Team Tower Turning*

Task Objective

With your team, build the highest tower you can, using only the cups and index cards provided.

Team Size

Four to six participant per team.

Building Materials

- 12 cups
- 15 index cards

Note: These are the only authorized building materials for the task. Other supplies (e.g., pen and paper) may be used during the build but cannot be used as building materials.

Goals

Prior to beginning the building process, the following goals must be determined and recorded below.

Tower Height Goal = _____ cups tall	**Building Quality Goal = _____ collapses**
How tall will your tower be at the end of the time allotment?	How many collapses during the building of the tower is acceptable to your team?
Tower height is measured by the number of cups included in your team's free-standing tower at the end of the time allotment.	Building quality is determined by the lowest number of collapses that occur during the building of the tower.

Time Allotment

The facilitator will tell you how much time you have to build your tower and will indicate when to start building and when to stop.

Activity Rules and Information

Refer to the Operational Procedures on the next page.

Team Tower Turning Operational Procedures

- The build starts with one "foundational" cup placed on the table by a member of the team.

    - There are no specific requirements for the orientation of this cup (i.e., open end up or down).

- Everyone on the team is required to take one "turn" before anyone takes a second turn.

    - Everyone takes a second turn before anyone takes a third turn (and so on) for the entire build process.

- A "turn" involves the following four (4) steps, completed by the team member whose turn it is:

    1. Place an index card on top of the upper-most cup.

    2. Place one cup on top of the index card.

    3. "Rotate" the entire structure (all cups and cards) 180 degrees.

    4. Completely let go of the structure so it stands on its own.

- During each Rotation, only the cups (not the cards) may be touched.

    - The person rotating the structure may ask for help from other team members.

- Once the 180-degree rotation has been completed, but before the person whose turn it is removes their hands from the structure, adjustments to the cups and cards are allowed.

    - No cups or cards may be removed.

- If a structural collapse occurs, the team must start over.

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Team Tower Turning* Reflection Questions

Note to Facilitator: It is important to include enough time to debrief the activity with your participants. Below is a list of sample debrief questions for you to consider including in your debrief. Feel free to modify or add debrief questions to best suit your participants and the desired outcomes of your session.

- On a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being the highest), how would you rate your team's success?

    - Why do you feel that way?

- When you first got started, how did your team share ideas and make decisions about the task and the goals?

    - Were everyone's ideas shared and heard? How do you know?

- Did your team change its process at any point in the activity? Why or why not?

- Which goal, Tower Height, or Building Quality, did your team pay more attention to? Why do you think that was?

- What did you notice about how your work style preferences affected your behavior during the activity?

    - If you were to do the activity over and could *personally* do one (1) thing differently, what would it be?

- Think about some of the challenges your team faced during the activity. How do those challenges relate to "real life" on your team? For example:

    - What did you notice about changes in your language or tone when you encountered a challenge or setback during the activity?

    - Some towers collapsed when too much pressure was put on the cups. How is this pressure like "real life" when your team is trying to achieve your goals?

- What did you notice about integrity during the activity?

- Did your team observe or interact with any other teams during the activity? Why or why not?

- What insights does your experience during this activity give you about how your team will work together in the future?

    - Consider how you will set goals, make decisions, manage setbacks, communicate with one another, etc.

- What does this activity have to do with building a high-performing team?

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*Activity Inspiration: *Cup it Up! Team Building with Cups* by Chris Cavert and Barry W. Thompson, © 2017