

Activity: Funny Fingers

Materials Needed: Construction paper (six 8" x 10" sheets for each team); clear tape and masking tape; a paper towel tube (to mold the "fingers"); round balloons (twelve for each participating team); large cardboard boxes (two for each team) to hold the inflated balloons; a flip chart, a felt-tip marker; a clock or timer.

Directions: Make "fingers" by rolling a piece of construction paper around the towel tube (not too tightly), taping the seam in several places, and then sliding the paper off the tube. You need to make six "fingers" for each team.

For each team, inflate twelve balloons and place them in a large cardboard box. Using masking tape, mark a starting line on the floor which is approximately twenty feet (eight giant steps) in front of the box holding the balloons. Place a second empty cardboard box approximately twenty feet behind the starting line (in the opposite direction). Repeat this setup for each participating team.

1. Instruct participants to form teams of up to ten members each. The players from each team should form a line behind their team's indicated mark on the floor, facing the box filled with the balloons.
2. Distribute six paper tubes to each group. Explain that each team's challenge will be to use the "fingers" to transport as many balloons as possible in a five-minute period to the end of the line. After the directions are given and before the activity begins, team players on each team will predict how many balloons they will be able to transfer during the allotted time period.
3. Give the following directions to the participants:

When the signal is given, the first player on the team will put the six tubes on any three fingers of each hand; other team members may help. The player will then leave the starting line, pick up a balloon, bring it back, and place it in the team box at the other end of the line. The "fingers" are to be transferred to the next player in line and the process is repeated until time is called.

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Record each team's prediction on a flip chart, then signal for the activity to begin. Give a one-minute warning before time is called.

4. Count the number of balloons in each team's receptacle box and record the actuals next to the predictions on a flip chart. The team that has transferred the most balloons in five minutes is the winner. (If more than one team has transferred all the balloons, the winner is the team that accomplished the goal in the least amount of time.)

Follow-Up Discussion:
(Answers may vary)

- ◆ How close did your team come in predicting the outcome? Did setting this goal help your team's productivity?
- ◆ How well did team members work together to coordinate the activity?
- ◆ What effect did time pressure have on team performance and productivity?
- ◆ What other factors influenced the team's ability to perform the task?