

Star Search Leadership

”Creating Leaders and Champions – On Court and Off”



Perseverance – The Power of Never Giving Up

The Tower Challenge

Total Equipment needed: One bag of mini-Marshmallows per team and one box of wooden toothpicks per team. Alternative materials: can use 1 box of plastic straws per team

Objective and Desired Outcomes:

- The team is to build the tallest tower using only the marshmallows and toothpicks
- Players will build perseverance; learn the importance of pre-planning to achieve a goal, and the need for effective communication during pre-planning; and to continue and persevere until the last second - keep trying.
- They will learn that both leading and following skills are needed for a team to succeed and persevere.

Set up and instructions:

Coaches will lead this session. Teams of 3 - 4 players are challenged to build the tallest freestanding tower from marshmallows and toothpicks. You will have 5 minutes to plan your structure and how your team is going to implement that plan. When you are asked to start building then you may pick up the marshmallows and toothpicks. You will be given 10 minutes to implement the plan **WITHOUT TALKING!**

Coach Facilitation Notes:

Players must do these activities on their own without prompting from coaches or parents. Keep reminding them that they cannot talk during the building process. Do not allow them to start before the allotted time. Notice how well they work together during the planning phase. In the building phase, are they able to communicate without talking? Are they all participating? Stay away from being judgmental. Acknowledge participants as much as you can. Notice all and be prepared to talk about specific instances so the team members can learn from their mistakes and successes. Notice if any, "give up" and quit trying and notice those that encourage the group to keep trying and that we "can do it."

Safety considerations:

None

Suggested Debrief questions that lead to the desired outcomes:

- How well did your plan work?
- If you were to do the planning part over, what would you have done differently?
- What did you notice about the other people in the group?
- How well were you listened to by the group?
- What is the level of leadership in this group?
- Who do you want to acknowledge for their participation and why?
- Who had a positive impact on the group?
- What did the greens, golds, blues, and oranges contribute?
- Who kept you motivated when you wanted to give up?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how is your group performing and how do you know?
- What can you take from this experience to improve your leadership skills?