstract:

We would like to create a virtual experience that requires the participants to go through a number of team building challenges. The format would resemble an escape room feel, however, the purpose of each room/challenge would be a specific team building task that has a useful goal or teaching point. There will be different options on how this experience can be used. For example, if there is a need to increase a level of competition there can be a clock tracking how long it takes each team to finish the challenges. Ultimately the team with the fastest team wins. If the goal is more experience and goal based, then there is no need for a clock, instead, there can be time for a reflection on the challenges experienced. The activities will require items that can be found in most people's homes (i.e. paper cups, spaghetti) making the activities affordable and easily accessible. As for gathering, all of these challenges can be done via webcam with other participants. This ensures that the participants will be following the shelter in place mandate during this time. Although the activities will be done through webcam, they will still be effective in learning through experience due to the new environment that we are faced with. Most of these challenges will be accessible to everyone of all ability levels. The challenges will have alternate ways of operation in case the participants are younger or have a disability. Multiple versions of each exercise will be presented to help accommodate the participants levels. Once the participants have finished the activities, there will be debrief questions that the participants can discuss or write down their own answers and share. Since the activity lacks a facilitator, having predetermined questions will work best due to the circumstances of social distancing.

How It Works:

These games are designed for team building exercises in two or more teams over webcam. We recommend that you use Zoom, but other applications may work. Before starting a game, determine the teams and make sure everybody's webcam is on. Some of the games work better for big groups and some work better for smaller groups, use your best judgment to decide on what games work best and how to adjust the rules for the amount of participants. At the very end of the page there are a few debrief questions and it is encouraged that everyone in the session answers the question in whatever form is decided on (written, spoken, or any other means). More importantly, have fun!

<u>Game Idea 1, Spaghetti Tower:</u>

Game : Spaghetti Tower

Objective: Team with the highest amount of tower height wins

Supplies: one box of dry spaghetti, one marshmallow, scotch tape, string, tape measure, timer

Instructions: Each team will have two minutes to build towers out of spaghetti, tape, and string. Each tower will require the marshmallow to be on top and must be able to stand on its own or it will be disqualified. Everybody's webcam must be on the whole time and needs to be positioned so that the whole tower is visible. One person between the two teams will be incharge of the timing of the game, they will say when to start and let everyone know when to stop. Once the time limit has been reached, everybody will lay down all their supplies and hands must be off the tower. If the tower falls after the time limit then that tower is disqualified. Each member of the team will record the height of the tower with a measuring device in inches or a predetermined unit of length. The teams will add their lengths together to get the team total. The team with the highest total length wins.

Variations:
1. If the supplies are not accessible then other supplies can be agreed upon to be used. A variation of the game can be who can build the tallest tower with no restriction on the supplies making any item in the participants surroundings accessible.
2. The time limit can be increased or decreased to change the difficulty of the game. Also adding supplies or decreasing supplies can change the difficulty.
3. Instead of having a time limit, the first team to build their towers to a certain height wins. For example: The first team to reach 50 inches total between their towers wins.

<u>Game Idea 2, Flip Cup Race:</u>

For this game, each participant will need 3 red solo cups.
Once logging onto the zoom chat, depending on the number of participants, the teams will be split as evenly as possible. Once each person has their team, they will decide on the order of their relay race teams. The objective of Flip Cup is to have the team flip each cup onto its face as fast as possible. Each member will have 3 cups that they are required to flip. Once the participant has flipped all 3 cups, the next member can go. This will be a best of 5 series.

Goals and objectives:

The purpose of this game is to create some strategy and competition. The reason it will be a best of 5 series is to try and create another strategy following the end of one of the games. This will give the teams the opportunity to shuffle up the order or give any tips on how to be more efficient. It is important to create a competitive environment to keep people engaged and pushing to make improvements. Friendly competition can create healthy environments where there is a lot of team building and growth.

Game Idea 3, Storyboard:

Objective: Assign each member a word or phrase to which they will come up with a creative paragraph. Have each team member come together and assemble each part to create a flowing chronological creative story.

Rules: Each team will have 10 minutes to write down their portion of the story. Following the first set of 10 minutes, the group will come together and combine their portions into one flowing storyboard (Allocate 10 minutes). Each member must have part of their story in the team's storyboard, if there is a portion left out, that team does not get to share.

Goals and objectives: The main objectives of this game is to test the creative minds of each team member. Also, to think critically as a unified group to analyze the information provided and how it can effectively be used to tell a story from beginning to end. There will not exactly be a winner on whose story is best, rather, the teams will reflect on their ability to work together.

Game Idea 4, Art of Communication:

Rules: For this game the class will be seperated into groups of 5 or more people and each group will select one member to draw and one member to be the teams describer. The person selected to draw will be provided with a list of simple shapes (2 squares, 4 triangles, 3 circles, etc) that they must use to draw a simple picture. All of the shapes on the list must be used and no other shapes can be added to the drawing. The groups will then give their drawing to another group's

describer, no one else in the group is allowed to see the drawing except that team's describer. It is then the job of the describer to explain the new picture and have their group recreate it on their own as best as possible. After a few minutes the groups will then compare their pictures and can vote on which group had the most nearly matched pictures. The game can then be repeated by choosing new drawers and describers with a new list of shapes.

Goals and Objectives: The primary objective of this game is to emphasize the importance of verbal communication when working with a group. The goal is to have groups discover the best means of communicating even the simplest of tasks with each other. Playing the game multiple times also allows groups to explore various strategies of communication to find what works best for their team. Finally, the game has the objective of showing the group how differently communication can be interpreted by different people and provides them with the goal of working to bridge those gaps.

Reflection:

After finishing these games, discuss the goals and objectives of each game/activity and their purpose. Why are these team building activities important? How could the activities be more effective? Do you think these activities would be better, worse, or the same if they were taken place in person?

Debriefing Questions: Can be used after each game.

-What observations can you make about how your group worked together?
-What do you believe was the goal of this activity?
-How did you make your decisions during the activity?
-How did you communicate your ideas to the rest of your group?
-What role did you play in the group during the activity?
-What important lessons do you think someone could learn from these activities?
-What might you do differently in your next group activity?