Smart Games for Smarter Learning

# CUP STACK & BALL CARRY

## Exploring Team Function: Clinical

### Fast-action team work in two specialized learning

As a result of participating in this activity, learners will:

1. Operate two rudimentary, team-based devices to accomplish an identified challenge.
2. Assess strategies needed to monitor the situation and support other team members during a high-stress event.
3. Evaluate the efficacy of those behaviors.



Image of students using string to carry a ball

*It doesn't take a lot to stress a team! Using simple devices from common, everyday items, teams perform tasks that depend on each member collaboratively participating while supporting others.*

**Materials:**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Large washer (2.5" metal ring) | Strings or rope | Eggs, foam craft balls, or ping pong balls |
| 16-ounce disposable cups | Elastic bands | |

**Instructions**

1. Assemble students into teams of 5-6 using some method to ensure diversity/interprofessionalism on each team. Each team is to complete two tasks in sequence to complete this activity.
2. The first challenge is to use a device composed of a large washer held up by strings tied to it (at least one string per team member.) The washer is a 2.5" metal ring. Team members must each hold a string, and use the device to carry an object such as an egg, foam craft ball, or ping pong ball (test these for difficulty) from one location to another. If the object drops, return to the beginning and start over. Team members may not hold the object with hands or fingers. Lower the object into a 16-ounce disposable cup.
3. The second challenge is to now empty the cup of the object (use your hands.) The next transporting device is an elastic band with a string attached (one for each team member.) The cup is placed open side down, and team members pull the strings to expand the elastic, stretching it over the base of the cup. Releasing the elastic allows them to carry the cup to another location. There, they find nine other similar cups, also open side down. Using the device, stack cups in a pyramid with four cups on the bottom, and subsequent rows of 3 cups, 2 cups, and 1 cup.
4. These challenges may also be done as individual events.

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| Lesson | Debrief Questions | Clinical Application | Bloom's Taxonomy | TeamSTEPPS™ Domain | IPEC Competencies |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Team Membership:**<br>In collaborative teams, we rely on others to function interdependently with the rest of the team. Under pressure, some team members may conclude that they have the best, or perhaps even the only, solution. In those situations, collaborative teamwork may become frustrating, or fall apart completely. | 1. What went well?<br>2. How did you r team perform in the completion of these somewhat awkward tasks?<br>3. Some team members performed better than others in this exercise. How did your team members respond to the differences in abilities? Ask a team member who felt confident, and then ask one who didn't | 1. Imagine that the ball being carried is a patient on whom your team has been asked to collaborate on.<br>2. Translate the metaphor of each of you holding the strings to being on a patient care team.<br>3. Provide an example of when we drop the ball in patient care.<br>4. Provide an example of when you have had to go back to the beginning and start over with a patient. | Analyze / Apply<br>Evaluate / Create | Leadership<br>Communication | Values & Ethics<br>Roles & Responsibilities<br>Communication<br>Teams & Teamwork |
| **Mutual Support:**<br>Team members do not all have either the same skills or the same proficiencies, potentially impeding the performance of the team. Being a part of the team sometimes means coaching others, helping them learn a skill that may be very unfamiliar to them. | 1. How did your team members hold one another accountable in this exercise? What happened if one team member struggled more than the rest of the group?<br>2. Try to recall the exact words used when people reacted to a failed attempt. How do you think those messages supported or criticized individual team members?<br>3. What is a typical reaction when team members feel that others are blaming them for team failures? | 1. If team members have similar skills, how can they provide mutual support to one another to provide optimal patient care? What about different skills?<br>2. Your teammate is going through a nasty divorce and is very distracted. You notice that she ordered a medication the patient is allergic to. What do you do?<br>3. The nurse is trying to insert an IV in a newborn and the parents keep yelling at him. How can you be supportive | Analyze / Apply<br>Evaluate / Create | Leadership<br>Communication<br><br>Mutual Support | Values & Ethics<br>Roles & Responsibilities<br>Communication<br>Teams & Teamwork |
| **Situation Monitoring:**<br>Teams are expected to operate as a unit, not a group of individuals. Being a team member means watching for opportunities to fill in any "gaps" in team performance for the sake of a positive outcome. Sometimes this is called "having someone else's back" be it a patient or a team member. | 1. What specifically did you notice about how your team aligned itself to bring individuals to function together?<br>2. Where in these activities did you either share or receive information that benefitted the progress toward the desired outcome? | 1. You are speaking with a patient and her family about her DNR order when the phlebotomist comes in to draw labs but you know that labs have not been ordered. How do you address this situation?<br>2. During both activities, you had to navigate around obstacles as a team. What are some types of obstacles your team has encountered in patient care? | Analyze / Apply<br>Evaluate / Create | Communication<br>Situation Monitoring | Values & Ethics<br>Roles & Responsibilities<br>Communication<br>Teams & Teamwork |

For additional information about Debriefing, please refer to the ***Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science Smart Games for Smarter Learning Debriefing Guide Supplement.***

**References:**


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