

Lesson 1: Human Knot

Category: Skills Identification and Career Exploration

Employability Skills

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| a) Teamwork & Working in Diverse Environments | f) Professionalism |
| b) Interpersonal Communication | g) Work Ethic: Integrity, Responsibility, & Accountability |
| c) Problem Solving & Critical Thinking | h) Time Management |
| d) Enthusiasm & Attitude | i) Ability to Accept and Integrate Criticism and Feedback |
| e) Flexibility & Adaptability | |

Instructional Direction

Students grouped into 6 or more (the larger the group, the more challenging the activity and the longer it takes to complete).

Group members face one another in a circle. Everyone raise one hand and grab the hand of someone that is not on either side of them. Everyone raise other hand and grab hands with a different person; again, not someone beside them. Everyone should be holding hands of two different people and that they are not holding hands with someone directly next to them.

Groups must now untangle themselves without unclasping hands. Students should take their time in order to limit injuries and they should not tug or pull on each other. Spot students as they pass over/under other students. End result should be that the group is back in a circle, although not all participants may be facing the same direction.

If group members break the chain, they must start over.

- Variation – penalize any group that breaks their chain by silencing one or more members from verbal communication each time it happens
- Variation – if there are multiple groups, any group that breaks their chain is eliminated

Groups then brainstorm on the skills it took to get back in a circle and write them on the flip chart. Highlight employability skills. You may need to define this type of skill. Employability skills, or “soft” skills, are skills that are difficult to measure consistently with a number but are essential to workplace success. The employability skills most often requested and needed by employers are all embedded in this activity and are found at the top of this page as well as on p. 11 in the When I Grow Up Workbook. The difference between hard and soft skills is also found in the Workbook on p. 7. Once students have listed the skills needed to complete the activity and have isolated the employability skills, discuss why these skills might be important to an employer.

Learning Outcome(s)

Students will be able to identify and demonstrate key employability skills desired by employers.

Resources Needed

- Flip chart
- Markers
- Space for movement

Modification and Extensions

- Set a time limit for untangling the knot.
- Consider assigning a leader — s/he is the only person allowed to speak and/or use any verbal or non-verbal cues.
- Make it a competition between groups to see which can accomplish the task most quickly, most quietly, fewest movements, etc.