

Gordian Knot

What This is an group energizer or warm-up activity for a communications or problem solving event. It is fun, enlightening or provocative.

When This is normally used as an energizer during the late morning or particularly in the mid-afternoon.

How 1. **Form Two Groups:** Ask for a volunteer that wants to ensure they are on the winning team or one that is a great leader. Form two groups of about equal size in an area where the group can move around easily. Have each group stand in a tight circle.

2. **Provide Instructions:** Ask for two people to step out to demonstrate with you. Have them reach across the group with their right hand to grasp the right hand of someone across from them. Then have them reach across to grasp someone else's left hand with their left hand. Left hand to left hand with one person, right hand to right hand with another.

For the group with the volunteer Winner/Leader, instruct the group they are not to talk or respond to questions from their leader during the event (They can, however, complain). They must listen to and follow the instruction of their leader. The leader cannot instruct them to break a rule. The other team may discuss their moves and work through the problem.

The object of the activity is to unravel the knot without letting go of your hands. You can twist and rotate your hand holds but you must not break the connection. The activity continues until one group forms a circle after following the rules.

3. **Unravel the Knot:** Have both groups unravel their knot. They must do this while not letting go of their hands.

4. **Discuss the Results:** Question the facilitator can ask are:

How does this relate to what we are doing here?

How does this relate to work?

What does it say about complexity?

What was different about how the two teams worked?

What does it say about teamwork?

What does this tell you about Problem Solving and group participation?

