



*Health Rocks!*

Team Building  
Guidebook

## About the *Health Rocks!* Team Building Guidebook

The *Health Rocks! Team Building Guidebook* provides activities to use with all members of *Health Rocks!* Teams to build their capacity. The most common problems teams face are trust, communication and accountability. The activities in this guidebook are developed to help overcome such obstacles and have your *Health Rocks!* teams on their way to success!

The guidebook includes the following sections:

- **The ARCTIC Model** (page 2) – used in debriefing activities. Debriefing is critical to making the activity come alive and live in your teams. It provides a way to transfer the learning from the activity into real life situations.
- **Crossing The Line** (page 3) – an activity to learn more about the members of a team.
- **Survival** (page 5) – this activity promotes shared decision making.
- **Rope Maze** (page 9) – develops trust and a willingness to ask for help.
- **Mouse Trap Walk** (page 11) – trust, listening and communication can be developed during this activity
- **Blind Poly** (page 13) – enhances communication, allowing every voice to be heard.
- **Lands Work** (page 15) – understand the various roles and responsibilities of the team's members.
- **Carpet Squares** (page 17) – trust, expectations, communication, conflict management, accountability and consequences are elements of this activity.
- **Yes/And** (page 18) – integrates all the elements into the team's system.

Thanks to Tom Courry of The Next Level for allowing the use of some of these descriptions. If there are questions about how to deliver any of these activities or suggestions for other Team Building activities, please contact:

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# The ARCTIC Model

Tom Courry, *The Next Level*

Experiential learning provides teams and individuals opportunities for growth that, in the best case scenario, continue over time. Debriefing experiential learning in a coaching framework helps lock in the learning for the participants. Here is Tom Courry's ARCTIC model for debriefing an activity. Utilize this model with each of the activities in the guidebook to maximize team growth and effectiveness.

## **Activity:**

- Set context for experiential activity
- Introduce activity
- Take group/team through activity

## **Reflection:**

- Review activity with group/team
- Conduct a conversation about what just happened
- Make room for any number of perspectives that may come up

## **Coaching:**

- Draw out both team and individual learning
- Be open and curious
- Ask open ended questions
- Create segue for transference

## **Transference:**

- "Make it real"
- Group/team creates action plans based on what they've learned
- What changes will the group/team make as a result of what they've discovered
- What structures will serve to keep those changes alive and growing
- Transfer of new learning to real life situations
- Group/team makes changes in everyday methodology/practices based on work they did in the activity, reflection and coaching

## **Integration:**

- Continued integration of learning into system
- What must the group/team do to integrate their learning and continue to grow
- Conscious use of new awareness
- Collecting feedback from system with regards to what is working, and/or what isn't working
- Conscious awareness of overall health of system, based on new learning

## **Coaching:**

- Ongoing coaching
- Keep learning alive over time
- Keeps integration happening
- Maintain health of system
- Maintain accountability structures within system
- Assist system in creating its own next steps

# Activity 1: Crossing the Line

## Objective

- Learn more about each member on your team.
- Recognize differences in team members.

## Activity

1. Explain that groups sometimes present themselves as more homogeneous than they really are. Underneath there is usually a world of differences, and a group can benefit from recognizing those differences. This exercise helps us recognize some of the differences in the team.
2. Have the entire group stand on one end of a room, together.
3. The facilitator will name identities, like 'women'. When an identity is named, all those who identify that way will walk across the room to the other side, turn and be silent.
4. The facilitator says "Notice who is with you and who is not." Allow some time for noticing.
5. Instruct those who moved to return to the rest of the group and continue naming identities having them notice who stands with them and who does not. The whole exercise will be done in silence.
6. Explain that it is OK to feel whatever feelings there may be because this is an awareness exercise. If you feel proud or embarrassed or whatever, just go ahead and feel it. But you won't talk about your feelings until later. At some point, the facilitator may name an identity that is ambiguous like 'elder' or 'youth'. Each person decides for her or himself how to respond.

**Teaching Tip:** When calling out identities, use a clear and formal voice as if you are announcing it. Be attentive, stay present, and support the process.

The following is a list of possible identities. You can choose identities or questions that are appropriate for your group or add others.

- If you believe in a higher power.
- If you have worked in your current job more than 10 years.
- If you are the oldest sibling in your family growing up.
- If you have lived in (fill in your state name) your entire life.
- If you consider yourself to be a "Nebraskan" (fill in your own state name).
- If you are single.
- If you are the middle of sibling order in your family growing up.
- If you have been divorced.

- If you have lost a loved one.
- If you have lost a loved one to a traumatic death.
- If you have traveled to a foreign country.
- If your family has been touched by alcoholism or drug abuse.
- If you have had one or more relatives fight in a war.
- If you are the youngest sibling in your family.
- If you have been widowed.

Observe, watch body posturing, look for energy shifts.

**Process:**

Ask if anyone wants to share what it was like for them?

What were the feelings they were experiencing?

When someone describes a feeling you suspect is more broadly shared, ask “How many others felt that?”

Give lots of permission for each person to be exactly where they are, at that time.

Point to the differences and similarities in the group.

## Activity 2: SURVIVAL: A Simulation Activity

### Objectives

- Experience the decision making process as a team.

### Activity

1. Explain: You and your companions have just survived the crash of a small plane. Both the pilot and co-pilot were killed in the crash. It is mid-January, and you are in Northern Canada. The daily temperature is 25 below zero, and the night time temperature is 40 below zero. There is snow on the ground, and the countryside is wooded with several creeks crisscrossing the area. The nearest town is 20 miles away. You are all dressed in city clothes appropriate for a business meeting. Your group of survivors managed to salvage the following items:
  - A ball of steel wool
  - A small ax
  - A loaded .45-caliber pistol
  - Can of Crisco shortening
  - Newspapers (one per person)
  - Cigarette lighter (without fluid)
  - Extra shirt and pants for each survivor
  - 20 x 20 ft. piece of heavy-duty canvas
  - A sectional, air map made of plastic
  - One quart of 100-proof whiskey
  - A compass
  - Family-size chocolate bars (one per person)
2. Your task as a group is to list the above 12 items in order of importance for your survival. List the uses for each. You **MUST** come to agreement as a group.

### Processing

- How did you feel during this activity?
- Were you satisfied with the decisions the group made?
- What did you learn about the functioning of this group?
- What would you think about your team if you were put into this real life experience?

### SURVIVAL EXPLANATION

Mid-January is the coldest time of year in Northern Canada. The first problem the survivors face is the preservation of body heat and the protection against its loss. This problem can be solved by building a fire, minimizing movement and exertion, using as much insulation as possible, and constructing a shelter.

The participants have just crash-landed. Many individuals tend to overlook the enormous shock reaction this has on the human body, and the deaths of the pilot and co-pilot increases the shock. Decision-making under such circumstances is extremely difficult. Such a situation requires a strong emphasis **on the use of reasoning for making decisions** and for reducing fear and panic. Shock would be shown in the survivors by feelings of helplessness, loneliness, hopelessness, and fear. These feelings have brought about more fatalities than perhaps any other cause in survival situations. Certainly the state of shock means the movement of the survivors should be at a minimum, and that an attempt to calm them should be made.

Before taking off, a pilot has to file a flight plan which contains vital information such as the course, speed, estimated time of arrival, type of aircraft, and number of passengers. Search-and-rescue operations begin shortly after the failure of a plane to appear at its destination at the estimated time of arrival.

The 20 miles to the nearest town is a long walk under even ideal conditions, particularly if one is not used to walking such distances. In this situation, the walk is even more difficult due to shock, snow, dress, and water barriers. It would mean almost certain death from freezing and exhaustion. At temperatures of minus 25 to minus 40, the loss of body heat through exertion is a very serious matter.

Once the survivors have found ways to keep warm, their next task is to attract the attention of search planes. Thus, all the items the group has salvaged must be assessed for their value in signaling the group's whereabouts.

*The ranking of the survivors' items was made by Mark Wanvig, a former instructor in survival training for the Reconnaissance School of the 101st Division of the U.S. Army.*

## **SURVIVAL RANKINGS**

### **1. Cigarette lighter (without fluid)**

The gravest danger facing the group is exposure to cold. The greatest need is for a source of warmth and the second greatest need is for signaling devices. This makes building a fire the first order of business. Without matches, something is needed to produce sparks, and even without fluid, a cigarette lighter can do that.

### **2. Ball of steel wool**

To make a fire, the survivors need a means of catching the sparks made by the cigarette lighter. This is the best substance for catching a spark and supporting a flame, even if the steel wool is a little wet.

### **3. Extra shirt and pants for each survivor**

Besides adding warmth to the body, clothes can also be used for shelter, signaling, bedding, bandages, string (when unraveled), and fuel for the fire.

### **4. Can of Crisco shortening**

This has many uses. A mirror-like signaling device can be made from the lid. After shining the lid with steel wool, it will reflect sunlight and generate 5 to 7 million candlepower. This is bright enough to be seen beyond the horizon. While this could be limited somewhat by the trees, a member of the group could climb a tree and use the mirrored lid to signal search planes. If they had no other means of signaling than this, they would have a better than 80% chance of being rescued within the first day.

There are other uses for this item. It can be rubbed on exposed skin for protection against the cold. When melted into an oil, the shortening is helpful as fuel. When soaked into a piece of cloth, melted shortening will act like a candle. The empty can is useful in melting snow for drinking water. It is much safer to drink warmed water than to eat snow, since warm water will help retain body heat. Water is important because dehydration will affect decision-making. The can is also useful as a cup.

### **5. 20 x 20 foot piece of canvas**

The cold makes shelter necessary, and canvas would protect against wind and snow (canvas is used in making tents). Spread on a frame made of trees, it could be used as a tent or a wind screen. It might also be used as a ground cover to keep the survivors dry. Its shape, when contrasted with the surrounding terrain, makes it a signaling device.

### **6. Small ax**

Survivors need a constant supply of wood in order to maintain the fire. The ax could be used for this as well as for clearing a sheltered campsite, cutting tree branches for ground insulation, and constructing a frame for the canvas tent.

### **7. Family size chocolate bars (one per person)**

Chocolate will provide some food energy. Since it contains mostly carbohydrates, it supplies the energy without making digestive demands on the body.

### **8. Newspapers (one per person)**

These are useful in starting a fire. They can also be used as insulation under clothing when rolled up and placed around a person's arms and legs. A newspaper can also be used as a verbal signaling device when rolled up in a megaphone-shape. It could also provide reading material for recreation.

### **9. Loaded .45-caliber pistol**

The pistol provides a sound-signaling device. (The international distress signal is 3 shots fired in rapid succession). There have been numerous cases of survivors going undetected because they were too weak to make a loud enough noise to attract attention. The butt of the pistol could be used as a hammer, and the powder from the shells will assist in fire building. By placing a small bit of cloth in a cartridge emptied of its bullet, one can start a fire by firing the gun at dry wood on the ground. The pistol also has some serious disadvantages. Anger, frustration, impatience, irritability, and lapses of rationality may increase as the group awaits rescue. The availability of a lethal weapon is a danger to the group under these conditions. Although a pistol could be used in hunting, it would take an expert marksman to kill an animal with it. Then the animal would have to be transported to the crash site, which could prove difficult to impossible depending on its size.

### **10. Quart of 100 proof whiskey**

The only uses of whiskey are as an aid in fire building and as a fuel for a torch (made by soaking a piece of clothing in the whiskey and attaching it to a tree branch). The empty bottle could be used for storing water. The danger of whiskey is that someone might drink it, thinking it would bring warmth. Alcohol takes on the temperature it is exposed to, and a drink of minus 30 degrees Fahrenheit whiskey would freeze a person's esophagus and stomach. Alcohol also dilates the blood vessels in the skin, resulting in chilled blood being carried back to the heart, resulting in a rapid loss of body heat. Thus, a drunken person is more likely to get hypothermia than a sober person is.

### **11. Compass**

Because a compass might encourage someone to try to walk to the nearest town, it is a dangerous item. Its only redeeming feature is that it could be used as a reflector of sunlight (due to its glass top).

### **12. Sectional air map made of plastic**

This is also among the least desirable of the items because it will encourage individuals to try to walk to the nearest town. Its only useful feature is as a ground cover to keep someone dry.

### **How to score**

If you decide to divide your group into teams and let them compete for the best answer, you can use this scoring system. Each team should list its top 5 choices in order prior to seeing the answer sheet. To award points, look at the ranking numbers on this answer sheet. Award points to each team's top choices according to the numbers here. For example, the map would earn 12 points, while the steel wool would earn 2 points. Lowest score wins (and survives).

## Activity 3: Rope Maze

### Objectives

- Develop trust amongst team members.
- Practice asking team members for help when needed.

### Materials

- Several lengths of rope
- Bandana Blind folds (1 per participant)

### Activity

1. Set up a maze in a separate location with the rope attached to several immovable objects. Trees work best. The rope is connected so there is no way out of the maze. The rope should be at waist level.
2. Blindfold the participants before entering the maze and have them each put their hand on the person's shoulder who is in front of them. Remember, Safety First.
3. Explain that they are about to enter a rope maze and that the object is to find their way out of the maze.

#### The rules are:

- a. You must keep both hands on the rope at all times.
  - b. You must keep your blindfold on at all times.
  - c. You must not talk. The only exception to talking is if you need help. In that case, raise your hand and one of the facilitators will come over and you can whisper your question.
4. Carefully, slowly and safely, lead the participants into the maze, place their hands on the rope and let them go. Once everyone is in the maze, tie the ends of the rope together so the maze is complete.
  5. Participants will wander around in the rope circle maze, diligently and hopelessly following the rope, searching for a way out.
  6. Periodically remind them that if they need some help, they need to raise their hand and ask for help.
  7. Eventually, someone will realize that the maze is indeed totally enclosed and that there is no discernible way out. That player might raise their hand and say: "I need help." Asking for help is what gets them out of the maze and allows them to take their blindfold off.
    - a. Sometimes a player will raise their hand and ask a question like "Is there really a way out of here?" This does not get them out of the maze. It gets them a 'yes' answer and then they keep going.
    - b. If a player asks for help, the facilitator carefully removes the blindfold and allows them to step outside of the maze. They become observers and cannot speak or offer guidance to their teammates.

8. The game ends when all participants are 'out', or the facilitator decides that it is not beneficial to keep playing.

**Teaching Tip:** Watch for injured feelings that can happen during this game. A participant might become upset when they can't find their way out, or if they are still in the maze at the end. Be careful, especially if only one player is left in the maze.

Don't ever forget about safety! If someone doesn't want to participate (they may have a fear of being blindfolded) let them assist as a silent observer.

### **Processing**

- What did the observers notice?
- How did you feel about yourself, your intelligence, your intuition as you navigated through the maze?
- If you got out, what was your strategy?
- If you didn't get out, what kept you in?
- What did you notice about your thoughts during this exercise?
- Did you want to ask for help?
- When you ran into people, did that frustrate you or were you glad you weren't alone?
- Did you think you figured it out, only to be disappointed? What did you then do, think, or feel?
- What stops you from asking for help?
- Where else in your life do you find it difficult to ask for help?

## Activity 4: Mouse Trap Walk

### Objectives

Develop team trust.

Practice listening and communicating with team members.

### Materials

Rope or tape

Several Mousetraps

Several bandana blindfolds

### Activity

This activity is conducted in two phases and two separate areas. In the second area, the mouse trap area needs to be out of sight where no one will see it until it is time to begin.

1. To set up the mouse trap area, first place two boundary markers of rope or tape about 12 – 15' apart.
2. Next place the mouse traps in a random pattern throughout the area so that there is not a clear path for anyone to walk through.
3. Set/load the mouse traps in the areas next to the boundaries, so that people will see that it is for real.

**Teaching Tip:** To save time during setup you can just 'pose' the mousetraps in the middle section to look like they are set.

4. Open a brief discussion on the importance of trust in team relationships.
5. After you have the group focused and bought in on the subject, divide them into pairs.
6. Next, tell them you are now going to give them a deeper experience of trust with an activity.
7. Before you take them in sight of the mouse trap area, have them remove their shoes.
8. Instruct each partner to stand directly opposite their partner, one on each side of the mouse trap area.
9. Tell them that each group is going to have the chance to walk through the mouse traps and rejoin their partner.
10. **Rules:**
  - a. Whoever is walking can only look directly at their partner's eyes; they can never look at where they are walking. (You can also use blindfolds if you like.)
11. The partner not walking gives verbal instructions to the one walking.
12. Once one group has gone, have them return to the other side and the remaining groups have their chance.
13. You may have to reset some of the mouse traps between groups.

**Processing:**

- What do you know about the importance of trust in relationships?
- How difficult was it to tune out the instructions from the others and concentrate on your partner?

## Activity 5: Blind Poly

### Objectives

- Enhance communication among team members.
- Allow every team members' voice to be heard.

### Materials

- Rope (at least 30' with ends tied together to form a continuous loop)
- Bandanna blindfolds (one for each participant)

### Activity

This activity requires from 6 – 12 participants.

**Teaching Tip:** This activity can be introduced as a virtual team project similar to projects where most of the work is done online, by email, or over the phone – those times when we can't see each other.

1. Have the group stand in a circle and put on their blindfolds.
2. Tell them that you are about to put a length of rope into their hands and that their task is to make a perfect square with the rope. They cannot take off their blindfolds or peek. One hand must be on the rope at all times.
3. They may slide their hand but must always have contact with the rope.
4. Once they feel they have a perfect square, they can lay the rope down.
5. The rope needs to be completely taut when they lay it down.
6. Once it is on the ground, they can remove their blindfolds.
7. During the activity, while the group is struggling, you may want to have them 'freeze' and ask "What do you know right now?"

**Teaching Tip:** More than one facilitator can be helpful to help protect participants from falling or tripping over unseen obstacles. *SAFETY FIRST!*

### Processing:

- What worked?
- What could have been better?
- Where did communication break down and what was each person's role in that?
- Did a leader emerge?
- Did the leadership for the 'project' change over the course of the activity?
- Were all voices heard?
- How is this activity and their behavior similar to their work together as a team?
- What learning do you want to take from this activity back to your work together?
- How will you do that?
- What do you need to keep this learning alive?

Typically, an alpha male will take charge and be so taken with his idea that others are not heard. You can explore everyone's role in supporting this behavior.

The object is not to make a perfect square. The object is to understand the communication and leadership (or lack of each) that occurred.

## Activity 6: Lands Work in an Organizational Setting

### Objectives

- Recognize the various roles and responsibilities of team members.

### Materials

- Masking tape
- *Lands Work* worksheet

### Activity

When working in team settings, it is important for the leader to help the members of the team understand various roles and jobs that are part of the team.

1. Using masking tape, lay out a wheel/pie on the floor with 8 wedges.
2. Ask the team members what are the various jobs that make the team's work effective. Ideas might be administration, advisory groups, information technology, finance, evaluation, promotion, team leader, etc.
3. Label each wedge with the jobs that are mentioned. Explain that they will now enter wholeheartedly into the land of the different jobs and leave their own role alone.
4. Ask everyone to move to one of the wedges and take on the job identified there. If there is someone who currently has that job, ask them to step outside the wedge and observe/listen (but not comment) from there.
5. For each wedge, ask these questions:
  - a. How does it feel to be in this job?
  - b. What is the most important thing in this job?
  - c. What are the challenges and pressures?
  - d. How do you need support from the other members of the team?
6. On the worksheet provided, ask participants to take a few notes about their perspectives in each wedge.
7. Check these perspectives with the individuals who hold those positions. What was it like to experience others talking about your job?
8. Continue to move around the wedges/jobs and repeat the questions until all are finished.

### Processing

- What are you willing to import from what you learned about each job to build your team together?
- What are the strengths that can come from each position that can become part of your team's structure?
- What new perspectives did you gain from this activity?
- What lessons will you use as you continue to build your team, based on what you might have learned about the various jobs?

## Lands Work

What are the key jobs that exist within your team and with the “Land of *Health Rocks!*” that help to make teams work and allow us to be effective in our program planning and delivery?  
(Identify up to seven)

In the chart below, record the jobs that were identified for this activity and complete the chart as the activity evolves.

Jobs/Roles Identified	My perspective about this job/role	What I learned from others about this job/role

## Activity 7: Carpet Squares

### Objectives

- Build team trust.
- Discuss expectations, accountability, and consequences when working on teams.
- Expand communication among team members.
- Practice conflict management within a team.

### Materials

- Carpet samples- 12"x12" and/or 15"x15" (1 per participant)  
\*\*Ask your local carpeting retailer if they have old samples they no longer use.
- Tape (masking or painter's tape)
- Several bandanna blindfolds

### Activity

You will need plenty of floor space for this activity.

1. Set-up a start and finish line, using tape on the floor, about 25 feet apart. Have several facilitators to monitor consequences and safety.
2. Issue one carpet sample/square per participant. Have them stand at the starting line.
3. The area they must cross can be a swamp that is populated by their fears, inadequacies, concerns, work problems, etc.
4. Have participants name the creatures of the swamp. The carpet squares are their power, resources, strengths, etc. Have them name the creatures and resources out loud.
5. **Rules:**
  - a. You can only stand on your square.
  - b. If your foot or other body part touches the floor, there is a consequence (**Don't tell them what the consequences are beforehand**).
  - c. You may momentarily (4-5 seconds) touch other people's squares.
  - d. Only you can move your square.
  - e. No sliding or hopping (safety first) – squares must be picked up to be moved.
  - f. Everyone must finish (step across the finish line) at the same time.
6. **Consequences:** Be religious in giving consequences so group has to learn reliance, communication, trust and accountability.
  - a. First floor touch = person is blindfolded.
  - b. Second touch = person starts over and removes blindfold.

### Processing:

- What did you notice?
- What worked?
- What could have been better?
- How do the skills and resources that helped you be successful relate to other areas of your life?
- Did some participants help each other by offering advice or encouragement or did they just hang out waiting for others to figure it out?

## Activity 8: Yes/And

### Objectives

- Integrate all elements of teamwork into the team's system.

### Activity

This activity can be done as an entire group or in pairs.

1. **Introduction:** We usually listen for what doesn't work when in conversations. As soon as we do, we quit really listening to another and typically respond with "yes but". This exercise will give you an opportunity to practice listening more closely, acknowledging other's ideas and perspectives. "Yes and ..." is a process that gives you an opportunity to listen to and acknowledge what your partner (or the previous person in the group) says before you make your contributions.
2. In this activity, your goal is to design a new *Health Rocks!* product together. You will take turns offering ideas, one at a time.
3. After the first person offers an idea, you will respond by appreciating at least one aspect of what was offered (What I really like about your idea is ....), completing it with something you can honestly say you like about the idea. If you cannot honestly appreciate an aspect of what was offered, ask the person to say more.
4. After offering your appreciation (which is the "Yes" step), you can add your own idea (which is the "And" part).
5. There are no restrictions whatsoever regarding money, practicality, plausibility, possibility, or physics.
6. If in a group, go around the circle at least twice to get some richness in the new product.

**Teaching Tip:** You may have to demonstrate with another facilitator to give them a clear idea of how this works.

### Processing:

- How was your experience with this activity?
- How did it feel to have your idea appreciated?
- Was it hard to always find something to appreciate?
- What is our normal listening preference – Yes, And or Yes, But?
- How might you use this with your team in the future?

