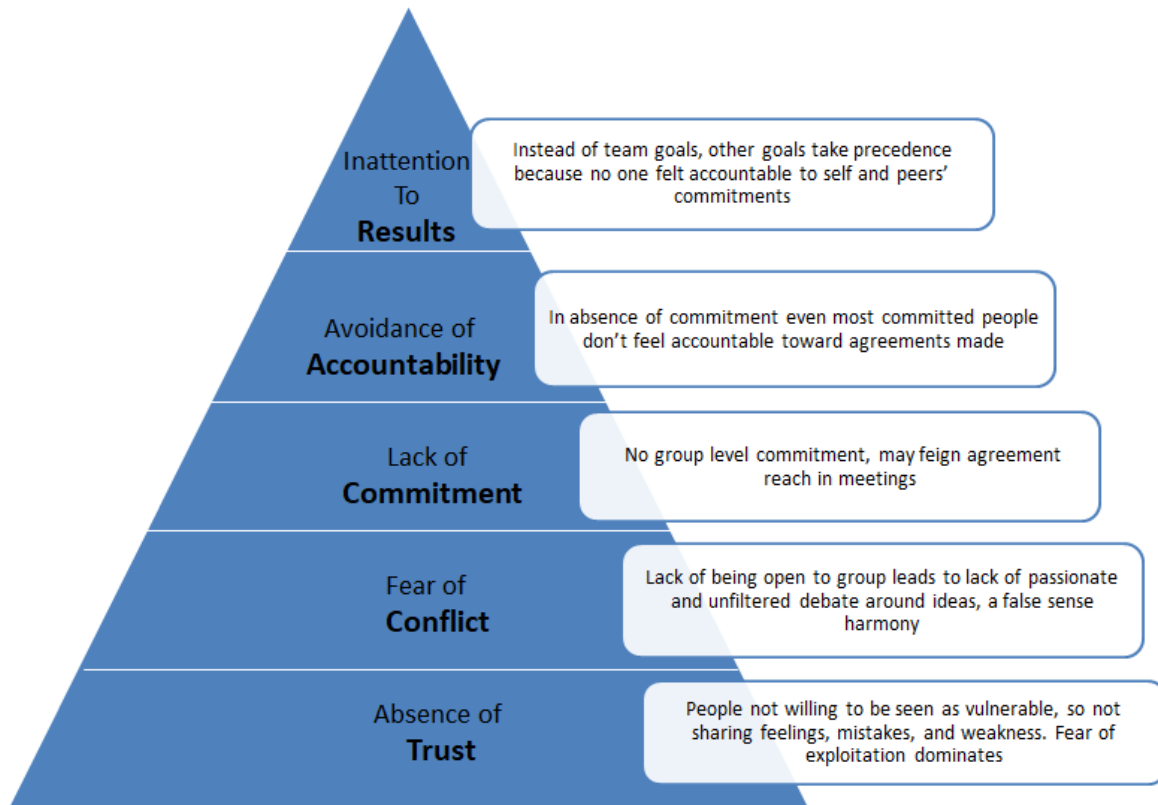


# The Five Dysfunctions of a Team



## Dysfunction 1: Absence of Trust

- Teams members that lack trust...
  - Conceal weaknesses and mistakes
  - Don't ask for feedback or help
  - Hesitate to offer help to others
  - Jump to conclusions about intentions
  - Fail to recognize and utilize others' skills
  - Waste time managing behaviors
  - Hold grudges
  - Dread meetings/spending time together

➤ Over coming Dysfunction

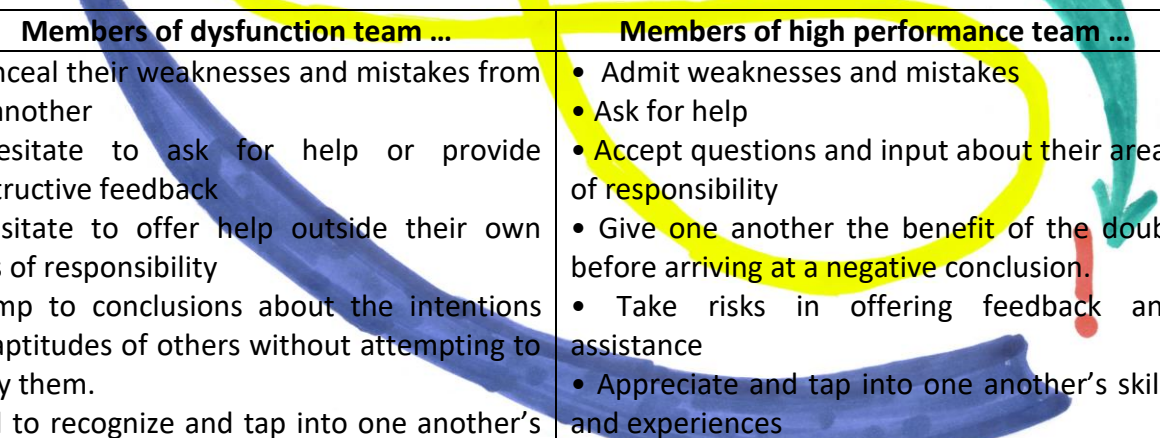
- Personal Histories Exercise
- Team Effectiveness Exercise
- Personality and Behavioral Preference Profiles
- 360 –Degree Feedback
- Experimental Team Exercises

➤ Role of leadership to overcome dysfunction

- Demonstrate genuine vulnerability first
- Create environment that does not punish vulnerability

➤ Role of team members to overcome dysfunction

- Acknowledge someone is being vulnerable
- Empathize
- Open up, meet them half way
- Support an environment that does not punish vulnerability
- Provide honest feedback when asked
  - Know your own weaknesses



Members of dysfunction team ...	Members of high performance team ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conceal their weaknesses and mistakes from one another</li><li>• Hesitate to ask for help or provide constructive feedback</li><li>• Hesitate to offer help outside their own areas of responsibility</li><li>• Jump to conclusions about the intentions and aptitudes of others without attempting to clarify them.</li><li>• Fail to recognize and tap into one another's skills and experiences.</li><li>• Waste time and energy managing their behaviors for effect</li><li>• Hold grudges</li><li>• Dread meetings and find reasons o avoid spending time together</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Admit weaknesses and mistakes</li><li>• Ask for help</li><li>• Accept questions and input about their areas of responsibility</li><li>• Give one another the benefit of the doubt before arriving at a negative conclusion.</li><li>• Take risks in offering feedback and assistance</li><li>• Appreciate and tap into one another's skills and experiences</li><li>• Focus time and energy on important issues, not politics</li><li>• Offer and accept apologies without hesitation</li><li>• Look forward to meetings and other opportunities to work as a group</li></ul>

➤ Exercises

- AS IF

Begin this activity by letting everyone know that you plan to give them a relationship to use for the upcoming interaction. Ask one of the participant to greet to another AS IF "you are long lost friend", "seating next to each other in a bus", "a celebrity", "don't speak English", etc. You can come up as many different AS IF's as you wish. Just avoid any situation which is embarrassing to participants and should not be work related.

- **Sharing Connection**

With a group seated in a circle, one person holding a ball of string begins by mentioning various things he enjoys e.g. I like to skate, I enjoy cooking, etc. When one of these statement rings with some one other participant, he raises the hand and string ball is passed to him while first person holds the end of the string. Now person holding the ball starts sharing e.g. I like beaches, I love kite flying, etc. Now again one of the statement will ring with one of the participant. Sting ball is passed to the new person while second person holds the string. This activity keeps on going till every one holds the ball at once.

Now, you can talk about how people share beyond work and relationships can be built over them.

- **Tiny Teach**

Begin this activity by asking participants to share something which other participants can learn from him e.g. a new language, about sculpting, etc. This will help team to build up relationships beyond work.

- **I am**

Have all team members answer the following questions about each member of the team other than themselves.

- What is that person's single most important behavioral quality that contributes to the strength of the team? (That is, their strength.)
- What is that person's single most important behavioral quality that detracts from the strength of the team? (That is, their weakness or problematic behavior.)

## **Dysfunction 2: Fear of Conflict**

Without trust people will not have healthy debates that are necessary to arrive at better thought through decisions.

- Teams that fear conflict...
  - Have boring meetings
  - Have environments where back channel politics and personal attacks thrive
  - Avoid controversial topics critical to success
  - Fail to tap into opinions and perspectives
  - Waste time with posturing and interpersonal risk management
- Over coming Dysfunction
  - Real time permission
  - Productive conflict
- Role of leadership to overcome dysfunction
  - Avoid temptation to protect team members
  - Personally model appropriate conflict behavior
- Role of team members to overcome dysfunction
  - Participate, keep it in the meeting
  - Share your thoughts
  - Don't make it personal

Members of dysfunction team ...	Members of high performance team ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have boring meetings</li> <li>• Create environments where back-channel politics and personal attacks thrive</li> <li>• Ignore controversial topics that are critical to team success</li> <li>• Fail to tap into all the opinions and perspectives of team members</li> <li>• Waste time and energy with posturing and interpersonal risk management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have lively, interesting meetings</li> <li>• Extract and exploit the ideas of all team members</li> <li>• Solve real problems quickly</li> <li>• Minimize politics</li> <li>• Put critical topics on the table for discussion</li> </ul>

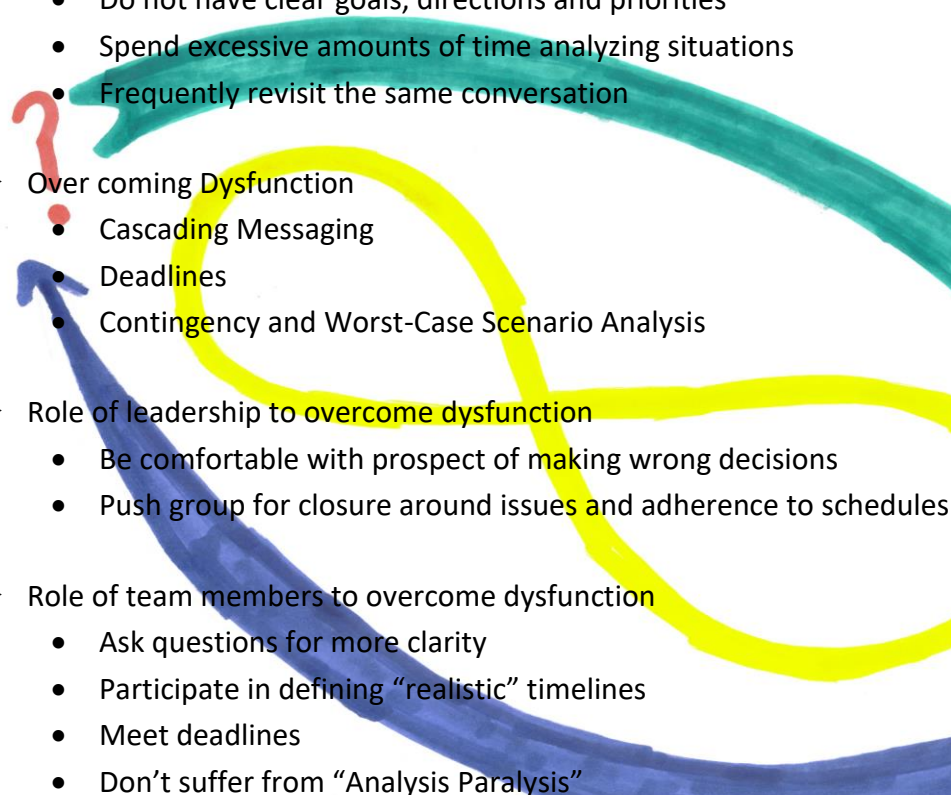
- Exercises
  - Fear in a Hat
 

Individuals write their personal fears (anonymously) on sheets of paper which is then collected in a hat and read aloud. Each person tries to describe his or her understanding of the person's fear. This leads to good discussion centered on the fears.
  - Challenge the assumptions

Ask participants to pick up two decisions which have affected the team. One of the decisions should be made by team and one someone outside from the team. Now ask team to write down the assumptions made in each decision making and reasoning behind those decisions.

### **Dysfunction 3: Lack of Commitment**

If the team has not aligned behind a decision, individual members who did not agree with the final decision will be less committed to it.

- Teams that fail to commit:
    - Do not have clear goals, directions and priorities
    - Spend excessive amounts of time analyzing situations
    - Frequently revisit the same conversation
  - Over coming Dysfunction
    - Cascading Messaging
    - Deadlines
    - Contingency and Worst-Case Scenario Analysis
  - Role of leadership to overcome dysfunction
    - Be comfortable with prospect of making wrong decisions
    - Push group for closure around issues and adherence to schedules
  - Role of team members to overcome dysfunction
    - Ask questions for more clarity
    - Participate in defining “realistic” timelines
    - Meet deadlines
    - Don’t suffer from “Analysis Paralysis”
- 

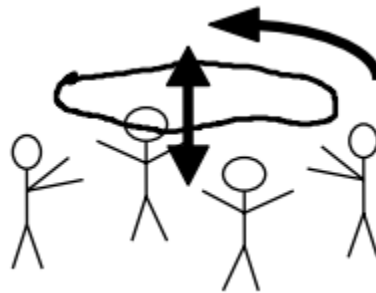
Members of dysfunction team ...	Members of high performance team ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creates ambiguity among the team about direction and priorities</li> <li>• Watches windows of opportunity close due to excessive analysis and unnecessary delay</li> <li>• Breeds lack of confidence and fear of failure</li> <li>• Revisits discussions and decisions again and again</li> <li>• Encourages second-guessing among team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creates clarity around direction and priorities</li> <li>• Aligns the entire team around common objectives</li> <li>• Develops an ability to learn from mistakes</li> <li>• Takes advantage of opportunities before competitors do</li> <li>• Moves forward without hesitation</li> </ul>



➤ Exercises

- Tossing the Pizza

Begin with a group of 5-8 participants, standing in a circle, hands upward, and elbows straight, with no slack in the circle.



The challenge is for the group to toss a pizza (flimsy cardboard) into the air, at least to the height of their heads, and then for everyone in the group to catch the circle as it drops back down, without anyone moving their feet. After a few unsuccessful attempts, encourage the group to plan their task, brainstorm new ideas, and try them. A good pizza flipping team can toss pizza in the air three times without anyone in the group dropping it.

- Euro Traffic Circle ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2yOF\\_m0P8uA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2yOF_m0P8uA))

Place a circle or hoop on the floor in the center of people. Ask each person to pass through the circle from where they stand. At a given point of time at least two people should cross the circle and should not touch each other and their one foot should be in the circle simultaneously.

#### **Dysfunction 4: Avoidance of Accountability**

If team members are not committed to the course of action, they are less likely to feel accountable (or hold others accountable)

➤ Teams that avoid accountability...

- Create resentment between members
- Encourage mediocrity
- Miss deadlines and key deliverables

➤ Over coming Dysfunction

- Publication of Goals and Standards

- Simple and Regular Progress Reviews
- Team Rewards

➤ Role of leadership to overcome dysfunction

- Avoid creating an accountability vacuum
- Encourage and allow team to serve as primary accountability mechanism
- Serve as ultimate arbiter of discipline

➤ Role of team members to overcome dysfunction

- Self-manage
- Don't look the other way
- Keep team apprised of status
- Share delays and missed deadlines in advance
- Don't make excuses
- Ask for help with priorities

Members of dysfunction team ...	Members of high performance team ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creates resentment among team members who have different standards of performance</li> <li>• Encourages mediocrity</li> <li>• Misses deadlines and key deliverables</li> <li>• Places an undue burden on the team leader as the sole source of discipline</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensures that poor performers feel pressure to improve</li> <li>• Identifies potential problems quickly by questioning one another's approaches without hesitation</li> <li>• Establishes respect among team members who are held to the same high standards</li> <li>• Avoids excessive bureaucracy around performance management and corrective action</li> </ul>

➤ Exercises

- Traffic Jam

This activity requires a minimum of six participants. Ask the group to divide into two teams and to stand as shown the picture. Each one is facing the center.



The challenge is for each group to pass the members of the other group, and find themselves at the opposite end of the pattern. There are only two legal moves:

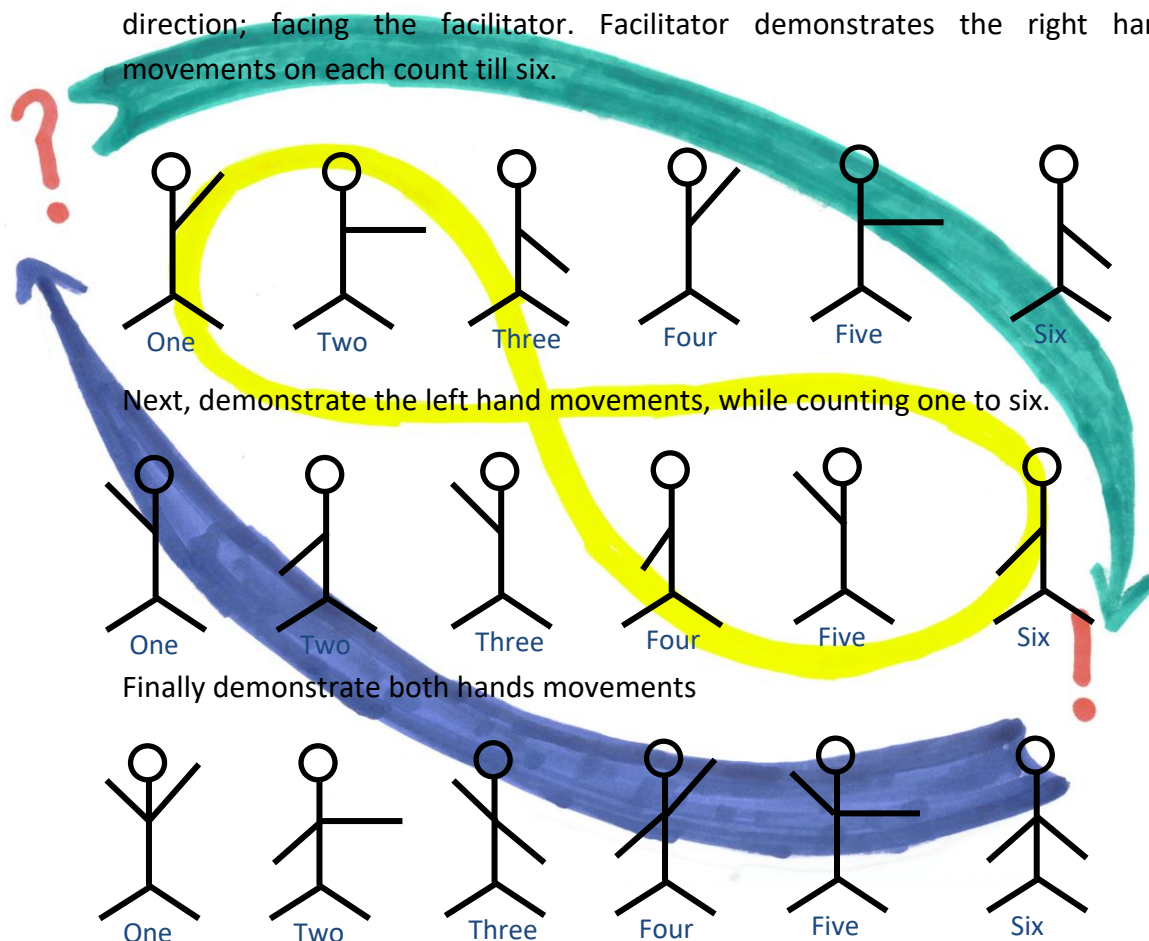
a. You can move forward into any open space.

b. You can only step around a member of another team if there is an open space behind him.

If you reach a condition where no one can move, restart the game.

- Counting Six

Begin by assembling a team of 4 to 6 participants all facing in the same direction; facing the facilitator. Facilitator demonstrates the right hand movements on each count till six.



Next, demonstrate the left hand movements, while counting one to six.

Finally demonstrate both hands movements

Now ask each group to repeat movement and watch for movements of team members.

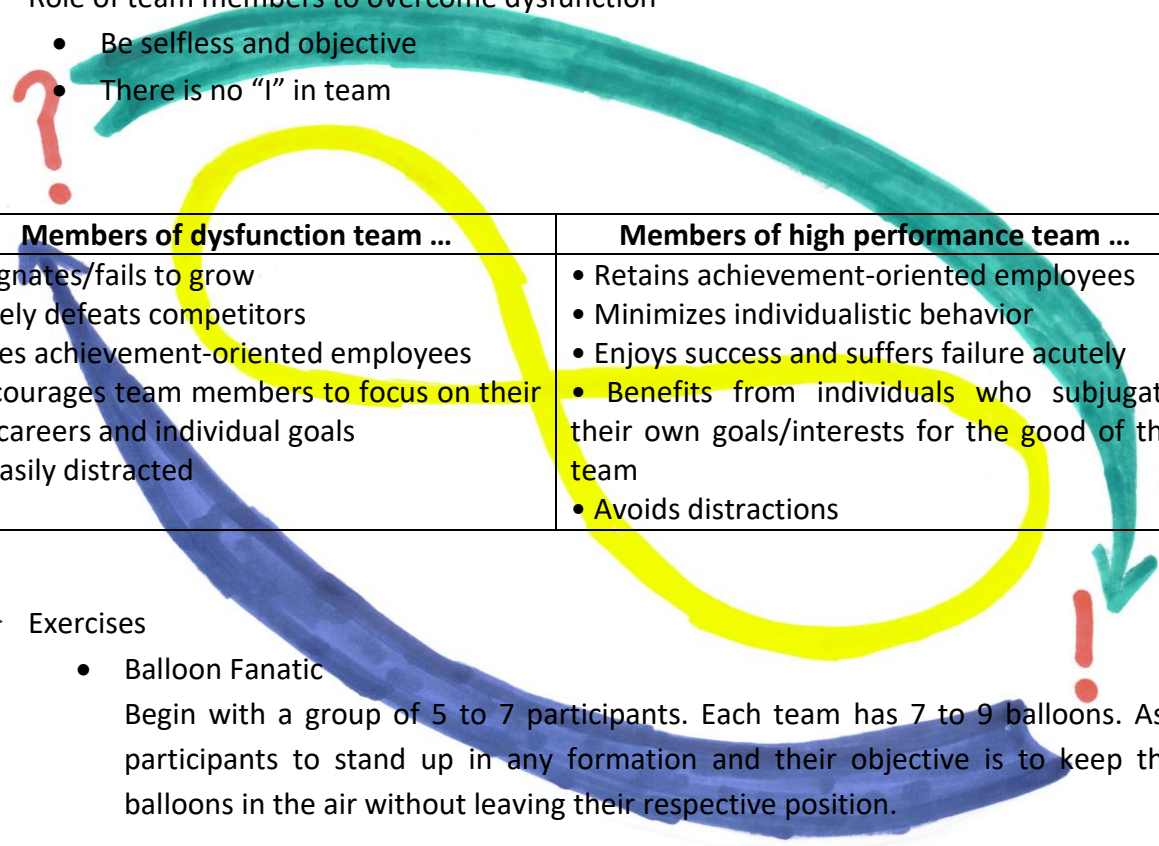
### Dysfunction 5: Avoidance of Accountability

People who are not held accountable are less likely to care about the group results

- Teams that are not focused on results...
  - May be focused on team "status"



- May be focused on individual careers/goals
- Over coming Dysfunction
  - Results-Based Rewards
  - Public Declaration of Result
- Role of leadership to overcome dysfunction
  - Set the tone for a focus on results
  - Be selfless and objective
  - Reserve recognition and rewards
- Role of team members to overcome dysfunction
  - Be selfless and objective
  - There is no "I" in team



Members of dysfunction team ...	Members of high performance team ...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stagnates/fails to grow</li> <li>• Rarely defeats competitors</li> <li>• Loses achievement-oriented employees</li> <li>• Encourages team members to focus on their own careers and individual goals</li> <li>• Is easily distracted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retains achievement-oriented employees</li> <li>• Minimizes individualistic behavior</li> <li>• Enjoys success and suffers failure acutely</li> <li>• Benefits from individuals who subjugate their own goals/interests for the good of the team</li> <li>• Avoids distractions</li> </ul>

- Exercises
  - Balloon Fanatic  
Begin with a group of 5 to 7 participants. Each team has 7 to 9 balloons. Ask participants to stand up in any formation and their objective is to keep the balloons in the air without leaving their respective position.