



VENTURING • BSA

Synergism Module 3 - Knots

Learning Objectives At the end of this session, each participant should be able to:

- Understand the need for cooperation in group problem-solving situations
 - Feel successful in accomplishing a difficult task
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Materials Needed None

Activity

Have the group divide into circles (circles should have no fewer than six and no more than 16).

Participants should face each other in a tight circle.

To begin the activity, each person holds out his or her right hand and grasps the right hand of someone in the circle, as if they were shaking hands. This should be done in unison.

Now have each person extend his or her left hand and grasp the left hand of someone else in the circle so that each person is holding two different hands.

This hand-in-hand configuration should come out equal. With hands tightly held, arms intertwined and bodies close together, it's time to explain the problem.

The group then attempts to unwind themselves into a hand-in-hand circle. In order to accomplish this they will be stepping over, between, and around each other.

The initial hand-to-hand contact cannot be broken during the exercise. Hand connections may pivot on one another, but skin contact may not be lost.

If a group has been struggling with a “knot” for longer than your session has time, decide by group consensus which pair of hands should separate and regrip.

Sometimes these human knots will produce two or three distinct circles, and sometimes they will be hopelessly intertwined. Be flexible; the teamwork lesson in this activity is worth the effort. If a group quickly solves their knot, have them make a new one.

Observe the group dynamics to help in specific questions during reflection.

Reflection

When all the groups have completed untying their knots, assemble for a reflection.

Ask: Did you feel frustrated at any time during this activity?

Did someone emerge as the leader? Who? Why?

Was the leader effective in solving the problem?

Was cooperation necessary to achieve success?

How does this activity relate to problem solving in your crew?

End of Session