

## **LA400 – Team Building**

### National OA Adviser Training

**Session Length:** 25 Minutes

#### **Slide 2 - Overview:**

Team building is a collective term for various types of activities used to improve relationships and define roles within Lodges. They often involve collaborative activities to encourage friendship and trust in lodge members. Team building is distinctly different from team training which is designed to improve the completion of tasks within a lodge.

#### **Slide 3 - Purpose of Session:**

With good team-building skills you can unite lodge members around a common goal and generate a dynamic and active lodge. Without those skills, you limit yourself and the lodge to only to individual efforts that can only be made alone. This session will guide you to a better understanding of the team building process.

#### **Slide 4 - Session Outline:**

This session will explain how you, as the adviser, can apply consistent and effective team development techniques that will help your leadership team achieve more and have more fun while doing it.

#### **Introduction - Team Building**

Team building is an ongoing process that helps your lodge evolve into a vibrant and cohesive group. The lodge members learn to not only share expectations for accomplishing the lodges goals and tasks, but trust and support one another and respect one another's individual differences. Your role as a Lodge Adviser is to guide the lodge and help the lodge leadership grow and become more effective leaders. You should constantly nurture and maintain the team for your lodge to succeed.

## Slide 5 - Guiding Principles

Team building can lead to:

- Good communications with lodge members as part of a team and as an individual
- Increased creativity and interest from lodge officers and members
- Arrowmen are motivated to achieve goals
- A climate of cooperation and collaborative problem-solving
- Higher levels of position satisfaction and commitment
- Higher levels of trust and support
- Diverse lodge members working well together
- Clear work objectives
- More effective operating lodge Executive Committee

## Slide 6 - Symptoms that Signal a Need for Team Building

- Conflicts or hostility among lodge members
- Confusion about assignments, commitments, and unclear relationships between individuals and committees.
- Decisions misunderstood or not carried through properly
- Apathy and lack of involvement, low attendance at meetings
- Lack of innovative programs to interest lodge members
- Ineffective L.E.C. meetings, low participation, no progress on lodge goals
- Negative reactions to elected officers or their advisers

## Slide 7 & 8 - Steps to Building an Effective Team

Team building consists of both how the adviser relates to the lodge and the lodges leadership team and activities that help guide the team to better interpersonal relationships.

The first rule of team building is an obvious one: to lead a team effectively, you must first establish your leadership with each team member. You are the Lodge Adviser so remember that the most effective advisers build their relationships of trust and loyalty, rather than fear or the power of their positions. The following comprise effective Team Building steps:

- Consider each lodge member's ideas as valuable. Remember that there is no such thing as a stupid idea.



- **Be aware of Arrowman's unspoken feelings.** Set an example to team members by being open and sensitive to their moods and feelings.
- **Act as a harmonizing influence.** Look for chances to mediate and resolve minor disputes; point continually toward the lodge's higher goals.
- **Be clear when communicating.** Be careful to clarify instructions. Explain clearly and concisely.
- **Encourage trust and cooperation among lodge members.** Remember that the relationships Arrowmen establish among themselves are every bit as important as those you establish with them. As the team begins to take shape, pay close attention to the ways in which team members work together and take steps to improve communication, cooperation, trust, and respect in those relationships.
- **Encourage team members to share information.** Emphasize the importance of each team member's contribution and demonstrate how all their jobs operate together to move the entire lodge closer to its goal.
- **Delegate problem-solving tasks to the team.** Let the team work on creative solutions together.
- **Facilitate communication.** Remember that communication is the single most important factor in successful teamwork. Facilitating communication does not mean holding meetings all the time. Instead it means setting an example by remaining open to suggestions and concerns, by asking questions and offering help, and by doing everything you can to avoid confusion in your own communication.
- **Establish lodge values and goals; evaluate team performance.** Be sure to talk with members about the progress they are making toward established goals so that everyone gets a sense both of their success and of the challenges that lie ahead.
- **Make sure that you have a clear idea of what the lodge needs to accomplish;** that you know what the lodge's and council's goals for success are going to be; that you have established clear time frames; and that team members understand their responsibilities.
- **Use consensus.** Set objectives, solve problems, and plan for action. While it takes much longer to establish agreement among your youth leaders, this ultimately provides better decisions and greater results.
- **Encourage listening and brainstorming.** As the Lodge Adviser, your first priority in creating the team is to encourage discussion. Remember that Arrowmen are often afraid to disagree with one another and that this fear can lead your team to

make poor decisions. When you encourage discussion, you inspire creativity and that's how you'll spur the lodge on to better results.

## Slide 9 - Team Building that Actually Builds Teams

The most important step when planning a team-building activity comes at the very beginning: you must start figuring out what challenges your lodge faces. Only then can you plan activities that will be effective in helping the lodge. Keep competition out of the activity and aim to make team building a consistent part of lodge activities rather than a once-a-year event.

Spend some time thinking about the lodge's current strengths and weaknesses. Ask yourself these questions to identify the root of any problems:

- Are there conflicts between certain lodge members that are creating divisions within the team?
- Do the team members need to get to know one another better?
- Do members focus on their own success, and harm the lodge as a result?
- Does poor communication slow the lodge's progress?
- Do lodge members need to learn to work together, instead of individually?
- Are some lodge members resistant to change and does this affect the lodge's ability to move forward?
- Do members of the team need a boost to their morale?

## Slide 10 - You've Done This Before!

You have probably been involved in a team-building activity at some point.

Perhaps it was at a conclave or conference. It could have been at summer camp or simply a day on the golf course getting to know everyone.

But, whether or not you or others enjoyed the experience, what happened when everyone returned to their old ways, perhaps arguing over assignments or not cooperating with each other? Did anyone actually use any of the lessons that they learned once the session was done? It is very important to know exactly what you want the team building exercise to accomplish before you decide what the exercise is- it needs to "stick" so that your lodge members can easily apply what they learn.

Sometimes the best team-building exercises for Arrowmen are those that teach them to get to each other better and trust each other more.

### Examples of Team Building Exercises

There are a great number of Team Building Exercises available in print and on the Web. A simple search reveals many ways to apply this great personal growth tool. Remember to identify what type of activity would work best in your lodges situation. For example,

activities that are targeted to helping with communication don't work well if your lodge is having problems with trust in its leadership.

### **Example 1 - THE TARP RAFT**

Get everyone to stand around the tarp. Then say, "We have a big announcement, we will now be doing \_\_\_\_\_ (name of lodge) Cruises! So hop aboard the cruise ship. Please keep in mind that everyone needs to stay on board at all times."

Once everyone is on, continue with, "Oh no! We've hit an iceberg – and we lost half of the ship. You need to get all of your fellow shipmates safely to the remaining half of the ship, everyone needs to stay onboard at all times or be forever lost to the sea, and there will be no human sacrifices."

The team needs to fold the tarp in half and keep everyone on the tarp. This shouldn't be too hard.

The say, "What's that in the distance? Is it a pirate ship? Could it be the Black Pearl and Captain Jack Sparrow? It is! The pirates have fired on our cruise ship and we have lost half of the ship. Make sure to get everyone safely to the remaining half of the ship. Again, everyone must stay on board at all times, and no one can be forced to walk the plank."

The team must again fold the tarp in half, keeping everyone on. If someone is lost, keep going, the point is to see how long they can go while working together effectively.

"Good, you made it. It should be smooth sailing now ... uh oh, those sharks look pretty hungry! Darn, a shark has taken a chunk out of our now small boat, and we only have half the ship left. Make sure everyone gets safely to the remaining half. Remember, keep everyone on board, and do not let anyone fall into the shark-infested waters."

And again, no sacrifices. If they still are all on, keep going, if not, call it quits. If you want, ask for a breakdown of what worked and what didn't, and what could have been done differently.

Finally say, "Phew! We're almost back ... I can see Palm Walk in the distance! But wait ... there is a leak and we need to evacuate everyone to one half of the boat to keep it afloat. Quickly and safely evacuate all staff to one half of the ship."

This should be the point that people start falling off and the game should be over by now. If not, end it and congratulate them for keeping everyone alive.

## Example 2 - ROAMING GNOMES

Similarly named "Roaming Gnomes" has at least a 20-year history (Google "roaming gnomes" to find hilarious stories). The tradition is that a Lawn Ornament (e.g. gnome, rabbit, etc.) is kidnapped and taken on adventures that are recorded on pictures or video. At the end of the adventure, the Gnome returns home happy and content and has pictures to show its family of where it has been. Here is how you do it.

First, split all Arrowmen into teams. Teams should probably be about 5-6 Arrowmen. Remember that if driving is involved you will need sufficient adult drivers and leadership.

Purchase (or have donated) lawn ornament (LO) gnomes and put them at pre-arranged locations in camp, maybe even the houses of 5 adult volunteers.

Announce: "Your mission tonight is to kidnap a LO from the address specified and take it on adventures around the city that you will capture on video camera!"

Rule #1: The game is called "Kidnapped", not "Murder". Treat your LO well. Tell us if you damage it, so we can pay for "hospital" costs.

Rule #2: Everyone in the group must appear in at least one scene with the LO, and the more scenes that include lots of people, the better.

Rule #3: Have fun, but don't get arrested. Keep it G-rated so we can give a copy of the video to the family of your LO.

Video Tape your LO doing the following, and while you're at it, give the LO a name, voice and some personality:

50 Points Each

Drinking coffee at a coffee shop

Shopping for vegetables at a grocery store

Playing on a swing set

Going to school

Dancing or playing an instrument

Driving a car as if in a speed chase

Trying to get in a store that has a "Closed" sign up

100 Points

Caught in the act of trying to escape

Eating with chopsticks

Having a conversation with another LO about the experience

Being interviewed by a reporter about his/her adventures so far

200 Points

Asking a stranger for a date

Posing with a community or emergency worker (paramedic, fire dept. personnel, police officer, etc.)

Working behind the counter at a fast food joint

Posing by a house with a "For Sale" sign & saying why they like this house

LO doing a TV commercial for a product

END THE VIDEO WITH A GROUP HUG AND FAREWELL STATEMENT FROM THE LO

Prizes will be awarded for:

Blockbuster Award: Most Points

MTV Award: Single funniest scene

Director's Award: Funniest overall video

### **Example 3 - THE GREAT EGG DROP**

This messy, yet classic and engaging problem solving activity requires splitting the room into two large groups with the task of building an egg package that can sustain an eight foot drop. A variety of tools and other materials should be provided to the teams. After the packages have been built, each team must also present a 30-second advert for their package, highlighting why it's unique and how it works. At the conclusion of the presentations, each group will have to drop their egg using their package to see if it really works. Aside from teaching the groups to work together and communicate, it also brings them together with the common goal of both winning

### **Example 4 - MINE FIELD**

This trust exercise requires some setting up before it can be executed. It also requires a large, open area such as a room without furniture or an empty parking lot. The leader must distribute "mines," which they place haphazardly around the area. These "mines" can be balls, bowling pins, cones, etc. This exercise gives coworkers a chance to work on their relationships and trust issues, which is why they are paired into teams of two. One team member will be blindfolded and cannot talk and the other can see and talk, but cannot enter the field or touch their blindfolded teammate. The challenge requires each blind-folded person to walk from one side of the field to the other, avoiding the mines by listening to the verbal instructions of their partners. Penalties can be put in place for each time a blindfolded person hits a mine, but the real idea behind the game is to get the team members to trust their partner's directions and to teach them to communicate in a more effective way.

## CLOSING

Team-building can help your lodge's leadership team trust each other more with increased communication and greater accomplishments for all. As a lodge adviser, the process must start at the top. Take time to study what is needed to help your lodge, decide what type of exercise would best accomplish that objective, and have fun doing it.