Team building: Under construction

Information

Objectives of the Session
Strengthen the team bonds between participants. Encourage creativity and opinion sharing. Strengthen pitching and creative presentation skills.

Risks
The activity can turn into a competition, which is understandable and in order as long as it is a healthy competition.

Tips / things to take into consideration
The competition part (evaluation of the bridges and the declaration of the winner) can be excluded, and after presentation you can have the discussion immediately.

Requirements

Time required
90 minutes

Space required
A bigger room with a certain number of tables (one table per group)

Group Size
Not specified

Group Info
Secondary school students

Materials required
Paper, cardboard paper, scotch tape (one per group), scissors (one per group), balls of twine, crayons, stapler, ruler, pictures of bridges.

Preparation needed before starting
Print the handouts, and arrange the tables in the room. Prepare the materials for the participants.

Activities step by step

Step 1:
The facilitator should first introduce the background story (10 minutes): A candy company (or any other that you come up with) wants to hire a group of construction workers to build a bridge between the two of their factories. Participants, divided into groups, will have 60 minutes to build a model of the bridge from specific materials. The groups should not be bigger than eight participants.

Each of the group should pick a name for their team.

Each team should receive three papers of handouts:

- A picture of the bridge they need to build a model of
- A table containing directions for ordering building materials
- A set of specific requirements given by the company

Explain that the purpose of this session is to strengthen the team work between participants as well as encourage creativity inside the group.

The company management as well as the materials supply company will be played by the two facilitators. Each of the roles has its own table. The management can be approached with questions about design, etc., while the supplier is approached when materials are ordered. The supplier is in charge of keeping track of how much did every group spend, and keep them from spending points above maximum.

Once the groups have been formed, they have to meet and agree on which materials should they order. Every group gets 200 points at the beginning of the workshop. They spend those points by buying material from supplier. Materials can be bought during the whole time the group is working on their bridge.

Step 2:

List of materials for ordering - Material and Price

- Paper A4: 1 piece = 5 points
- Cardboard A4: 1 piece = 5 points
- Scotch tape: 1 piece = 40 points
- Ball of twine: 3 meter = 40 points
- Crayon: 1 piece = 5 points
- Scissors: 20 minutes = 30 minutes
- Stapler: 10 minutes = 30 points
- Ruler: 20 minutes = 30 points

List of requirements

- Length should be minimum 40 cm.
- Height of the columns should be minimum 30 cm.
- The model should be as close to the picture as possible.
- The model must be able to bear the load of 3 pens for the endurance test.
- The model should be portable (can be moved from place to place)
- The budget for one team is 200 points and cannot be exceeded.

Distribution of points per criteria - Criterion/Points

- Length: 1
- Height: 1
- Portability: 1
- Endurance: 1
- Budget: 1
• Design idea: 2
• Overall look: 2
• Presentation: 3

PS. 0 points is given when the criterion is not satisfied at all.

In this step the groups should work on building their bridges (45 minutes).

Step 3:

After the bridges have been finished ask each group to give a short presentation of their bridge (15 minutes). The presentation should not be longer than 1 minute. After each of the presentations the bridge is evaluated by the construction monitoring committee, and given a number of points depending on the fulfillment of the requirements.

The monitoring committee can be a group composed of the people you select (either from the participants) or other people.

The team whose bridge has the highest number of points is awarded with a symbolic gift at the end.

Step 4:

Once the activity is finished go back into plenary and have a brief discussion (20 minutes). Try to tackle the following questions:

• Where there any team roles that were agreed on from the beginning? Did they develop ad-hoc?
• How did you feel working under pressure with limited supplies?
• Were there any arguments? How were they resolved?