

# **“Desert Survival” Consensus/Team Building Exercise**

## **Scenario:**

It is 1:00 p.m. on a Saturday afternoon at the end of May. You and your teammates have just finished a two-day training in Casablanca, Morocco. You are all on board a chartered, twin-engine plane destined for Dakhla, Morocco, a small town on the coast of the North Atlantic Ocean, approximately 1000 miles from Casablanca. After takeoff, the Captain came on the overheard speaker and invited you to sit back and relax during the two-hour flight. Fifty minutes into this relaxing flight, the Captain comes back on with another announcement. He informs you that you are currently flying over the Sahara Desert and that weather reports currently show a temperature high of 115 degrees. Fifteen minutes after this announcement – which means you are now one hour and ten minutes into the flight – you hear a loud blast and the plane nosedives.

Within minutes you realize that the cabin is losing pressure. When you look outside the windows, you see the desert below growing larger as the plane rapidly descends toward the ground. All you see outside your windows are large boulders and miles and miles of sand. The pilot comes on once again to let you know that the plane has blown an engine. All passengers should prepare for a turbulent crash landing.

Within minutes, the planes crashes. Smoke and flames fill the cabin. All passengers and crewmembers scramble to exit the plane before it explodes. Seven minutes after the crash, the plane explodes in a fiery ball that reduces it to rubble. All crewmembers and passengers – including you – survive the crash and explosion. Now you must decide how to work together to survive the desert climate and terrain, get help, and hopefully make it out of the desert alive.

In the few minutes before the plane exploded, you and your teammates were luckily able to salvage the items listed on the chart in front of you.

Keep in mind: It is May and you and your teammates are dressed in business casual for the hot summer months of Africa. With only the clothes on your back and the items you pulled from the wreckage, how will you survive?

## **Instructions:**

1. Provide a ranking chart to each participant.
2. Each participant will individually rank the items in order of importance for survival (1 = most important; 18 = least important). They will record their individual rankings in Column 1. [5-7 minutes]
3. Assemble into groups of 3 – 5. Encourage everyone to share their individual rankings with their group members. Then, as a group, they must come together to agree on one collaborative list. This group ranking will be recorded in Column 2. [15-20 minutes]
4. Once all small groups are done working, come back together as a large group to discuss. Which parts did you find easy? Which parts were more challenging? Did your group come to a decision quickly, or did you spend more time debating? What skills does this activity highlight? How are these skills helpful/applicable beyond this activity?

<b>ITEMS</b>	<b>Column 1: Individual Ranking</b>	<b>Column 2: Group Ranking</b>
1 Book of matches		
3 Airplane blankets		
20 ft. of nylon rope		
Sewing kit		
2 50kg oxygen tanks		
20 soda cans		
Life raft		
Bottle Opener		
Magnetic compass		
Single-blade pocketknife		
15 gallons of water		
3 signal flares		
First aid kit		
Snakebite kit		
25 mini bags of pretzels		
55 mini bags of peanuts		
Safety razor blade		
4 airplane pillows		