



TEAM ALBERTA PROGRAM

Team Building Booklet



Introduction to Team Building

This material was put together as a guide for coaches to engage your athletes in a fun, creative manner away from the ice rink. In any short term event, where the athletes are thrown together, the quicker you as a coach can break down barriers and have the group working together as a team, the more success the team will have.

This guide is a collection of exercises and challenges that have been done at many of our Provincial Player Development Camps. If you have your own initiatives, we encourage you to use what you believe will work best for you and your athletes. However, we hope this guide will provide you with several new ideas and spur your creativity, as well as your players.

Getting Started

As the leader, you can use these initiatives to teach a variety of essential skills and attributes to your athletes like teamwork, communication, adaptability, ingenuity, creativity, courage, focus and trust. Each of these is desirable qualities within a team. To bring out the best in your players and maximize your activity the underlying element must always be FUN. And, as the leader of group, it is your job to maximize the experience for your athletes.

With this type of “Adventure Learning,” the leader facilitates the activity. However, it is important that not all the answers are provided to the team, they should learn from each other. The athlete’s successes and failures provide unique teaching opportunities for them to grow.

Yogi Berra once said, “You can observe a lot by watching.” These activities will provide a different insight into the individuals that make up your team and their dynamics. Pay close attention and much can be revealed.

As the facilitator or leader, your challenge is to know when and when not to intercede. The very nature of these activities includes a certain amount of unpredictability. It is your responsibility to be adaptable as well. In this type of learning environment, more often than not, it is important for the facilitator to get out of the way and let the athletes sort out the problem by themselves.

When to intercede? Always be aware of safety issues for your group. If you anticipate that the physical safety of the participants may be in jeopardy, step in and make an adaptation to prevent injury. If the group is having too much difficulty and a high level of frustration is setting in, it may be time for the leader to step in, give advice or move on. This is where your judgment is key. While a team can learn

from its failures, much more can be learned through overcoming great obstacles. With this type of problem solving, it is your job to be a facilitator, not a teacher. Remember, it's not your job to save them; they need to learn to save themselves!

Imagination

It can be amazing how the level of intensity will increase when the game or initiative has some small background story to it. When a gym floor is just a gym floor, the activity may be fine. However, when the gym floor is represented as the deadly, shark-infested waters off your island of safety, it can be amazing how much more involved your participants can become. Kids are kids, and if you sell the scenario right, an extra level of fun and excitement can had for all.

Debriefing

Without a debriefing at the conclusion of an exercise, your athletes will have participated in a fun, group activity, but they will not have gained the full benefit. By reviewing the exercise, you allow the athletes to process and digest their results. They will gain a better understanding on what went well and what didn't. Hopefully, they will learn some lessons that will help them grow into being better teammates and ultimately a better team.

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

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*

- Are we on track?

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. Employer are:

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

If you can find ways to ensure these values are incorporated into your programs you will be well on your way to building a successful team.

Here are some early thoughts on things you can do in sequence that will build the team and find your leaders. Lots more but these are simple, require little in the way of props and each can illustrate in the debrief with the players the importance and learning from doing the activity.

Everything done needs to:

1. be purposeful
2. be debriefed
3. be used as a teaching tool in the process (present and future)

activities to include:

1. icebreakers
2. communication
3. cooperation
4. trust
5. leadership
6. adversity/problem solving

1. Ice breakers

a. Travel as a Team

Togetherness is extremely important for any team to have success. Throughout camp there will be a lot of walking. This includes to and from the rink, to and from dryland sessions and all around campus. When teams walk they will be expected to walk together in a tight group (no stragglers). Each team will also be required to always travel with their team flags and team ball. All teams will make sure that everyone is accounted for and no teammates are left behind. Remember to hold your teammates accountable to be on time. Coaches may also challenge their teams to be creative throughout their walks so be prepared.

b. Cafeteria Chaos

For every meal that the team has at the cafeteria they will be required to sit in a particular order. This order will be based on the direction of the coaches. Once teams get into the cafeteria they will get their seating direction prior to getting their food. Seating Orders (use each order once)

- Oldest to Youngest
- Shortest to Tallest
- Lightest to Heaviest (Body Weight)
- Lightest to Darkest (Hair Color)
- North to South (Geographically – home towns)
- West to East (Favorite NHL Teams)
- Shoes Size (Smallest to Largest)
- Alphabetical Order
 - Last Names
 - First Names
 - Middle Names
 - Types of Skates
 - Name of School
 - Name of Previous Bantam team (team name – ie. Oilers)
 - Favorite Movie
 - Favorite NHL Player (Last Name)

c. Hot/Cold

- Materials: An object within the room

Objective

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

Explanation/Formation:

- Players spread out in room; 1 player leaves room
- An object is selected for the player outside room to come back in, find and ID the object. If an error is made in direction of looking, clap less. However, if a right movement is performed, the teammate clap faster and louder to reinforce the action.
- Clapping 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.

d. Toilet Paper Game

Materials: a number of roles of toilet paper

Explanation/Formation:

- Group: 1 large Group
- Have rolls of toilet paper and explain to your group that they are going camping and need to take as much toilet paper as they think they may need for a two day trip. Once everyone has an ample supply, explain to the group that for every square in their possession, they must share something about themselves. NOTE: If anyone knows the activity, ask them not to give away the secret under any circumstances.

e. Toonie truth or lie

Materials - toonie and a cup

Explanation/Formation:

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.

f. Penny and Dice

Materials - cup, 1 dice, 1 penny

Explanation/Formation:

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

Heads - truth about the storyline

Tails - lie about the storyline

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| 1. Family | 4. Vacation spot |
| 2. Music | 5. team |
| 3. sports story | 6. Hero |

g. Have you ever . . . ?

Materials

- 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:

- Players are asked to sit in a chair in a circle formation facing on another.
- One individual, who is "it", stands around in the middle of the group bouncing the tennis ball.
- 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).
- 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.
- The person who asked the question, moves to sit down in one of the empty chairs.
- 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?).

2. Communication

a. Heartbeat

Equipment:

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

Objectives:

- 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 team members sit next to each other and only have contact to each other by holding their hands. Teams sit back to back from one another
- A coin is thrown by the coach – only the coach and the first person in each line gets to look at the coin.
- Heads means that the first player in the row applies pressure to the person's hand beside them. This pressure is passed along the row so that the last player in the row can reach a spoon/object which is laying on a stool/being held by another coach or....
- Tails means that nothing happens.
- Process then starts again with coach or leader flipping a coin.
- After each flip, front players move to the back of the line
- The first team to pick up the object on the chair receives 1 point. Any team that messes up loses one point. The first team to 5 points wins!

b. Circle of Communication

PURPOSE

- * For use as ICEBREAKER
- * people get to know each other's 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:

- 5 balls of varying sizes, but not bigger than a small football - tennis balls, soft balls are good

Explanation/Formation:

- Ask the group for 1 volunteer and have him/her 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
- 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
- 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.
- If the ball is dropped it must go back to the first person and start the pattern again
- 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 volunteer that has been "outside" in to get involved in the challenge. You can give the new person a role (eg; be a good teammate and try or one who is on their own page and doesn't listen to the groups instructions/drops the ball, etc...). All of this will assist in the debrief
- It will be up to the group how they "bring in" the new member as the entire pattern will now have to be altered. Start with 1 ball again
- continue to add balls once they get a new pattern established
- Once this is done, bring the challenge to its conclusion.

Progressions and debrief

- Add the number of balls in the pattern (focus, communication (passing and receiving (verbal and non- verbal), learning names, confidence)

- Time the group and see if they can get better each time through (pressure and time influence execution)
- Add 1 plant player (dealing with adversity, leadership (how they help the new player and if the player isn't buying in, their reactions to them)
- Throwing and catching with "wrong hands" (adversity, focus)

c. 3 man human statue

Materials

- none

Materials

- crumpled up paper, basket/box

Explanation/Formation:

- The players will split into groups of 3 and have 3 rounds alternating where one player will be a muse another will be a statue and the last will try to get the muse using only voice commands to replicate the statue.
- Make sure the players are in a straight line with the muse in the middle facing away from the statue

d. Snowballs in a bucket

Materials

- crumpled up paper, basket/box

Explanation/Formation:

- 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

e. Search and Rescue

Equipment:

- Environment where players are together with no distractions.

Explanation/Formation:

- Players divided into 2 teams
- The first player in each line is given a blind fold to begin the challenge
- 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

3. Cooperation/trust/leadership

a. 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.

Explanation/Formation:

- Players are divided into partners. Preferably someone they do not know.
- One of the partners places a blindfold on (not permitted to see).
- Partner who can see will lead blindfolded partner outside around various obstacles.
- Seeable partner must communicate precisely, correctly and frequently to partner so no accidents will happen.
- 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 how fast person runs and how much trust is required.

b. 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:

- 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.
- Next person does it and proceeds one at a time.
- After first person goes, he rests on the floor below/underneath (double trust) and he has to be protected by other players (optional).

C. Wind the Willows

Equipment:

- 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.

d. Helium Stick

Equipment:

- Hockey stick, pole, fishing rod,...

Explanation/Formation:

- 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.

e. Team Pedestal - Milk Crate

Equipment Required:

- Sturdy milk crates and a stop watch

Explanation/Formation:

- Divide the team into two or three groups. 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.
- Progress from 1 player to 2 to 3 to... Must use different players each round. Try to get from 6-8 on the crate at once.
- The team must stay/balance on its crate for at least 3 seconds

f. Cohesion Bucket

Equipment:

- 5 Gallon Bucket Pail
- Water

Objectives:

- 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 all socks and shoes are off, they must put them back on. Once this has been done, the objective is to lower the water filled bucket to the ground.
- The objective 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.

g. Flip Flop

Equipment:

- 1 large blanket or 2 medium sized blankets. Water

Explanation/Formation:

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.

h. Electric Fence

Equipment:

- 1 long length of rope or twine of some type (can substitute with hockey tape or...)

Objectives

- Teammates cooperating to achieve objectives(s) together.

- Opportunity to brainstorm together to come up with solutions.

Explanation/Formation:

- The rope is tied to stationary objects (ie. pole, tree, etc.) The trees can be 8-15 feet apart depending on the length of your rope.
- Assume the rope consists of an electrical wire fence that extends below the rope. The only safe opening is over the rope.
- 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.
- You want to safely get everyone over to the other side. If one player happens to touch the rope, they are severely electrocuted and die
- Time determines how many attempts to get every teammate over safely (leave no man behind...)

i. Stair Stepper

Equipment:

- You will require 1 long set of stairs, long enough that there is at least 1 step per player.

Explanation/Formation:

- 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.

j. Inhuman Knot (ropes)

Materials:

- 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).

Explanation/Formation:

- Duration: 10-15 min
- 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 pickup 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.

k. Move the Team

Materials:

- 2 balls of any kind (must be the same i.e. 2 baseballs,2 footballs)
- 2 teams of 10
- 30 min to complete this task

Objective:

To teach the athletes the value in effective communication, leadership and teamwork.

Explanation/Formation:

Each team will start at the same location there goal is to get each member of their team to a specified finish location. Only the player touching the ball can move and only one player can touch the ball at any one time.

l. Push-up Party

Materials:

- none

Objective:

- To get the players to work as one cohesive unit, no player shining above the rest. All 20 players will be required to do 5 push ups in unison

Explanation/Formation:

- All team players must reach the top and the bottom of their push up at the same time every time they do so they will have completed 1 push up as a group. (This may take 50 or more push ups to complete) This task seems so easy but actually is incredibly challenging.

m. Skip Rope

Materials:

2 Ropes

- approximately 10 metres long

Explanation/Formation:

- Group Size: 2 Groups of 10
- Duration: 10-15 min

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 forward, 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.

n. Gauntlet Line

Materials:

- None

Explanation/Formation:

- Players line up in 2 lines. Turn so that each is looking across from a player in the opposite line. Each player puts his arms out in front of them and spaces each in between their partners 1 player at a time walks from the front of the line to the back through each set of arms. The players in the line must lift their arms up as their teammate goes through the gauntlet.
- Timing and communication are critical if the player going through is not to get hit by a teammates arms. Once through, the next player goes. As they become familiar with the team builder, have them jog and later sprint through. Great activity for trust as well!

o. Peanut Butter Sandwich

Materials:

- bread, peanut butter, knife, note cards, pens, and pencils

Explanation/Formation:

- Hand out a pen or pencil to each member of the group. Ask each player to write down the directions to make a peanut butter sandwich on his/her note card.

- Collect all the note cards and mix them up. Draw a random card from the pile. Read the directions, and follow them exactly as written. After the sandwich is made, have the writer let everyone know if it was what they wanted...
- Select another card and repeat. Unless someone does a great job with their directions, the leader will not be able to create a perfectly constructed peanut butter sandwich. Each card will also end with a slightly different result.
- Debriefing Tips: This exercise demonstrates that even when you believe your communication is clear and precise, others can interpret it differently.

p. Peanut Active X's & O's

- Materials
- 9 hula hoops or tape or ... to make 9 squares
- 9 bean bags
- It's basically tic-tac-toe but instead of X and O it's 2 colours. It is a race to make the 3-colored line first.
- One team at a time places their bean bag in 1 of the 3 by 3 square game board (hula hoop/taped onto the floor). Alternate teams.
- The game continues until 1 team has a straight row of 3 bean bags.
- The url link below shows a video of how to play the game
- <https://www.facebook.com/uniladmag/videos/2229895623700151/>