

Running Teams



Overview:

A simple, effective team challenge which is fun to play and frequently confronting. Large groups of participants must train for and compete in the ultimate race while running in a tight formation. This can be a high gradient activity ... be prepared for issues to surface.

Sequencing:

Best played in longer programs or conferences over time. Any time it is necessary to get participants into action or to encourage them experience the effects of true team cohesion on their ability to achieve exceptional results. A great game to play in team-building programs, a must for leadership sessions.

Potential:

This game has the potential to:

- get participants into action
- challenge team assumptions
- show how trust levels limit success
- broaden leadership understanding
- demonstrate coaching principles
- show importance of shared team vision
- encourage team bonding
- display leadership qualities
- demonstrate what holds teams back and drives them forward

Participants:

From 12 upwards in teams of 12 - 20
Optimum team size 18. No maximum

Timing:

Time to play: 20 minutes
Time to debrief: 5 - 10 minutes

Ratings:



Energiser



Fun



Teamwork



Competitive



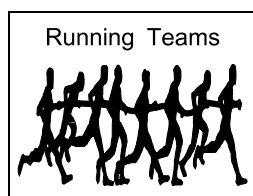
Personal Growth



Minutes



Outdoors



Comments:

“A simple framework but some spectacular results can be expected as the task demands that teams deal with a raft of their own issues as they form a cohesive unit.”

John Radclyffe, Trainer

Logistics:

Essential:	Optional:
Materials: <i>Per participant:</i> Optional Debrief Sheet. Running gear. <i>Per team:</i> One or more Rules Sheets.	Music: None required but you could play <i>“Keep on Running”</i>
Props: Course markers, if required. First Aid Kit	Assistants: None
Set-up: Copy Debrief Sheets and Rules Sheets, if required. Choose an appropriate and safe course for a large formation to run. Obstacles are not necessary and should be avoided. It helps to build the length of the course as participants fitness and cohesion improves. A length of 1 or 2 kms is good to start. Gauge the final race length according to fitness. Form teams of equal size. Large teams of around 18 participants are best. If anyone is physically unable to compete (as opposed to simply unfit), give them a course marshal role. It is a good idea to pre-warn potential program participants and set expectations.	

Script:

Introduction:

Hand out rules sheet to each team

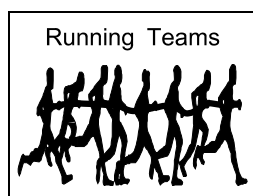
Your team task is to practice for a team race in competition with other teams.

In this race your whole team must run in formation around this course.

Demonstrate or illustrate one lap of the course.

From the start line here, around these markers and back is one lap.

You will run laps in your practice sessions - about 1 (or 2) kms

**Main Activity:**

Lead participants to the designated start line or start position

Okay, I want every team to run three abreast, shoulder to shoulder.

You can work out for yourselves who should go where.

If anyone on your team is unfit or injured, then you must work out how to deal with that as a team.

They must still be a part of your formation even if you have to carry them.

You must keep the team safe at all times and everyone is responsible for their own health and well-being.

Remember, you must be within 1 metre of another member of your team at all times ... and not just those in the same rank as you!

Get ready to practice for the race.

Five, four, three, two, one ... Go!

Watch participants carefully for unsafe play. Help keep teams apart, especially when overtaking.

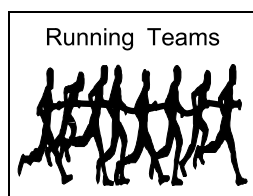
It is a fundamental principle of this game that teams are self regulating. Allow plenty of time for teams to brief and debrief.

On a long program, it is best to have 30 minute practice sessions built into the timetable such as at 6 am prior to breakfast.

Ensure there is plenty of water available and that all participants bring proper running gear to the event.

If the total group size is sufficient for a final race, this is best run as a finale to the event as a whole. Be flexible - watch teams in practice - you may want to allow teams to have say 3 - 6 fit participants run a first lap, while one or two start walking ... and the fit people pick up the rest of their team (minus the walkers) and run a second leg. The important thing is to infer in practice that the race is going to be one formation.

If time does not allow for practice sessions, then the formation running is still a good team exercise - you just will not get the same team self-analysis.

**Debrief:**

On completion of the race, declare the winning team

Do we have a winner? Yes, the winning team is team ...

Participants return to their seats

Give them and yourselves a big hand. Everybody back to your seats.

Debrief the game

Please complete your debrief sheets headed the "Running Teams"

Debriefing:

(Please note: possible responses are in parentheses)

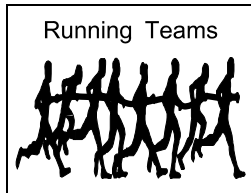
- Get participants to record their individual experiences on the Debrief Sheets. Talk them through the questions on the sheet.
- Ask participants to discuss on their teams.
 - *What worked for you and your team when running in formation?*
 - *What didn't work for you and your team when running in formation?*
 - *What did you learn about others on your team in this game?*
 - *What did you learn about yourself in this game?*
 - *What can you learn from the game that you can use on your work teams?*
- Debrief all participants as a group:
 - *What worked for you and your team when running in formation?* (Simple instructions. Breathing together. Keeping in step. Trusting the leader. Encouraging others. Awareness of others.)
 - *What didn't work for you and your team when running in formation?* (No trust. No patience. Running at different speeds. Bullying. Injuries.)
 - *What did you learn about others on your team in this game?* (Others doing the best they can. Needs are different. Encouragement works. Criticism rarely does.)
 - *What did you learn about yourself in this game?* (The game can often bring up frustrations and other negative emotions that are really an opportunity for a learning - allow time for individual learnings to be reflected on)
 - *What can you learn from the game that you can use on your work teams?* (Draw out and flipchart, if desired, to include: Importance of trust. Rapport. Encouragement. Better understanding of each other. Building trust with the least trusting. Understanding team can only go as fast as the slowest member. etc.)

Source:

WorldGAMES 2008

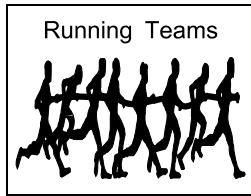
Trainers Note:

Please feedback new variations, solutions, outcomes and debriefing points for WorldGAMES to update and circulate.



Running Teams Rules

- 1 There will be a race in competition with all of the other teams. You must practice for this race.
- 2 You must number yourselves within the team: 1, 2, 3 etc.
- 3 Numbers 1 - 3 will run shoulder to shoulder in the first row of the team. Numbers 4 - 6 in the second row. 7 - 9 in the third row and so on.
- 4 The whole team will run in formation Numbers 1 - 3 at the front. Each row must be within 1 metre of the row in front at all times. The objective is to run in a tight formation.
- 5 The facilitator will show you the course and the length of each run. The objective is to regularly practice for the big race day.
- 6 You are free to change the numbering within the team at any time.
- 7 You are free to appoint and dismiss leaders at any time.
- 8 You are free to deal with any issues that come up within the team and set your own team rules. However, no-one can drop out of the team or simply decide not to run.
- 9 You are totally responsible for your own safety and play at your own risk. Unsafe play or sabotage of any kind will result in team disqualification.
- 10 On the race day, the first team to complete the race is the winner. Completion will be when the last of your team crosses the finishing line.



Debrief Sheet

1. What worked for you and your team?

2. What didn't work for you and your team?

3. What did you learn about others on your team?

4. What did you learn about yourself in the game?

5. What can you learn that can help you on your work teams?