

Marshmallow Lighthouse Challenge

It's fascinating to introduce a group of people to the marshmallow challenge and watch how grown-up people try to solve a seemingly silly problem and cheer when they succeed. Check the marshmallow challenge home page (www.marshmallowchallenge.com) to learn some tips especially if you're organizing the activity for the first time.

1. Break attendees into groups of four.
 2. Materials for each group: 20 sticks of spaghetti, 1 yard of tape, 1 yard of string, 1 marshmallow and scissors
 3. Build the tallest freestanding structure from the table-top to the top of the marshmallow. The entire marshmallow must be attached on top.
 4. The time limit will be 18 minutes.
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Follow-up Questions:

1. Was there a leader on your team? Who was it and who decided who it would be?
 2. If you had no leader, do you think if you had designated a leader it would have helped?
 3. If you had a leader, how did he/she do?
 4. How helpful was everybody on your team in challenging the process of building the tallest structure?
 5. Did anybody appear to be an expert?
 6. Did any team members tune out of the activity out of frustration with other members or for some other reason?
 7. What could've been done to keep everyone engaged?
 8. Did you feel everyone's ideas were well-received during the activity?
 9. How did you feel as the time limit was approaching? Did pressure increase? If yes, was that helpful?
 10. In retrospect, what could you have done better to enhance your ability to challenge the process?
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This challenge was developed by Tom Wujec, a business visualization expert, makes the perfect team building icebreaker. He has conducted this challenge 150+ times and the worst performers were recent MBA graduates, while the best performers were kindergarteners. Why?

1. Kids don't have preconceptions
2. Kids don't try to gain power
3. Kids immediately build prototypes instead of spending time planning