

Exploring Leadership

ADAPTABILITY: FLEXIBILITY

Flexibility is one of the key elements of participating in any sort of team. It is most commonly associated with adaptability, which is the ability to change when the settings and circumstances of your team change. Flexibility is more of an ability to take on multiple things at once, specifically when there is a need for extra help. It is important to recognize when you need to be flexible, and take action to fulfill a need in your team. Those who are flexible, show a willingness to step up and help their team in whatever way is needed and the ability to succeed in different projects and skills.

CONVERSATION STARTERS:

- Think of a time when you have had to be flexible in a team
- How did being flexible help your team?
- Why do you think being flexible is so important?

KEY OBJECTIVES:

- Discover what flexibility is and when it is needed.
- Understand and practice how to be flexible and why it is important.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- Sheets of newspaper, 20 per team
- A roll of masking tape, one per team
- One beach ball (inflatable)
- Supplies for alternative activities. (If using examples, instructions for origami cranes/origami paper and whiteboard markers)

EXPLORATION ACTIVITY:

Flexibility is the ability to take on multiple tasks, being willing to take on extra work as needed, and accepting things that go differently than expected or planned. This is important as it helps you practice working on multiple projects at once, and develop skills in different categories. This shows devotion to the group, and a willingness to go the extra mile to help everyone succeed as a whole, even if it means taking on more work yourself.

- Each team must build a 3-ft tower strong enough to support a beach ball for 10 seconds using the materials provided
- Split into groups of 6-8 members, pass out newspaper and tape
- Within the 10 minute time limit teams can ask the facilitator to test their structure.
 - If the structure holds up the beach ball for at least 10 seconds they pass (beach ball must be blown up completely and not changed in any way)
 - If the structure fails to hold up the beach ball for at least 10 seconds, the team may rebuild / readjust their tower within the remaining time and test it again
- At random times choose a few team members from each group to participate in a different activity or accomplish a different task. Emphasize that the remaining team members still must represent their entire team and accomplish the task in the allotted amount of time. You could also try having entire teams switch projects and adjust to completing a structure another group started.

FACILITATOR TIP:

- Alternative activities may include drawing a picture, folding origami cranes, creating and performing an encouraging song for all the teams, or organizing the chairs into a new shape.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

Ask the below open ended questions to your group to engage in a discussion about what happened during the activity.

- How did you change what you did in order to be flexible?
- How did you feel when you needed to step up to fill another role when someone could not do what they were originally doing?
- How did you feel when you had to shift your focus to a different task?
- Was there anything you could have done differently to make the task easier or more successful if you knew you were going to have to change tasks?

APPLICATION DISCUSSION:

- What are some times in your life when you might need to be flexible?
- What can you do to better prepare yourself for situation where you need to be unexpectedly flexible?
- How can you help your team be more flexible?
- How can you limit the need for flexibility?



CONCLUSION:

Flexibility is an important skill to have when working with others, especially when there are multiple tasks that must be worked on at the same time. When we recognize when we need to be flexible, we can step up and fulfill the needs of our team. It is important to remember to be flexible when we can to make the team successful as a whole, but also to make it so your team can still be solid without too much need for flexibility.

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REFERENCES

- <https://ventureteambuilding.co.uk/lift-a-beach-ball-team-building-activity/#.YHj7K0hKg2w>