



Exploring Leadership

TEAMWORK: PROJECT PLANNING

Teamwork is more than just a group of people working toward a task. Imagine a pick-up basketball game where random players come together to play. They might do well at first, but as they spend more time together, they get better because they learn each other's strengths. And, the more they understand each other's strengths, the more successful they become as a team.

CONVERSATION STARTERS:

Discuss: "If you fail to plan, you plan to fail" -Benjamin Franklin
What makes a strong plan, and why?

Teamwork is about how members interact and use their skills to support one another. By recognizing each person's strengths and assets, you can plan and assign roles that suit them best. *Project planning* helps your team combine knowledge and abilities to create a shared vision and achieve goals effectively.

KEY OBJECTIVES:

- Communicate effectively to plan and execute a project.
- Develop a shared vision or goal as part of a project plan.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- Structural materials: typing paper, straws, toothpicks, wood skewers, popsicle sticks
- Fastener materials: two feet of masking tape, gum drops, marshmallows, brads, binder clips, rubber bands, string
- Tennis balls
- Tape measure or ruler
- Timer

EXPLORATION ACTIVITY:

This fun challenge will test your teamwork and creativity as you build and rebuild a tower, helping you discover ways to work together more effectively.

FACILITATION TIPS:

- Observe how the teams collaborate. What makes some teams more effective than others?
- Pay attention to the building strategies. Which ones worked well, and which ones didn't?
- Consider giving a small reward for the tallest or most stable tower.

- Divide into teams of 3-5.
- Your challenge is to build the tallest tower in 5 minutes that can hold a tennis ball on top, using only two types of structural materials and two types of fasteners.
- Once time is up, measure the height of your tower with the ball on top.
- Take 5 minutes to reflect on your first attempt, as a team, using the first set of questions in the 'Reflect' section.
- Disassemble your original tower and rebuild a taller one in 4 minutes from scratch.
- Measure the height of the new tower, then discuss what you learned as a group, using the 'Reflect' section to guide your discussion.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

After first attempt:

- What worked well? What didn't?
- Did your group have a leader? How was that person chosen?
- Did everyone share responsibilities, or did you assign specific tasks to each person?

After second attempt:

- What changed from the first attempt?
- Were you more successful the second time? Why or why not?
- What parts of your plan helped you succeed the most?

APPLICATION DISCUSSION:

The best team projects come from careful planning and clear structure.

- How can you apply what you learned to planning future events or activities?
- What were the most important steps in your project planning?
- Let's compare those steps to this guide for professional project planning:
 - **Initiation:** Forming the team and agreeing on a clear, shared goal.
 - **Planning:** Defining the project scope (who, what, when, where), identifying tasks, assigning roles, evaluating risks, identifying resources, and creating a schedule to prepare for action.
 - **Execution:** Carrying out the tasks outlined in the plan.
 - **Monitor and Control:** Track progress, manage resources, and solve problems to stay on schedule.
 - **Project completion:** Finishing the project and reflecting on lessons learned.



CONCLUSION:

Team planning is one of the most powerful tools a leader can use to bring people together. It unites people, allowing them to combine their strengths, ideas, and creativity. Well-organized teams can achieve more together than even the most talented individuals working alone. Planning together helps teams achieve more and create a greater impact.

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