

COLLABORATIVE DECISION-MAKING

Collaboration is more than just working alongside others—it's about listening, problem-solving, and making decisions together. Strong teams find ways to communicate, adapt, and trust each other to reach a common goal. In this challenge, you'll see firsthand how effective collaboration can turn a simple task into a powerful lesson in teamwork and leadership.



Conversation Starter: Think of a time when you were in a group where no one listened. What happened?

RUBBER BAND - CUP CHALLENGE

- Teams must work together to stack cups without using their hands. They must rely on a shared tool (rubber band with attached strings) to complete the task successfully.

Instructions:

- Divide participants into small teams of 3-5.
- Give each team a rubber band with four or more strings attached—one string per participant.

FACILITATION TIPS

- Modify string lengths as needed for accessibility. Participants with limited motor skills can serve as team strategists, giving verbal instructions instead of manipulating the rubber band.
- Encourage teams to pause and reflect after their first attempt. Giving them time to discuss strategy before trying again often leads to better teamwork and problem-solving.

- Each participant holds onto one string.
- Teams must work together to lift and stack plastic cups into a stable pyramid without touching them directly.
- Only the rubber band and strings may be used—no hands.

Variations:

- Race Mode: Compete against other teams to build the tallest or most stable pyramid.
- Time Challenge: Unstack and restack the cups into a specific formation within a set time.
- Silent Mode: Complete the task without speaking—teams must rely only on nonverbal communication.
- One-Hand Mode: Each participant may only use one hand, increasing the challenge.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- Strengthen teamwork and decision-making in group settings.
- Develop problem-solving skills through collaboration and adaptability.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Rubber bands (one per team)
- Strings (tied to the rubber band, one per person)
- Plastic cups (stackable)



REFLECTION

- What is collaboration, and how did your team demonstrate it during this activity?
- Did a leader emerge in your group?
- What was the most difficult part of working together?

APPLICATION

- How does teamwork help when solving big challenges, not just small tasks?
- Have you ever been in a situation where poor teamwork caused problems? How could what you learned today have helped?
- How can we apply these teamwork skills to service projects, leadership roles, or everyday problem-solving?
- Dive Deeper: How do teams decide whose ideas to follow when there are multiple opinions? What happens when a team ignores certain voices, and how can we make sure everyone is heard?

KEY TAKEAWAY: Working together isn't just about getting the job done—it's about listening, adapting, and making space for everyone's ideas. When teams communicate, trust, and collaborate effectively, they can solve problems and accomplish more than they ever could alone.

CHECK UNDERSTANDING

Did this activity help participants experience the value of working together to solve a problem?

