**Marshmallow Challenge**

Each table should include:

* 20 strings of spaghetti
* 1 yard of masking tape
* 1 yard of string (+scissors to cut if it’s thick)
* 1 marshmallow
* 1 paper bag or manila envelope to encase supplies above
* Icebreaker supplies:
  + Pen and paper

Instructor kit should include:

* Measuring tape
* Stopwatch/timer (could use projector and have a timer in powerpoint presentation)
* Prize
* Powerpoint
* Flipchart and markers
* Groupify Supplies
  + Original Picture
  + Puzzle Pieces
  + Containers

Groupify (5 minutes)

* Groups should be no more than 5
* Use Group Puzzler technique to assign people to a table.
  + Select a picture for each group
  + Cut each picture into the same number of pieces as group members
  + Mix pieces from all pictures into a container
  + Participants choose a piece from the container when they enter
  + Participants look for the table that has the complete picture their piece corresponds to and put the picture together as other people arrive to the table.

Icebreaker (10 minutes)

* Ten Things in Common
  + Find 10 things you have in common with every other person in your group (Remember to avoid the obvious! –eg. “We all have a nose.”)
  + One person in each group records their list
  + Each group reads their list to the whole group upon completion

Marshmallow Challenge Instructions (5 minutes)

Be clear about the goals and rules of the Marshmallow Challenge. Visually reinforce the instructions:

* Build the Tallest Freestanding Structure
  + The winning team is the one that has the tallest structure measured from the table top surface to the top of the marshmallow. That means the structure cannot be suspended from a higher structure, like a chair, ceiling or chandelier.
* The Entire Marshmallow Must be on Top
  + The entire marshmallow needs to be on the top of the structure. Cutting or eating part of the marshmallow disqualifies the team.
* Use as Much or as Little of the Kit as you want
  + The team can use as many or as few of the 20 spaghetti sticks, as much or as little of the string or tape. The team cannot use the paper bag as part of their structure.
* Break up the Spaghetti, String or Tape
  + Teams are free to break the spaghetti, cut up the tape and string to create new structures.
* The Challenge Lasts 18 minutes
  + Teams cannot hold on to the structure when the time runs out. Those touching or supporting the structure at the end of the exercise will be disqualified.
* Ensure Everyone Understands the Rules
  + Don’t worry about repeating the rules too many times. Repeat them at least three times. Ask if anyone has any questions before starting.

Start the Challenge (18 minutes)

Start the countdown clock and the music with the start of the challenge.

* Walk around the Room
  + It’s amazing to see the development of the structures as well as notice the patterns of innovation most teams follow.
* Remind the Teams of the Time
  + Countdown the time. Usually, I call 12 minutes, 9 minutes (half-way through), 7 minutes, 5 minutes, 3 minutes, 2 minutes, 1 minute, 30 seconds and a ten-second count down.
* Call Out How the Teams are Doing
  + Let the entire group know how teams are progressing. Call out each time a team builds a standing structure. Build a friendly rivalry. Encourage people to look around. Don’t be afraid to raise the energy and the stakes.
* Remind the Teams that Holders will be Disqualified:
  + Several teams will have the powerful desire to hold on to their structure at the end. Usually because the marshmallow, which they just placed onto their structure moments before, causing the structure to buckle. The winning structure needs to be stable.

Finish the Challenge (20 minutes)

After the clock runs out, ask everyone in the room to sit down so everyone can see the structures. Likely, just over half the teams will have standing structures.

* Measure the Structures
  + From the shortest standing structure to the tallest, measure and call out the heights. If you’re documenting the challenge, have someone record the heights (eg. Flipchart).
* Identify the Winning Team
  + Ensure they get a standing ovation and a prize (if you’ve offered one).
* Wrap up with the Lessons of the Marshmallow Challenge:
  + Show TEDTalk
  + Review and record final thoughts (eg. Flipchart)