Bridge Build: [TEAM BUILDING](http://www.ventureteambuilding.co.uk/category/team-building/)

Using the materials provided, two teams must work together to build a bridge, with each sub-team constructing half the bridge each. During the challenge, teams cannot see each other and must rely on their communication skills to build an identical design. This is an excellent activity for developing communication skills, problem solving and creative thinking.

**Equipment Required:**

newspapers, lego, toy bricks, straws, paper, cardboard etc.

**Other essential resources**: Tape, paper, pens, tape measure and tarpaulin or sheet.

**Space Required**: Small. Indoors or outdoors.

**Group Size:**8 to 16 ideally. Enough people for at least two sub-teams of four or more. If you have a large group, then you can get more than one team working on a build – just ensure you have enough equipment including tarpaulins!

**Total Time:**45 minutes

* 5 minutes to brief and set up
* 10 minutes group discussion and designs
* 25 minutes to complete build
* 5 minutes to review

**Bridge Build Team Building Instructions**

1. Before to the start of the activity, setup the room or area with a divide so teams cannot see what the other team is doing, use either a tarpaulin or sheets.
2. Explain to the group, that they will be split into two sub-teams and must work together to create a complete bridge with each team building half a bridge each. At the end of the time you need to put your bridges together to create your build. However, you will be separated during the challenge and can only communicate verbally to ensure that each build meets the design specification. You have just 30 minutes to complete the challenge.
3. Split the group into smaller sub-teams (aim for 4-8) and separate them to either side of the tarpaulin.
4. Provide each team with a bag of materials. Ensure that each bag contains exactly the same items. Also provide each team with paper, pens and a tape measure.
5. Give the team ten minutes to generate ideas and come up with a plan for the design. Remind teams to discuss ideas and communicate with their partner team on the other side of the tarpaulin to ensure a similar design.
6. Each team then gets 30 minutes to construct their half of the design. It is essential that each sub-team communicates effectively during the construction phase, failure to do so will result in failure of the challenge.
7. Once the time is up, remove your divide separating the two teams and see how close each build was to each other.

**Suggested Learning Outcomes**

* Problem Solving
* Active listening
* Team communication
* Creative thinking
* Cooperation and teamwork

**Useful Tips**

This is an excellent exercise to use as a lead in to a project workshop or team meeting. It gets teams communicating effectively and listening to each other. In addition, this team challenge also develops problem solving skills and creative thinking.

Another skill that can be developed during the task is leadership. You can let this happen naturally within a team or you pick a team leader before the start of the challenge. This gives lower level employees an opportunity to get out of their comfort zones, build rapport with others and develop new skills.

Questions to ask when reviewing:

* What did you find most difficult about his challenge? How did you overcome that?
* What did you do well? How did you decide on that method?
* Who was responsible for communicating the design between the teams? If you had more than one person, did you find this difficult?
* Did you select a leader? Why was leadership important during the task?
* How did you work out the key responsibilities for the challenge? Did you delegate based on strengths and weaknesses?
* Did you miscommunicate at any point during the challenge? How did you get back on track?
* What surprised you most about the activity? What can you take away?