Lines of Communication

Goal: Put all the objects back into the bag or box provided by passing information through a few people before getting to the ‘workers.’

Group Size: 9-30

Time: 15-20 minutes

Props Required:
- 2 ropes or roll of tape
- Soft tossables
- 1 bag or box

Setup:
- Set up 2 ropes or 2 lines of tape on floor about 15 feet apart from one another.
- Divide group into 3 subgroups.
- Separate groups so they cannot hear, or ideally see each other.

Activity Instructions:
1. Group Set Up:
   a. Group 1 – stand behind first rope facing Groups 2 & 3. Can see but cannot use their voices.
   b. Group 2 – Stand in front of second rope facing Group 1. Can use their voices and can see in front of them, but cannot look behind them.
   c. Group 3 – Blindfold everyone. After Groups 1 & 2 are in place, lead to stand in area behind second rope.
2. Directions for each group (should not be heard by other groups):
   a. Group 1 – From this moment on, you do not have the resource of your voice. You cannot ask questions or talk to one another to strategize. You need to communicate to the rest of your team to pick up all the tossables on the ground and put them in the bag/box. You must stay behind the first rope at all times.
   b. Group 2 – You must make a commitment to never look behind yourself for the duration of this activity. Can I get everyone to raise their right hand and repeat after me, “I commit myself to only looking forward for the duration of this activity.” All of the information you need to be successful will be given to you by the rest of your team.
   c. Group 3 – All information you need to be successful will be given to you by the rest of your team.
3. After each group is in ‘position’ set out all the tossables as quietly as possible in the area where Group 3 (sightless) is.
4. After you finish laying out the items, signal to Group 1 that they may begin.

Facilitator Notes:
1. After initial celebration of accomplishing task, take time to let each group describe their experience during the activity. Recommended to start with Group 3 since they had the least amount of information and resources.

2. After each group has had the opportunity to discuss what the experience was like ask them to start making connections between this experience and the real world.

Possible Debrief Questions:

1. Think about how the group communicated in this activity. Do you see any connections to communication trends on your team?
2. What are some of the challenges this teams has in communicating with one another?
3. What do the tossables represent to this group in the real world?
4. How important is the element of empathy in this activity? How does that translate to management and the different roles in our company?

Asset Categories:
Support, Empowerment, Positive Values, Social Competencies