

Shanghai Shift

- Type** Quiet activity that can be done anywhere by oneself.
Works on creative problem solving and gets people thinking.
- Group Size** Solo activity. Each person works on his/her own.
- Equipment** • One chopstick per person. Or something like a chopstick. A long brand new pencil would work as well.
- Objective** The objective is for each person to be able to flip the pencil from over his/her hands to under his/her hands.
- Rules**
1. Place your hands in a prayer position as shown in picture 1.
 2. The goal is to move the chopstick to the below position as shown in picture 2 without letting go.



3. Give this challenge to a group of people at the start of a session or day. If anyone knows how to do it already, have that person show others and then practice it for a bit and go onto the Variation.
 4. If no one knows how to do it already, have them walk around all day with their chopstick and play with this activity anytime they have downtime.
- Variations**
1. Once the individuals get good at this activity, have them do it in partners. One person donates one hand to the activity and they do it together. If they get good with the obvious hands...have them switch hands.

Notes

Crossword Names

- Type** Quiet activity that needs to be done inside.
Works on seeing each other's names and how everyone is part of the group..
- Group Size** Any group size. Make sure your paper is large enough.
- Equipment**
- One large piece of paper or board.
 - One or more black markers.
- Objective** The objective is for each person to put their name up in big letters for everyone to see.
- Rules**
1. Place a large piece of paper on the wall at the front of the room. You could also use a chalkboard or whiteboard for this activity. The nice thing about the paper is that no one is going to erase it. It stands as a permanent reminder of the members of your group.
 2. Choose one person with a really long name to go up and neatly print their name horizontally right in the middle of the paper. They need to print it large enough that it can be read but not so large that the rest of the names in your group will fit.
 3. One person at a time goes up to the paper and adds his/her name to the sheet using at least one letter from a previous person to be a letter in his/her name.
 4. The whole thing should look like and be interconnected like a crossword puzzle.
 5. Leave this poster up in a very obvious place for everyone to see throughout the day / session.
- Variations**
1. You can come back to this activity at the end of the day or session and have people add one word descriptions of what they learned or felt about the activities. Nice little wrap-up.
- Notes** You can make some obvious connections for the group using this poster. Everyone is interconnected. Everyone is part of the whole. Where did you put your name? Why? Are there people way out and barely connected? Might have something to do with the fact that they were among the last people.

Gotcha

- Type** Active activity that can be done anywhere.
Works on breaking down barriers while having some fun with each other.
- Group Size** Any group size.
- Equipment** None.
- Objective** The objective is for each person to capture someone's hand while avoiding capture of his/her own.
- Rules**
1. Everyone stands in one large circle.
 2. Each person places his/her left hand out, palm up, in front of the person to his/her left.
 3. Each person places the index finger of his/her right hand pointing down onto that upward facing palm of the person to his/her right.
 4. On "GO", each person tries to capture the index finger of the person to his/her left using the left hand while at the same time avoiding capture of the right index finger.
- Variations**
1. Switch hands.
 2. Switch places in the circle in some random fashion so you end up with someone new on either side. New people = new challenge.
 3. You can play this game as a knock-out version. When someone's hand is captured, they are knocked out of the circle. Knock out versions are no conducive to team building. How does it feel to be the person knocked out?
- Notes**

Pass the Balloon Please

- Type** Active activity that can be done anywhere.
Works on breaking down barriers while starting to work together.
- Group Size** Any group size.
- Equipment** • One balloon per person.
- Objective** The objective is for the balloons to be passed around the entire circle as quickly as possible.
- Rules**
1. The entire group needs to be sitting or standing in a circle. Sitting is easier. Standing would make a good new challenge variation. Sitting in a chair makes it even better.
 2. Everyone needs to have one balloon that is blown up and tied off sitting on his/her lap.
 3. On "GO", each person will pass the balloon s/he has to the person on his/her right or left depending on whichever way you have indicated.
 4. This keeps on going until all of the balloons are back with their original owners.
 5. You might want to use a marker to mark something on a specific balloon so when that balloon gets back to its original owner, the time stops.
 6. You could also have everyone mark something on their balloon to personalize it and the time does not stop until everyone has their balloon back in their possession.
 7. If a balloon drops to the floor or floats / flies away, no passing can occur until that balloon is back under control and where it belongs.
 8. Once the balloons are back in their starting position, challenge the group to better their time.
- Variations**
1. Try this activity standing instead of sitting. The balloons will float for a split second before they start to fall slowly to the ground so if a group is really on the ball, they can pull this one off.
 2. Have 2 circles. One inside of the other. Make sure that you have an even number of people so that everyone in the outside circle has a partner in the inside circle facing them. Do the

activity as listed above but every once in a while, yell "SWITCH" and the partners facing each other have to switch places while still keeping the balloons going in their original direction.

Notes

Be the Machine

- Type** Active activity that can be done anywhere.
Works on being creative and breaking down barriers.
- Group Size** Groups of 5 to 10 work best although a really large group could be interesting.
- Equipment** None.
- Objective** The objective is for the group to act like separate parts of one large machine, noise and all.
- Rules**
1. Each person in the group is to become a part of one whole machine. The group as a whole will be the machine.
 2. Each person will be making a motion and a sound that they will be repeating over and over until the entire group is doing all of their motions and sounds that will represent the machine.
 3. When it is time for the group to demonstrate their machine, one person will start, which will cause the next person to go and so on until all of the members of the group are going.
 4. Once everyone is going, continue the motions and sounds for at least 10 seconds or more so everyone gets a clear idea of the whole machine.
 5. It is up to the group whether or not the machine operates in one spot or moves.
 6. While the machine does not have to have any purpose, for extra "credit", the group could have a name for their machine that they could use to introduce it and if they can come up with a purpose to their machine, all the better.
- Variations**
1. Put different groups together and have them become one large machine. Put your whole group together. 1 person starts which kicks the next person into gear and so on. 30 plus people all making motions and sounds. What a warm-up.

Notes

Paper Trail

- Type** Active activity that can be done anywhere.
Works on understanding how communication can be interpreted differently by different people.
- Group Size** Any size group.
- Equipment** • One piece of paper per person.
- Objective** The objective is for each person to fold and rip the paper according to the instructions given.
- Rules**
1. Give each person in the group one piece of paper.
 2. Everyone must close their eyes and keep them closed for the entire time.
 3. No one can talk or ask questions of anyone throughout the activity.
 4. Read off the following instructions slowly and clearly. If need be, repeat the instructions as you read them.
 - “Fold the paper in half.”
 - “Now fold it in half again.”
 - “Rip off the right corner.”
 - “Fold the paper in half again.”
 - “Rip off the upper corner.”
 - “Rip off the bottom corner.”
 5. Then have everyone open their eyes and unfold their papers and compare them to each other.
 6. Discuss the differences and why they think they exist.
- Variations**
1. Try it with everyone’s eyes open but make the folding and ripping more detailed. Don’t let them look at each other’s creations as they are doing this one.
- Notes** Make sure that you don’t correct anyone as they are doing the folding and ripping. There is no right way. It’s how every they interpret your instructions.

Tower of Balloons

- Type** Active activity that needs to be done inside (preferably a large room with high ceiling).
Works on working together, planning and communicating.
- Group Size** Groups of 5 to 10 work best. Any larger and there will be people standing around doing nothing.
- Equipment**
- Large number of balloons (75 to 100) per group.
 - 1 to 2 rolls of tape per group. (masking or cellophane)
- Objective** The objective is for each group to be able to build the tallest free standing tower possible.
- Rules**
1. Each group is given same number of balloons and the same amount of tape.
 2. The group has a certain amount of time to blow up and tape together the balloons in order to make the tallest possible free-standing structure.
 3. The structure must not be held up by anything except the balloons within the structure.
 4. The structure may not be leaning against anything like a wall or a member of the group.
 5. The structure has to be able to stay standing indefinitely. In other words, just because it was at a certain height for 5 seconds or so, and then fell over, doesn't cut it.
- Variations**
1. Give each group a bag of balloons that are not a uniform shape. Long balloons, balloons with ears, small balloons, etc. Let's see what they can do now.

Notes

Tower of Feet

Type	Very active activity that can be done anywhere. Works on physically supporting each other and working together.
Group Size	10 to 20 although if you have a really together group, you can do it with more.
Equipment	None.
Objective	The objective is to build the highest possible tower of stacked feet.
Rules	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The group members are allowed to make physical contact with each other in any fashion.2. No single person can have his/her feet touching each other. All of the feet must be stacked in an alternating fashion with other people.3. To count as a success, the group must hold the tower in place for at least 5 seconds.4. To start, just see how high of a tower the group can build. After they get some practice, set a specific height as the challenge like 6 feet or 8 feet or more.5. It's really nice if you can do this activity in a room with a low ceiling and make the challenge to build a tower connecting the floor and the ceiling.
Variations	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Instead of using feet, use hands. Pinky to thumb. This variation is a little easier than using the feet. This might be a good place to start, especially if your group is experiencing difficulty.
Notes	Always remember safety. Some of the group members should be designated as spotters around the tower. If the group doesn't realize this on their own, once the tower starts to approach any height that requires spotting, sit the group down and do some debriefing about safety, watching out for your fellow groups members and how spotting roles are just as important as the actual doing roles and then continue.

Tower of Paper?

Type	Active activity that is best done inside. Works on planning and working together.
Group Size	3 to 5 is a perfect number. Any more in a group and people are standing around doing nothing.
Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 10 sheets of paper.• 1 meters worth of masking or scotch tape.
Objective	The objective is to build the highest possible tower using only the paper and tape provided.
Rules	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The group is only allowed to use the paper and tape provided.2. Anything can be done to the paper and tape including cutting, tearing, joining, etc except for adding anything including water or spit.3. The tower must maintain its height for at least 5 seconds.4. The tower may not be leaning against anything or be in physical contact with anything except the floor.
Variations	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Take away the tape. The rules and objective stay the same. The group has to make the tower without using any tape. Much more challenging.
Notes	You might want to deliberately build in some planning time. Describe the activity and show the group the materials but don't hand any out. Give the group five or more minutes to discuss and plan before you give out the materials. Ask about this afterwards. Would they have planned in as much detail if you hadn't forced them to?

Catch you on the FLIP SIDE

- Type** Active activity that can be done anywhere.
Works on problem solving and teamwork.
- Group Size** Any group size.
- Equipment**
- 1 large blanket or tarp that will fit your entire group on with a fair amount of room to spare. The more room left over, the easier the task.
- Scenario** You are all on a life raft in the middle of the ocean. You have just realized that the life raft is actually upside down and you are all on the bottom instead of being properly inside of it. You must get on the proper side of the life raft if you hope to survive this ordeal. Of course, you are in shark infested water so don't fall out.
- Objective** The objective is for the group flip the tarp over without anyone stepping off of it.
- Rules**
1. Place the blanket or tarp on the ground and have the entire group stand on it.
 2. They must flip the tarp over to the other side without any person in the group touching anything other than the tarp and/or each other.
 3. Once they are all standing on the tarp, tell them the rules and the task ahead of them.
 4. No one may touch the floor or anything else except the tarp (either side) and each other.
 5. If any contact is made, the entire group must start over again on the one side of the tarp.
- Variations**
1. Make the tarp smaller and smaller with less free space. If you use an inexpensive plastic sheet, bit by bit, cut sections off each time the group is successful.
 2. Use a large gym mat instead of a tarp. Much harder to flip over with people standing on it. Even harder, use a large piece of cardboard for that group that really thinks they are all that.
 3. Start with only one person on the mat. After a successful flip, add another person and so on until the entire group is on the

mat.

4. Add the rule that the group may only touch the tarp with their feet. No other body parts, including hands.
5. With large groups, break the group into 2 or more and have each group with their own tarp to turn over but define success as all of the groups making it over, not just one. It's interesting to see if any group tries to move their tarp near another one so they can work together.

Notes