

Lemons: A hazard assessment training activity

Set up: Divide group into teams of 4-6. Give each group a different colored pad of Post-Its.

Framing: read "A Spotter's Guide"

A spotter's guide

It is a summer evening in Northern British Columbia. The water is clear and glassy as the paddle stroke hums through the water. The Douglas firs reflected in the lakes mirror like surface. The canoe is edging toward the end of a nine-day trip and the taste of our first cold beer is on the tips of our tongues. Not far now the cedar deck is fast approaching with the promises of hot showers and a mattress.

Our party of four sit with post trip smiles studying the cold beers in front of us while the lodge owner joins us:

"You have an amazing place here, the lake is so beautiful and peaceful" Richard chirps up looking out over the picture-book view.

The weathered face turns slowly and considers, "It's not always like this, last year two people had their lemons come up".

We make eye contact around the group, perplexed expressions from all and Richard leads on, "How do you mean 'their lemons came up'?"

The lodge owner turns to them. "Well life's like a one-armed bandit slot machine, and if four lemons come up you are out".

Still confused we press for more; "Sorry to be slow on this but we're from the other side of the pond could you explain about the lemons?"

"Life's about looking out for lemons, each lemon is a hazard which unless it gets sorted could prove a problem. If you get four of these it is not looking good. The paddlers last year had the lemons lining up; they were novices and not confident swimmers, Lemon 1; they ignored advice and were in the middle of the lake, Lemon 2; it was 4.30 in the afternoon, lemon 3 and then the wind picked up, lemon 4. Four lemons and sadly they died."

"So it is like a risk assessment looking at hazards and what can go wrong?"

(Continued)

“You can call it what you like, but its common sense we just talk about looking out for lemons.”

Activity: Select an activity venue, or multiple venues (one for each team) depending on time and location. It could be a school bus, climbing wall, challenge course, hotel, open-air market, etc.

Have each team survey the venue for "hazards." Place a Post-It at the site of the hazard.

Debrief: Have each team identify and explain their choices.

Open-ended questions:

- **What constitutes a "hazard?"**
- **How likely is the hazard to cause and injury or loss?**
- **What is the potential severity?**
- **What can be done to mitigate the risk?**

•Thanks to: Liz Gray

Round Square Projects Support Manager

T: +44 (0)7590 520018

E: liz@roundsquare.org

Skype: rslizg

Round Square, Swan House, Madeira Walk, Windsor, Berkshire, SL4 1EU, UK



(Continued)