



**Michigan Career Education Conference  
February 1, 2011**

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## Teambuilding Activities: It's Not Just About Having Fun

### Purpose of teambuilding activities:

- Helps the instructor get to know the students
- Helps the students get to know one another
- Gets students working with students outside their own "clique"
- Helps students start to look at their range of resources
- Helps students understand that sometimes there isn't a "right answer"
- Helps students understand that sometimes there is more than one "right answer"
- Helps students work together to solve a problem
- Allows/requires students to think creatively
- Stresses the importance of communication
- Explores a range of communication styles
- Practices skills that will ultimately be important in the work world

### Some of our favorites and why we use them: (see directions attached)

- All Tied Up (Students must communicate and work together as a team to achieve success)
- Choosing Sides (Learn about interests, preferences, etc. and whether or not students are willing to "stand alone")
- Cup Stack (Working together, participation and communicating are key; leadership styles emerge)
- Line Up (Importance of communication, both verbal and nonverbal)
- One Common Goal (Recognize how much we have in common as we work forward)
- Spiderweb (Learn what we have in common and things unique to us; learn who we can learn from; develop a support system)

(Source: Jones, Alanna. Team-Building Activities for Every Group. Rec Room Publishing: Richland, VA. 1999)

### What we watch for:

- How is each individual functioning as a member of a team? Are they a "team player?"
- Who is emerging as a leader? Who is happy as a follower? Who can be comfortable in either role?
- How are they communicating? Is one person doing all the planning and directing? Is everyone getting a chance to be heard? Are all ideas valued?
- Who's "thinking outside the box?"
- What prior knowledge do they bring to solve problems? Are they determined to find only one or "the" right answer?
- How are students processing what they've learned from one another? Do they know what they "bring to the table?"

Teambuilding Activities: **All Tied Up**

(from Team-Building Activities for Every Group by Alanna Jones)

Suggested Materials:

- Scrap strips of cloth
- Other items as needed

Directions:

Break participants into partners or small groups, or work as one large group.

Ask participants to form a circle in their group. Use the cloth strips to tie the group together so that each person is tied to both neighbor's wrists. Now give the group a task to do together such as:

- > make and eat ice cream cones
- > wrap packages with gift wrap, bows and a card
- > eat lunch
- > make a snack
- > create an art project
- > etc.

This is a good way to learn about working as a team. Did everyone cooperate? Did everyone do their part? Was the group successful?

## Teambuilding Activities: Choosing Sides (Four Corners)

(from Team-Building Activities for Every Group by Alanna Jones)

### Suggested Materials:

- None

### Directions:

Gather the group in the middle of the room or playground and point out four designated areas (four walls, four specific playground structures, etc.). Pose a question/statement with four different choices/answers and ask students to move to the area that matches their choice. For example:

- How many people are in your family?
  - If there are six or more people, move to the wall by the fish tank.
  - If there are 4 or 5 people, move to the wall by the pencil sharpener.
  - If there are 3 people, move to the wall by the door.
  - If there are 2 or less people, move to the door by the white board.
- How much time do you usually spend doing homework each night?
  - If you spend 2 or more hours, move to the swings.
  - If you spend 1 to 2 hours, move to the slide.
  - If you spend less than 1 hour, move to the climber.
  - If you don't do homework, move to the soccer net.
- What kinds of things do you like to read?
  - If you like to read stories about animals and places, move to ....
  - If you like to read stories about real people, move to....
  - If you like to read stories about imaginary people, move to....
  - If you don't like to read, move to....
- What subject are you most worried about?
  - If you're most worried about math, move to...
  - If you're most worried about reading, move to...
  - If you're most worried about science, move to...
  - If you're most worried about spelling, move to...

This is a good way to learn about students and for them to learn about each other and what they have in common. Questions can be developed to fit different needs: getting to know you, study habits/work skills, review of content, etc.

## Teambuilding Activities: **Cup Stack**

(from "Team-Building Activities for Every Group" by Alanna Jones)

### Suggested Materials:

- For each group: 10 paper or styrofoam cups of equal size, one rubber band (large enough to fit around a cup), 6 pieces of string or yarn

### Preparation:

Before the activity, cut the string or yarn into pieces 2-3 feet in length. It is not necessary for all pieces to be the same length (in fact, varying lengths within each group may be more challenging!?).

Tie 6 pieces of yarn or string to a rubber band, spacing them as evenly apart as possible. (it will look like a sunshine with 6 rays going off of it)

Make one of these for each group.

### Directions:

Give each group 10 cups, laying every which way on a table, and one rubber band implement. Ask the group to stack all 10 cups into a pyramid (4 on the bottom, then 3, 2 and 1) using only their rubber band tool to maneuver the cups. At no time may they touch a cup with any body part.

This is a good lesson in people working together on a difficult project. Talk about how everyone must do their part. Did leaders emerge?

## Teambuilding Activities: Line Up

(from Team-Building Activities for Every Group by Alanna Jones)

### Suggested Materials:

- None

### Directions:

Ask all participants to line up according to one of the ideas below (or make up one of your own). Increase the challenge by:

- > allowing no talking
- > blindfolding some or all participants
- > setting a time limit
- > combination of the above

### Line up ideas:

by birthdates

shortest to tallest

by the number of letters in your full name

by where you were born (nearest to furthest)

etc.

This is a good way to consider other forms of communication. Did someone emerge as the leader? Were people frustrated? Did people have different expectations?

Teambuilding Activities: **One Common Goal**

(from Team-Building Activities for Every Group by Alanna Jones)

Suggested Materials:

- Paper and writing instruments

Directions:

Break the participants into groups of near equal size. Ask them to write down everything that they can think of that is common to every person in their group. Set a time limit for the activity. When the time has expired, have groups share their list. If desired, you can even see what the common elements were between all groups.

This is a good way to learn more about each other and to recognize that we all have things in common.

## Icebreaker Activities: **Spiderweb**

### Suggested Materials:

- two or three skeins of yarn tied together and wrapped into one large ball
- a group of participants standing in a circle

### Directions:

- 1) The group leader begins by explaining these rules:

I am going to tell you something about myself. If what I say is common to you, I want you to raise your hand. I will wrap the yarn around myself and throw the ball on to someone who raised their hand because we have something in common. If the ball comes to you, tell us something about yourself, wrap the yarn around you, and throw the ball of yarn to someone who raised their hand because the two of you have something in common. We will play until everyone has been wrapped up 2 or 3 times.

- 2) Play as directed.

- 3) When everyone has had the opportunity to participate, say:

We have created a big web. This web helped us learn about one another, to find out what we have in common, and to find out who likes things that we'd like to learn more about. The more we participated, the bigger and stronger our web got. It was nice to find people who had things in common with us, but it was also nice to find people who were different from us because they make the world much more interesting. We need to remember the people in our web when we have something to celebrate; these are people who can share our successes and happiness. We also need to remember the people in our web when we need help because these are people who can work with us to get bigger and stronger and to help us out when we're feeling sad or frustrated.



## Possible CTE Program Certifications

**Highlighted certifications may articulate for college credit**

Program	Certification Possibilities
<b>Agri-Tech</b>	Pesticide Certification
<b>Auto Services Technology</b>	Michigan Auto Certification
<b>Careers in Early Childhood</b>	CPR & First Aid Certification
<b>Careers in Education</b>	Michigan Basic Skills Test
<b>Careers in Electrical Engineering</b>	PLTW Certificates of Completion Fanuc Robot Tool Handling Certification
<b>Careers in Hospitality</b>	ServSafe Sanitation and Safety Certification ServSafe Alcohol Certification ProStart Certification
<b>Careers in Public Safety</b>	CPR Certification FEMA (NIMS 100, 200) Certification
<b>Computer Information Services</b>	A+ Certification Network Plus Certification CISCO Certified Entry Network Technician
<b>Dental Aide</b>	CPR & First Aid Certification
<b>Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)</b>	CPR & First Aid Certification National Registry Preparation for licensure
<b>Engineering, Design &amp; Cad</b>	PLTW Certificate of Completion
<b>Health Care Careers</b>	CPR & First Aid Certification Dean Vaughn Medical Terminology Certificate
<b>Nursing Preparation</b>	CNA Certification (Certified Nursing Assistant)
<b>Ornamental Horticulture</b>	Michigan Floral Certification Michigan Certified Nurseryman Pesticide Certification

## Planning Your Successful Career Pathway Hospitality & Culinary Arts

