BALLOON TOWER

Objective:
To allow for observation of team interaction while exploring communication skills, cooperation, planning, and having fun.

Group Size:
Groups of 10 to 15.
The group can be broken into smaller groups to accommodate the smaller size.

Materials:
100 balloons
2 to 3 roles of masking tape

Instructions:
The group is to build the tallest, freestanding structure they can in 20 minutes using only the balloons and the tape.

Processing Questions:
1. What worked in the process? What hindered the process?
2. How did you plan your structure?
3. Was leadership displayed? Did you observe leadership in the group?
4. What role did you personally play in the exercise?
5. What did you learn about yourself? Others?
6. Did everyone feel like they had an active role? Did you feel as if your ideas were heard and considered?

Alternative:
You can break the group into two groups with 50 balloons each, using the same general instructions. Do not tell them that it is a contest, however they will assume that it is. It is often interesting to see if they decide to work together or not – for there is no rule that they cannot. This opens a lot of conversation on collaboration and separate units working together for a common goal.

Having the group pop all of the balloons at the end of the exercise adds to the fun of this problem-solving task.

Adapted from The Leadershape Institute