

Tank Wars (also called Tank and Commander)

Objective: Teamwork, communication, and problem solving

Group Size: 8+ participants (Even number)

Materials: Blindfolds (enough for half of participants) and NERF balls (or something soft to be hit with)

Estimated Amount of Time: Flexible (depending on number of participants and how many rounds played)

Instructions: Prior to beginning this activity, look at the environment you have to work with, this activity works best with a flat field or open room with no breakables. The larger the room, the more difficult the activity can be. The instructor will tape off a large square boundary for students to move in and will randomly scatter the Nerf balls across the field (soft swimming pool toys can be a good alternative). The facilitator will then instruct the students to choose a partner. Once the partners are selected, have one of the students in each pair volunteer to be the tank and the other student to be the commander (these roles will switch after each round). The tanks will all be blindfolded and placed within the playing arena. It is the commander's job to verbally instruct the tank where the balls are located. The commander must stay outside the playing arena and not touch any of the tanks at any time. The tanks must locate the balls in the arena (with the commander's help) and throw them at the other tanks on the field. If hit by a ball, the hit tank must take off their blindfold and leave the playing field. At no point in time will the commanders or hit tanks throw a ball. An "out" is verified by a clean throw and not from a tag or bounce off a wall/ground. In order to prevent injury, instruct the tanks to only walk while on the playing field. The round is complete once there is only one tank left standing on the field. Instruct the students to switch roles and play again. Rounds can pass swiftly so it is up to the facilitator's discretion how many rounds are played. If there is additional time, the facilitator can instruct students to find a different partner.

Processing Questions:

1. What strategy was the most effective, why? Did you change your strategy after different rounds?
2. Did you enjoy being the tank or commander more, why?
3. What communication skills were needed to be successful in this game? Where there any times you felt frustrated? How could these times have been fixed?
4. If you had to switch partners, how was it adjusting to a new commander/tank?
5. How does this activity relate to real life? In a world full of different voices telling you different instructions, how do you find the voices intended for you and how do you know they are good/bad advice?
6. What characteristics do you look for from staff/team members or from a supervisor? Discuss these expectations.