



2. Action Sports

In this session we will find out what motivates people to be involved in action sports. We will begin to understand the exciting opportunities possible in serving these people.

1. What are Action Sports?

Action Sports are a unique set of sports that utilize the environment. They use environments in the air, on the earth and in the water.

2. What are the opportunities within the culture?

Participants in Action Sports are often seekers of identity who long to belong to a community. They can have an intense drive for personal improvement. They love risk and adrenalin and they seek freedom and autonomy. They are often creative and passionate and continue to be persistent and progressive in their sports.

They are often seen in the sports world as an 'unreached tribe' or a 'community of orphans'. They are a ripe harvest field.

3. What are the next steps to reach this culture?

How did Jesus do ministry? We will explore some practical examples on how to reach your action sport community using the Set tool '**Pray | Play | Say**'.

Luke 15:1-7

Action Sports

90 minute training session

YOU WILL NEED: Laptop and projector, Flipcharts and pens, Skateboard, Surfboard or other action sport equipment (optional)

SESSION OUTLINE

1. Welcome and session overview

2 min

Introduce the team of presenters. Explain the goals and key elements of the session:

- What are action sports?
- What are the opportunities within the culture?
- What are the next steps to reach this culture?

WHAT ARE ACTION SPORTS?

2. Video energizer *(see notes)*

15 min

▶ **Video: Introduction to action sports**

→ Link: This video captures the adrenalin and passion of Action Sports.

Work in groups of 4 or 5. Discuss.

- What words or feelings come to your mind after seeing this video clip?
- What Action Sports exist in your community?

Summarize as a group. Write feedback on flip chart.



THE CULTURE OF ACTION SPORTS

3. Define Action Sports *(see notes)*

5 min

- Link: Action Sports is a term for activities that utilize the environment, have a high intensity level, and are individualistic.

Explain the different types of action sports.

Air sports	paragliding, hang-gliding, wingsuit diving
Earth sports	skateboarding, rock climbing, parkour, snowboarding, skiing
Water sports	surfing, wakeboarding, kite surfing, kite skiing

- Link: Action Sports communities around the globe are growing in numbers, however, there are few churches reaching out to them. They are an ‘unreached tribe’ living in your community. In order for us to reach them, it is important to understand their sub-culture. This is what these communities are like:

- Quickly growing
- Disconnected
- Thirsty for risk and adrenalin
- A love for freedom and autonomy
- Creative and passionate
- A sense of spirituality
- An ‘unreached tribe’ with a desire to be a close community
- Counter-cultural and rebellious, often disconnected from society and the church

4. Explore the statistics *(see notes)*

5 min

Share some global statistics about the scale and influence of action sports.

Discuss together.

- What information surprises you?

HOW TO REACH OUT THROUGH ACTION SPORTS

5. Bible discovery

15 min

Work in groups of 3 people. Read Luke 15:1-7.

- What does this passage say?
- What does it mean for people involved in action sports? (they are like the lost sheep – the rebellious troublemakers, treated with suspicion by society, and by the church)
- How does Jesus see the 'lost sheep'? (*deeply loved and in need of a savior*)
- What can you do? (care for them, find them, include them, bring them to Jesus)

Share some thoughts as a whole group.

6. How to reach them (see notes)

15 min

→ Link: So how do we reach these 'lost sheep'? Here are three possible ways to get you thinking.

Write the three key words at the top of columns on a flip chart: **inside**, **active** and **serve**. Collect ideas and examples from the group about how to fulfil each one.

Inside	be an authentic insider who understands the culture
Active	be an active participant according to your ability
Serve	serve them, which creates many breakthroughs

Reflection

- Who could you be? Why? (insider, active participant or servant)

▶ Video: How surfers talk

- Share video of two Action Sports participants talking.
- Ask who understands what was said.



- Explain that often you need 'inside information' to effectively reach them.

▶ **Video: Arm trick**

- Watch tutorial video for instructions.
- Invite 2-3 people up to demonstrate.
- Ask who understands how this was done.
- Explain that often you need 'inside information' and tell them the trick.

WHAT NEXT?

7. Next steps (*see notes*)

20 min

→ Link: Are Action Sports even accessible in my area?

▶ **Video: Practical example of action sports ministry**

Work in groups of 3-5 people.

- What are some possible models of ministry that could work in your area?

Explain that there are 3 things that you could do as a next step. Discuss and give examples of each of these.

- Pray
- Play (connect)
- Say (engage)

8. Reflection and conclusion

15 min

Work alone for 5 minutes. Make notes on your ideas to help you remember them. Pray.

- What is the Lord saying about reaching this action sports culture?
- What you can do to help make this dream become a reality in the next day? Week?
- Who will you tell and be accountable to about your actions?

Share your thoughts with another person and pray for each other.

2. Video energizer

This video is a sample of the elite level of these sports. It is full of passion and adrenalin.

Possible answers are as follows:

- What words or feelings come to your mind after seeing this video clip on Action Sports? *Answers may include passion, adrenalin, excitement, etc.*
- What Action Sports exist in your community? Challenge people to work together to consider the different action sports disciplines being practiced in their local communities.

3. Define Action Sports

Answers to the question '**What are Action Sports?**' will vary as there are many different types in different places. Therefore the trainer can emphasize that there are many different expressions of action sports.

Mention that there are also sports to consider that were not featured in this video like Mountain Biking, Kiteboarding, Rock Climbing, Parkour, etc.

- *They Are a Quickly Growing Group* – Action Sports are growing in all areas of the globe
- *They Are Often Disconnected from Society* – They are often outcasts from society
- *They Are an Unreached Tribe* – To many, those in Action Sports can be intimidating and a hard group to reach

What is the sub-culture or identity of the Action Sports community?

It would be helpful to interview someone in your community who participates in Action Sports with these terms:

- Thirsty for Risk/Adrenalin
- Love for Freedom/Autonomy
- Sports becomes lifestyle
- Creative and Passionate
- Persistent and Progressive
- Having a Sense of Spirituality

4. Explore the statistics

Global Statistics (as of 2014):

- In Australia more people surf (10%) than attend church (8%).
- Japan has 2 million surfers.
- 25% of Costa Rica's tourist economy is from surfing.
- There were 6.6 million skateboarders in the US in 2014 with an average age of 14 years.



Consider doing some research of your local area or region of the world and share these alongside the global statistics:

- What facilities are in your area? Beach, skate park, snow resort, biking trails, etc.
- “Did you know” statistics (e.g. the number of churches compared to the number of local skate parks and how many of these churches are reaching these parks?)
- Action Sports becomes a religion and has a culture of meaning. For example, we no longer say, "Oh, I skate." We say, "I'm a skater", or "a surfer", or "a paraglider"

The need is great! We want to see this culture given the opportunity to come to know and follow Christ and, in turn, impact the Action Sports community they belong to.

6. How to reach them

Share the following points to help consider HOW to reach this group.

On a new page of the flip chart write the words INSIDE – ACTIVE – SERVE. Ask participants to list ways to meet each of these categories. (For example Inside could be finding someone in your congregation who participates in Action Sports and loves the Lord but might need some mentoring. Serving may simply be taking some bottles of water to the local skate park on a hot day.)

Answers may include:

- **INSIDE:** Explain that, since they are a community, one of the best ways to reach them is to be an authentic insider who understands the culture.
- **ACTIVE:** Explain that, since they are passionate about their sports, to best reach them, you should participate according to your ability. Beginner or accomplished, just be authentic.
- **SERVE:** Action Sports are individualistic and self-serving. Therefore, to best reach them, we can serve them. By serving this community you create many breakthroughs.

7. Next steps

The video clip shows practical examples of ministry from an entry level to an elite level and in various aspects including chaplaincy, camps, all abilities, sending and receiving, etc.

Share the next steps to reach this community and use your flip chart for answers under columns for PRAY-CONNECT-ENGAGE to the question of some possible models of ministry that may work in your area:

PRAY - Pray for your Action Sports community and what you could do to reach it.

CONNECT (PLAY) - Connect with this community. If you are an action sports person, have you ever connected your God-given passion with His purpose? What would it mean if you took this passion and gave it to God for His Glory? If you are not an action sports person, can you connect someone who is?

ENGAGE (SAY) - No matter your level of connection, you can engage with the Action Sports community through one of the following:

- **Becoming a Learner** – Even a beginner can make an impact. What Action Sports are practiced in your area? Consider jumping in and trying it out!

- **By Serving Them** – Service to a community can open incredible doors for you to build relationships in the Action Sports community.
- **Growing a Strategy** – Pray and decide on a strategy to reach your local community and put the plan into action.

