

500-BALLS ACTIVITY FACILITATOR GUIDE

LEADERSHIP
SUMMIT
GROWTH | 2024



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ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

Activity Objective

During this high-energy learning experience, four groups will collaborate to try to optimize their score by throwing colored tennis balls into matching buckets.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this activity, participants will:

- Recognize the value of fostering an environment that supports brainstorming and idea-sharing.
- Identify the conditions and approaches needed to cultivate a growth enterprise mindset.
- Demonstrate the ability to challenge assumptions.

Materials

- 4 sets of balls (per square)
15 balls per set
- 4 buckets (per square)
- Blue tape
- Electrical tape (1 per color)
- 4 copies of participant instructions (per square)
- 1 easel with chart paper (per square)
- 1 marker (per square)



Activity At-A-Glance

Alloted Time: About 80 minutes
Transition (10 minutes)
Activity Framing - Whole Group (5 minutes)
Facilitating the Activity - Small Groups (35 minutes)
Debriefing the Activity - Small Group (10 minutes)
Debriefing the Activity - Whole Group (10 minutes)
Transition (10 minutes)

YOUR ROLE

500-Balls Activity Host

As the activity host, you will be leveraging your facilitation experience from 28+ to guide participants through this exercise. Your role is to introduce the activity, frame the task rules, manage the group's time, and facilitate the whole-room debrief.

Square Facilitator

As the square facilitator, you act as the mediator and will facilitate the discussion that follows, leveraging your observations. This activity was designed to be **ambiguous**, and it is up to the participants to determine what are fair interpretations of the rules in the context of problem-solving, innovation, and enterprise thinking. During the activity, there will be four 90-second rounds, followed by five minutes for groups to strategize. Between each round, you will provide hints to support the evolution of the groups' thinking. You will also be responsible for updating the score and observing the strategies being used to support the progress.

The ambiguous nature of the activity allows participants to:

- Examine the assumptions they are operating under
- Make decisions with incomplete information
- Be adaptable and creative in their approaches
- Think beyond their immediate team and consider the larger group
- Try new strategies, take risks, and think outside the box

HOW TO READ THIS GUIDE



SAY is not verbatim and used to indicate possible wording for delivering to participants - you may paraphrase or improvise.



DO is self-explanatory, and you should carry out these actions.



ASK is not verbatim but gives some direction for potential questions to ask to drive conversation and alignment.



FACILITATOR NOTE provides you with important information that will be helpful in guiding group discussion or activities.

500-BALLS | PROJECT TASK

Project Task

To work as a team to earn as many points as possible in 90 seconds.

Project Requirements

1. Buckets and lines cannot be moved.
2. Balls must be thrown into matching buckets from behind the line (earn 1 point per ball that is in the right bucket).
3. Each ball must bounce at least 1 time before coming to rest in the bucket.
4. Each team decides the ratio it wants of ball **Throwers** and **Runners**.
5. Balls can only be thrown into the buckets by ball Throwers. Throwers must stand behind the line.
6. Loose balls can only be retrieved by the Runners. Runners can be anywhere; however, they may not use any muscular movement to put the balls in the bucket.
7. Balls can be recycled after all the balls are in all the buckets.

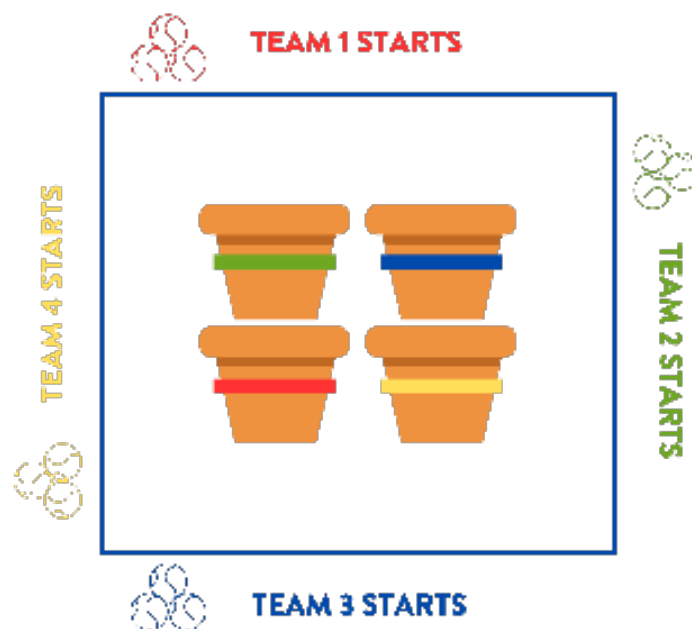
If rule #7 is met, then the bucket may be moved to recycle the balls, but it must be immediately returned to its original location.

PREPARING FOR THE ACTIVITY

Setting Up The Activity

For each square:

1. Use the provided blue tape to create four connecting lines of equal length (creating a square). Lines should be about 15 feet in length.
2. Place the buckets in the center of the square, with the corresponding balls on the opposite side to where the bucket is.
3. Use the electrical tape to wrap each bucket with the matching color (only one piece is needed for participants to identify which bucket is theirs).
4. Place an easel, chart paper, and marker next to each square.
5. Print at least four project tasks per square.



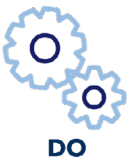












Planning Considerations





For this activity, you will need a large space, approximately 3,000 square feet for every 100-150 participants. Each square creates a group, within each group there are four teams.

To facilitate this activity, you will need an activity host to lead the whole-group discussion, as well as a square facilitator stationed at each square to run the small-group activity and debrief.

FACILITATING THE ACTIVITY

10 MIN	TRANSITION
SUPPORT STAFF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support groups in finding their assigned square.
SQUARE FACILITATOR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As groups arrive, assign them to a side of the square and let them know this will be their 'team' during the activity. Give each group 1 copy of the directions to review. Let participants know that the host will frame the activity shortly.
ACTIVITY HOST 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome participants as they are entering the space and getting settled. Once everyone is settled, briefly introduce yourself.
5 MIN	ACTIVITY FRAMING
ACTIVITY HOST 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You may be wondering why we had you gather in squares for this activity. We're going to actively experience growth by playing with tennis balls and reflecting together. The goal of this activity is to observe what's happening in ourselves and others - and we'll do this by completing a project task together.
ACTIVITY HOST 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read the project task objective and requirements.
ACTIVITY HOST 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You will have approximately 5 minutes before round one begins. Each round will last 90 seconds. After each round, your scores will be calculated on the chart paper. Then, you will have 5 minutes of planning/practice between each round.

35 MIN	FACILITATING THE ACTIVITY
<p>ACTIVITY HOST</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give participants 5 minutes to assign roles (Thrower/Runner) and strategize before round 1 begins.
<p>SQUARE FACILITATOR</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct round 1. • During the game, look for rule violations and/or strategies you'd like to highlight during the debrief. • After 90 seconds have passed, record the scores for round 1 by finding the sum of all 4 groups. • Then, give groups 5 minutes to strategize.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once you've displayed the square's total score, groups should recognize that they are working as a collective team. This will inform their next strategy session.
<p>SQUARE FACILITATOR</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct round 2. • During the game, remain observant of the following themes: <i>growth enterprise mindset, how groups challenge assumptions, and leading change.</i> • After 90 seconds have passed, record the scores for round 2. • Then, give groups 5 minutes to strategize.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To fuel competition and drive innovation, let groups know that they have seen squares score in the thousands before (1,000 balls recorded in 90 seconds).
<p>SQUARE FACILITATOR</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct round 3. • After 90 seconds have passed, record the scores for round 3. • Then, give groups 5 minutes to strategize.
<p>SQUARE FACILITATOR</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct round 4. • After 90 seconds have passed, record the scores for round 4.

20 MIN	DEBRIEFING THE ACTIVITY
<p>SQUARE FACILITATOR</p> 	<p>Ask participants to quickly rate their performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do you feel that you performed in this activity (thumbs up/down)? Why? <p>Begin to surface patterns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What assumptions did you make in the first few rounds? What made you start to challenge those assumptions? <p>Lead a discussion on enterprise mindset & leading change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What happened when you noticed your team's score (side of the square) was contributing to the overall group score? When did you notice this change? How did your behavior shift? Where did you get stuck? How <i>did you or could you</i>, have gotten unstuck?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The goal of this conversation is to help leaders see that they lead change for the Company. This requires that they step outside of their comfort zones in a rapidly shifting environment to understand decisions being made in service of VR2030, and how they can translate that in a meaningful way to their teams. This activity serves as a vehicle for that conversation. Surface where you saw participant's struggle/succeed with shifting priorities (evolving strategies) and adopting an enterprise mindset (working with the larger group). Emphasize in the debrief that these leaders need to have an enterprise orientation to lead change, elevate our frontline, and create a strategic advantage.
<p>ACTIVITY HOST</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring the room together for a whole-group discussion.
<p>ACTIVITY HOST</p> 	<p>Lead a discussion on key takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask square facilitators: What did you observe about the groups that were most able to adapt and improve their performance? What happened once you started thinking differently? What are you taking away from this activity? How can you apply these lessons as you lead your teams for growth?
10 MIN	TRANSITION