

Keep your Balance! – Ice-breaker / energiser

Encourages problem solving in an imaginative way, working together as a team etc.

- Time:** 20 minutes (intro 5 mins, activity 10 mins, feedback 5mins)
Group size: As many groups of 4 or 6 as space allows
Materials: One sheet of paper/plastic for each group (approximately 1x1 metre)

Purpose: To get the group to think about the problem and come up with a co-operative solution

Skills Developed: communication, negotiation, teamwork and problem solving

This is an ice breaker which also encourages teamwork and group problem solving, where everyone has to contribute and co-operate for the solution to be reached.

This is a fairly physical activity so check that everyone is able and comfortable to keep their balance in an awkward position for a few minutes!!!

Objective: Group members have to stand on a small sheet of paper which has to be turned over without anyone stepping off the paper

Method:

The group members should be asked to position themselves on the piece of paper in their groups. They should then be given the instructions.

- The sheet of paper has to be completely turned over
- No-one should at any time step off the paper
- No-one should at any time remove both feet at the same time from the sheet of paper
- They have 10 minutes to complete the task
- They should be able to explain to the other groups what they did

Feedback:

If they haven't come up with a solution in the specified time have a short feedback session to discuss the activity and any learning points which may have emerged:

- ask each group to give a quick explanation of how they went about the task - did they explore more than one way to solve the problem, were solutions suggested and considered or just dismissed, did they weigh up the benefits or negatives
- ask what they might need to do as a group to solve the problem – communicate with each other, support each other physically, respect each others ideas, opinions and knowledge, did they look at the task as a problem or a challenge
- ask what skills they used e.g. communication, logical thinking, physical skills,



This exercise could encourage team members to bond, work more co-operatively, communicate more effectively, use their initiative, think creatively and raise awareness of the skill used when solving problems

Facilitators Note:

You can adjust the difficulty of the exercise by:

- ★ increasing or decreasing the number of participants on each sheet of paper
- ★ adding more rules of play depending on physical ability e.g. half of each group must only stand on their right foot at all times
- ★ to make the activity longer and more complicated colour code the teams and, the sheets of paper (write the colour blue/red or whatever on one side) put the paper face down so the teams start on the wrong colour sheet e.g. red team on blue sheet green team on red sheet etc. then ask the teams to turn the sheet over as above to reveal what colour they are on and where their colour is. They then have to work out with the other teams how they get every team on to the right coloured paper without feet touching the ground out with the paper islands, no more than two people off a team sheet at one time etc.

