

GROUP ACTIVITY

ACTIVITY NAME: TENNIS BALL TRANSFER

PURPOSE:

Students will work as a team to find the quickest way to transfer a tennis ball so that each student touches it in each of their hands at least once. Through iteration and supervisor feedback, students will learn the importance of communication, teamwork and process efficiency in a group setting.

TIME: 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- 1 tennis ball
- Stopwatch or timer (optional, but recommended)



DIRECTIONS:

1. Split students into groups of 5-10 (adjust as needed for class size).
2. Give each group a tennis ball and explain the rules: The ball must be touched by each hand of every group member before the task is complete.
3. Allow groups 2 minutes to discuss strategy, then have them set up and time their first attempt.
4. Announce that you are the “floor supervisor” and more efficiency is needed. Give them 1-2 minutes to revise their process, then time them again.
5. Repeat the cycle for approximately 10 minutes, encouraging them to improve and compete against their own best time or other groups.
6. Continue to act as a “floor supervisor” or “operations manager” throughout—challenging them to be faster, more precise and better coordinated.

DISCUSS:

- How did communication improve your team’s performance?
- What changes made the biggest difference in your time?
- How did you identify inefficiencies and decide on improvements?
- Did you notice that small adjustments added up to significant time savings?
- How does this activity relate to real-world manufacturing, where processes are refined to improve output and quality?

ACTIVITY CREDITS:

Special thank you to Stark County Manufacturing Workforce Development Partnership for providing MakingOhio with this activity.

