



Purpose:

Working in pairs, the objective of this activity is to coach your partner (whose eyes are closed) into placing their hand on top of a set mousetrap. The skills developed include: communication, trust, planning, coaching.

Timings 20 – 30 minutes.

Space required: Minimal

Props/ equipment required: One “traditional” wooden mousetrap per pair.

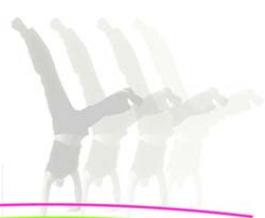


Set up/ Preparation

- This is an advanced activity to be led by a skilled facilitator with groups that are ready for the challenge; prior to leading this activity you should assess your group’s ability to safely participate in this activity.
- Do not attempt this activity if your group isn’t ready (ie where trust in you/ each other is not sufficiently established).
- Make sure that your group understands that participation in this activity is purely voluntary; if they don’t want to participate then they should not be (or feel) pressured to do so. Allocate observer/ feedback roles to anyone not wishing to take an active role, so that they can still add value to the activity.
- When the group is clear about the rules of engagement, explain that there are 4 stages to this activity:

1	<p>Leader demonstrates how to set a mousetrap.</p> <p>Pair up and issue a mousetrap to each pair; practice setting the trap.</p> <p>(Assume that this familiarisation/ role allocation will take approx 5 minutes.)</p>
2	<p>Partners each get a chance to set a trap with their eyes closed.</p> <p>(Assume that this will take approx 4-5 minutes.)</p>
3	<p>Show the group how to safely un-set a trap by placing your hand directly on top of the trap and then taking your hand off the trap.</p> <p>This step can be a shocker for some; they may find it hard to believe what you’re doing.</p> <p>Let the pairs experience this stage; assume 4-5 minutes for this stage.</p>
4	<p>Person A closes eyes then person B sets the trap and places it on a hard surface.</p> <p>Person A is coached by Person B to un-set the trap.</p> <p>Switch roles.</p>

- Pacing is important; don’t rush this activity.
- Speak clearly and confidently; this is not the time and place for jokes (by you or anyone else).
- Don’t show all 4 steps at one time; show one step then have the group do that step before proceeding to the next step.



Safety warning:

- A high degree of trust is required to successfully accomplish this challenge. This challenge is best left for a group that is advanced as far as maturity and their ability to safely care for one another. People can get hurt in this activity but it is unlikely that they will get seriously hurt – that's one reason we use a mouse trap and not a rat trap!

Facilitator Notes:

- This is one of the most amazing activities I've ever seen. It's so portable and yet so powerful in its ability to create trust within individuals and the group.
- If you are familiar with the trust building activity Trust Fall then you'll find this activity similar in its impact. It may even be transformational for many.
- Expect some people not to participate in this activity at all; expect others to stop participating half-way through – like when you tell them to put their hand on top of the trap.



De-briefing suggestions:

- Which did you prefer: to coach or be coached? Why?
- If this mousetrap represents a fear in your life, what did you like about how you handled it? What would you change?
- What did you observe in the interactions between partnerships around you?

Variations:

- Hand out a mousetrap to each person; ask them to write on the trap a fear they are choosing to face in their life.

Acknowledgement: This activity comes from the brilliant mind of Sam Sikes who has authored several teambuilding games books. www.doingworks.com