LEADERSHIP INSPIRATIONS

Wild Goose Chase

Come with a set of random tasks for a partner to complete

TIME	MATERIALS	TEAM STAGE
10-20 minutes	Paper, pens	Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing

Learning & Development Outcomes

This activity will give participants practice using systems thinking to create comprehensive project plans. It will allow them to think through all of the steps required to achieve a desired outcome.

Outcomes are focused on developing ***21st Century Skills*** and the ***National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) Career Competencies***, including, but not limited to:

- Prioritizing, planning and managing work to achieve the intended result.
- Analyzing how parts of a whole interact with each other to produce overall outcomes in complex systems.
- Prioritizing and completing tasks to accomplish organizational goals.
- Planning, initiating, managing, completing, and evaluating projects.

Preparation & Logistics

Set Up

- Make sure to have a space that participants can move freely around.

Safety

- Participants will be coming up with tasks for each other to complete. Remind them to consider physical and psychological safety when coming up with their list of tasks and to avoid any task that may be dangerous or uncomfortable in any way.

Additional Considerations

- Set aside additional time for a debrief.
- *Click here to watch it live!*

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Instructions

Summary
Participants will send a partner on a "wild goose chase" to complete a series of tasks.

To make the activity age appropriate for your participants, suggest tasks relevant to the group.

Step 1: Create the list of tasks

- Give each participant a piece of paper and a pen.
- Have each participant write out a list of tasks that could be completed in the room. The tasks must meet the following criteria:
  - Include exactly ten tasks
  - Have a physical starting location in the room
  - Have a physical ending location in the room
  - Include at least one verbal task (eg. tell a joke to another participant)
  - Include at least one object to find (eg. pick up something red)
  - Include something with a number (eg. walk backwards eight steps)

What if we don't complete all tasks?

"If a participant is unable to complete a task, uncomfortable with a task, or runs out of time, that is completely fine. This activity is about the process of creating and following task lists, not about actually doing all of the tasks."

Step 2: Complete the tasks

- Have each participant find a partner to trade task lists with.
- Have one partner give the other partner their task and send them on a "wild goose chase" to complete all of the tasks in order.
- Once the first participant has finished going through all 10 tasks, they should switch and send their partner on a wild goose chase to complete the ten tasks that they came up with.

How to end the activity

- The activity is over once everyone has successfully completed all of the tasks on the list that was given to them.

Check in with participants as they complete Step 1 to make sure that all tasks are safe, appropriate, able to be accomplished. Or, add a step between Step 1 and Step 2 that required a facilitator to sign off on each task list before it can be given to a participant to complete.

K-2 **3-4** 5-6 7-8 9-12 ASB

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Debrief Questions

These questions are a starting point to guide your debrief. Pick the ones that best match your group's experience and add or change questions as needed!

What

- What was easy or hard about coming up with your task list?
- What was easy or hard about completing the tasks on your partner's list?

So What

- Why is it important to be specific when giving instructions?
- How can thinking creatively help you come up with different ways to complete a task?

Now What

- What other opportunities are there to give or receive instructions?
- How can you make sure that others will complete tasks the way you intend for them to be completed?

Adjustments for...

Large Group (25+)

- Have participants work in pairs or small groups to come up with task lists and complete tasks.

Risk Level

- Add more specific criteria to Step 1 to have more control over the types of tasks that participants choose, or add more vague criteria to require participants to get more creative.

Group has prior experience

- Add in a third participant to be a "director". Their job will be to take the task list from one participant and direct the other participant on what to do without using the words on the task list.

Online

- Have participants come up with tasks that can be done in any environment. After everyone has come up with their task list, put each pair in a breakout room and have them use the chat to share their task list with their partner.

Each adjustment is its own unique idea for how to facilitate this activity for different groups and situations! Choose any or all that work!

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