Activities for Classroom Application & Presentations

Props/Prep: Yes  Time: 25-45 min  Audience: Any (teams)  Physical: no

Lost at Sea Exercise

Activity: This exercise can be used in many different settings and training programs. It is designed to work mainly to develop team building, cooperation, and leadership. This is a great activity to do with newly formed groups to 'break the ice', or to use with groups having functional problems to help identify assumed roles.

Time Requirement: Approximately 25-45 minutes

Materials needed: 1 Lost at Sea scenario sheet per person

Procedure:

Part 1
- Participants should divide into teams of 5. Hand out one scenario sheet with 14 items listed, to each participant. Give 10 minutes to individually rank the 14 items.

Part 2
- Team members should then confer for an additional 10 minutes and decide on the team’s priority ranking of the 14 items. Have the team re-rank items on one sheet of paper.

Part 3
- Team members should then compare their individual rankings with those determined by the group as a whole, and discuss why the scores differ, if applicable. Or, if individuals would re-rank items based on the group discussion, what changed their minds? How where they influenced by the group?

Part 4
- Teacher reads out correct order of contents. There is no reason to do this accept that group answers will certainly differ from the correct order. It creates many smiles.

Function in Class:
Focus on teamwork, collaboration, concession, thinking outside the box.

(See activity resource pages below)
Scenario: You and your team have chartered a yacht. None of you have any previous sailing experience, so you have hired an experienced skipper and two-person crew. As you sail through the Southern Pacific Ocean, a fire breaks out and much of the yacht and its contents are destroyed. The yacht is slowly sinking. Your location is unclear because vital navigational and radio equipment have been damaged. The yacht skipper and crew have been lost to the fire. Your best guess is that you are approximately 1,000 miles southwest of the nearest landfall.

You and your friends have managed to save the following 14 items:

1. A shaving mirror
2. A quantity of mosquito netting
3. A 19 liter can of water
4. A case of army rations
5. Maps of the Pacific Ocean
6. A floating seat cushion
7. A 7.5 liter can of oil / petroleum mixture
8. A small transistor radio
9. 186 square decimeters of Opaque plastic sheeting
10. Shark repellent
11. 1.1 liters of 160 per cent proof rum
12. 4.5 meters of nylon rope
13. 2 boxes of chocolate bars
14. A fishing kit

In addition to the above, you have salvaged a rubber life raft. The total contents of your team’s pants pockets amounts to one package of cigarettes, three boxes of matches, and three pieces of paper currency.

YOUR CHANCES OF SURVIVAL WILL DEPEND UPON YOUR ABILITY TO RANK THE ABOVE 14 ITEMS IN THEIR RELATIVE ORDER OF IMPORTANCE. GOOD LUCK!
Lost at Sea - Answers

According to the experts (United States Coast Guard), the basic supplies needed when a person is stranded mid-ocean are articles to attract attention and articles to aid survival until rescue arrives. Without signalling devices, there is almost no chance of being spotted and ultimately rescued. Furthermore, most rescues occur within the first 36 hours and a person can survive with only a minimum of food and water during that period. So, the following is the order of ranking the items in their importance to your survival:

1. The shaving mirror would be critical for signalling.
2. The oil / petroleum mixture would also be critical for signalling. The mixture will float on water and could be ignited with one of the pieces of paper currency and a match.
3. The water would be necessary to replenish fluids lost through perspiration.
4. One case of army rations would provide basic food intake.
5. The opaque plastic could be used to collect rain water and provide shelter from the elements.
6. The chocolate bars could provide reserve food supply
7. The fishing kit is ranked lower than the chocolate since ‘a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush’, and there is no guarantee that you will catch any fish.
8. The nylon rope could be used to secure people or equipment to prevent them from being washed overboard.
9. The floating seat cushion could serve as a life preserver if someone fell overboard.
10. Shark repellent
11. The 160 per cent proof rum contains 80% alcohol, which is enough to be used as an antiseptic for any injuries; otherwise, it is of little value.
12. The small transistor radio would be of no use without a transmitter. You would also be out of range of any radio station.
13. Maps of the Pacific Ocean would be worthless without navigation equipment.
14. The mosquito netting would not be necessary, as there are NO mosquitoes in the mid-Pacific Ocean, and the fishing kit would be more effective for catching fish.