**Relationship Building Team Activities**

**#1. Truth And Lie**

Give each team member four identical slips of paper. Instruct them to write down three truths and one lie. The lie should be believable to some extent (i.e. not “I’ve been to Mars”), and the tenor of the truths and lie should not be offensive or crude. Go around the group, one at a time, and have them read the truths and lie in random order. When they are finished, the team should discuss which they think are the truths and which are the lies.

**Purpose:** This exercise fits into the “get to know each other” category. Extroverts have no difficulty in making themselves known, but introverts often remain an enigma, bowled into silence. This exercise gives them equal footing to reveal facts about themselves as well as expose the assumptions others have made. Participants learn about others and also learn about themselves through the lies they thought were true.

**#2 Organizational Jenga**

Using wooden blocks or an actual Jenga game, mark blocks according to the hierarchies present in your company. For example, you might have some blocks denoted as the IT department, and others as HR. You might have particular shaped blocks marked as “manager” and block shapes as “support staff.” The labeled blocks should reflect the composition of your office (e.g. if 10% of your staff is IT, so should 10% of the blocks).

Divide your team into groups, giving them an equal number and kind of blocks. From here, either specify the type of structure each team must build, or provide guidelines and allow them to build any structure they want. When the time limit has been reached, each team, taking turns, must begin to remove a block at a time without destroying their structure. Do not inform them ahead of time that you will be asking them to do this.

If time allows, you may ask them to repeat the exercise. See if they find a way to build a structure that can withstand removal of blocks.

**Purpose:** This exercise is meant to show how each department and the various managers and staff positions are necessary to complete the task, and that without everyone in place, things fall apart.The second round reveals what “blocks” the team sees as unnecessary as they conceive of a way to deconstruct their structure without destroying it.

**#3 Watch Where You Step**

Using masking tape, create a large polygonal shape on the floor. It should be about 12 feet long by 6 feet wide, at least. Mark the start and stopping points. Make the shape a bit convoluted, choosing a shape that is elongated with the idea that people must make their way from one end to the other. Place a few squeaky dog toys inside the shape, and twice as many full sheets of paper with a large X on them inside the shape. The paper is the mines.

At least two at a time, each person on your team must make their way from start to finish blindfolded. They cannot step outside of the boundary, nor can they step on a mine. If they do, they are frozen. They can only be unfrozen if someone else inside the shape steps on a squeak toy. Their only guidance is the vocal commands of those outside the shape who are not blindfolded.

**Purpose:** This game is about communication, and trusting each other. Players learn to be observant of multiple action as well as give clear and timely advice.

**#4 Group Timeline**

On a bulletin board or other surface which accepts thumbtacks, create a blank timeline. The timeline should start as far back as the oldest member on your team was born or when the company was founded, whichever came first. Mark each year on the timeline. Then, using narrow strips of paper, write down important dates for the company (e.g. founded, merged, changed names, incorporated, new product) and pin it to the correct spot on the timeline.

Give your team members four slips of paper, and ask them to mark down four important moments in their life. Let them pin them to the timeline.

**Purpose:** This exercise helps show, in a visual way, the different generations and experiences of your team. It leads well into talking about cultural and generational differences and the effects that has on how people work and communicate. It is also an opportunity for team members to learn more about each other.

**Picture Pieces Game**

This problem solving activity requires that the leader choose a well known picture or cartoon that is full of detail. The picture needs to be cut into as many equal squares as there are participants in the activity. Each participant should be given a piece of the “puzzle” and instructed to create an exact copy of their piece of the puzzle five times bigger than its original size. They are posed with the problem of not knowing why or how their own work affects the larger picture. The leader can pass out pencils, markers, paper, and rulers in order to make the process simpler and run more smoothly. When all the participants have completed their enlargements, ask them to assemble their pieces into a giant copy of the original picture on a table.

**Purpose**: This problem solving activity will teach participants how to work in a team and it demonstrates divisionalized ‘departmental’ working, which is the understanding that each person working on their own part contributes to an overall group result.