



Breaking the Ceiling

Teamwork

Collaborative Activity

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Title	
Straw Tower Challenge	
Objective	Foster teamwork, creativity, and problem-solving skills through the design and construction of a tower using straws.
Materials Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Plastic straws (variety of sizes) – Tape – String – Scissors – Additional building materials (optional, e.g., paper, cardboard, paper clips)
Instructions	
Introduction (15 minutes)	Begin with a brief explanation of the design thinking process: empathize, define, ideate, prototype, and test. Emphasize the importance of collaboration, creativity, and learning from failure.
Empathize and Define (20 minutes)	Discuss the challenge: Building a tall and stable tower using only straws and tape. Encourage participants to think about the end-users (their team) and any specific requirements or constraints.
Ideate (30 minutes)	Allow time for brainstorming and ideation. Participants should sketch and discuss their initial ideas for the tower. Provide materials for participants to jot down their thoughts, create simple sketches, or share ideas verbally. Provide materials for participants to jot down their thoughts, create simple sketches, or share ideas verbally.
Prototype (45 minutes)	Distribute straws, tape, and any other materials you've provided. Participants start building their prototypes. Encourage experimentation, iteration, and teamwork. Remind them to consider stability, height, and overall design.
Test (15 minutes)	Once the towers are complete, each team presents their design to the group. Conduct a testing phase where each team's tower is assessed for stability and height. Discuss what worked well and what challenges they faced during the process.
Reflection and Iteration (20 minutes)	Facilitate a group discussion on the design thinking process. Ask participants to reflect on what they learned, what challenges they encountered, and how they overcame them. Discuss potential improvements or modifications to their designs.
Showcase and Awards (15 minutes)	Allow each team to showcase their towers to the entire group. Consider giving awards for different categories, such as "Tallest Tower," "Most Creative Design," or "Best Use of Materials."

Debrief	<p>Conclude the activity with a debriefing session where participants share their experiences and insights. Discuss the importance of collaboration, adaptability, and creative problem-solving in the context of the design thinking process.</p> <p>This Straw Tower Challenge not only promotes teamwork and creativity but also introduces participants to the iterative nature of design thinking. Adjust the duration and complexity based on the preferences and goals of your group.</p>
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