

Activity: The Deep Divide

Overview

The Deep Divide challenges teammates to work through a series of tasks that require coordinated effort and communication for success. Four teams race across a deep divide using a series of mats and stationary islands strategically placed inside the divide. Teams must work together and share resources to make it across.

Set Up

- 6 20-foot ropes
- 2 18"x22" mats
- 12 12"x12" mats
- The All Aboard Platform

To begin, create a rectangle with the ropes (20'x40'), folding back the corners of the rectangle so the ropes do not actually touch at the corners.

Inside this rectangle place the All Aboard Platform in one area and the two 18"x22" mats side by side in another area. (They do not have to be equally distanced from any one side.)

Instructions

1. Divide the team into four groups, each beginning on one face of the outside of the rectangle.
2. Each group must cross to the opposite side as quickly as possible without stepping on the floor/ground.

The following rules apply:

1. Each group has 3 jet stand (2 for smaller groups) that may be used to safely traverse the divide.
2. Rope boundaries and islands may not be moved.
3. A maximum of three feet may be on one jet stand at a time.

4. The chimney-pipe islands are safe, but once utilized they must always be occupied by two people within a reasonable time (one person stepping on while the other is stepping off) or the island becomes uninhabitable.
5. If a jet stand is released at any time (i.e., if you lose touch with the mat), it is lost.
6. Groups must begin on one side and exit on the opposite side without stepping outside the rope boundaries of the divide. (In other words, they may not walk around.)
7. The stones (mats) cannot be scooted across the floor.
8. No jumping, leaping, or otherwise unsafe movement is allowed for safety reasons.
9. If any rule is broken, the group must begin again.

Sample Story Line

You are on an expedition to repair four technology stations that have malfunctioned. Your team decided to split into four groups to explore the area and see if you could find the equipment faster, since disaster will strike if you don't complete the work within a specified time. Each of the four groups found a station, but unfortunately, they found one they are not trained to repair. The four groups have arrived simultaneously at the edges of a deep canyon. You discover the group facing you has found the station you are trained to repair, and it is quite close to where they are located. There is no time to go around; you all must get to the equipment ASAP because time is running out. Fortunately, each group brought three jet stands that will enable you to walk on air. These little jets, however, can support no more than three feet. They stay active as long as you engage the starter, but if you release the starter (let go of the mat), the little jet stands will crash to the bottom of the canyon. You also suspect that what appears to be a mirage rising out of the ground might actually be one of the mystical chimney pipes you've read about in your study. These mystical pipes become real and useful when stepped on, but once stepped on, must always be occupied or they will disappear.

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Safety

To help in the safety of this activity, remind the group of the following safety tips:

- No running, leaping, or any other form of unsafe movement is allowed.
- Remind participants to be careful when stepping on and picking up mats.

Reflection

Group goals often take priority over organizational goals. When this occurs, there is the opportunity for conflict over resources, assignments, priorities, personnel, and time. In addition, if the competitive spirit is encouraged or simply arises on its own, more challenges arise. Moving beyond conflict requires attention to the higher vision (big picture) as well as teamwork and leadership skills.

Discover

- What skills were important to the success of this task?
- How did you support your team? Did you have a plan?
- How did you arrive at a group decision regarding which ideas to use?
- At what points were attention and awareness of others at their peak?
- How did you and the team respond to the variance in the distances you had to travel?
- How did you build rapport with others outside your group?

Connect

- What components of communication were essential for this activity to be completed successfully?
- What were some of the resources you used? How did you manage the use and care of these resources?
- Cooperation is important, how did your group excel with this component?
- What contributions did each member make?
- What important skills were used to help move the group through conflict or to avoid potential conflict altogether?
- Think of an example at work, school, or home that is similar to this activity, one where individual or department goals may take primary focus. Explain.

Create

- What did you discover or learn here that will enable you to be more effective in similar situations? Be specific in telling us how you will implement these new skills.
- Provide an example of when you have experienced team members having unequal responsibilities. What did you learn here that could help in real-life situations similar to this example? What is required of individuals in similar real-life situations?