

# The Marshmallow Challenge

**SESKAT Training  
Toolbox**

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## Description

In this engaging and amusing activity, participants will work in teams to build the tallest free-standing structure topped with a marshmallow. They must complete it in 18 minutes.

## Objectives

- To understand the challenges of teamwork and how to overcome them on a time pressure
- To understand the benefits of teamwork
- To improve creativity and critical thinking skills

## Connection with Soft Skills and Emotional Intelligence

Participants will have the chance to work in teams and to understand both benefits and challenges of teamwork



# Resources and Materials

Each group of 4-5 people is given:

- 20 sticks of spaghetti
- one yard of tape
- one yard of string
- scissors
- one marshmallow

## Steps

01

10 minutes: The trainer explains the Marshmallow challenge and splits the class into several groups. Group size may vary, but the ideal size would be 4 to 5 participants. The participants will have eighteen minutes to complete the challenge and build the tallest free-standing tower with a marshmallow on top. The group that creates the tallest tower wins. Using devices to look up solutions and cutting the marshmallow are forbidden.

02

18 minutes: The actual Marshmallow challenge takes place. Participants will have eighteen minutes to discuss, plan and in the end build a free-standing tower using spaghetti, yarn and tape, not forgetting the marshmallow, which should be on top of the tower.

03

5 minutes: The trainer checks the towers and measures them. It is time to celebrate the winning team!

04

At the end of the activity, the trainer moderates a brainstorming session about the Marshmallow challenge. What have participants learned from the activity? Which soft skills have they improved? What have they learned about teamwork? What went well in the succeeding teams and went wrong in teams that did not win?

# Learning Outcomes

By the end of the activity, participants will have:

- Acquired practical experience and insights about effective teamwork, creativity and critical thinking
- Reflected upon the soft skills they used

