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Through the power of play

HOW TO MAKE TEAM BUILDING ACTUALLY WORK

STRATEGIES FOR GETTING REAL RESULTS OUT OF TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITIES

By David Goldstein

david@teambonding.com

twitter: @teambonding

Team Building Exercises

By Tyler Hayden

TeamBonding Keynote Speaker and Facilitator

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HOW TO MAKE TEAM BUILDING ACTUALLY WORK



Inside this guide, I'm going to share with you how you can prepare for and approach a team building event in a way that not only does everybody have an amazing time, but your team gets a real lasting benefit from it.

Before we go further I want you to know that these strategies will benefit all sorts of teams; whether you're a small local business or a fortune 500 company.

We know that these strategies work because we have spent the last 20 years honing our craft as the pioneering team building company in North America. We know what makes a great event into an unforgettable one.

We've even thrown in a few simple team building activities for you to try yourselves so you can see the benefits first hand.

By the time you have read this report, you will know how to get the absolute most out of your next team building activity.

SO LET'S GET STARTED.

THE BIG PICTURE: PREPARATION.

If you are planning or already have a team building event coming up, it is critical that you plan ahead to ensure all the details are covered.

A successful team building event is something that can have a positive effect on your team far into the future. When your team is better connected, everyone's work environment improves, staff are happier and work more effectively together, all of which will have a positive impact on your bottom line.

If you don't properly prepare for these events, you and your team won't enjoy the maximum benefit.

If you have a big event coming up, here are some tips to make sure it gets knocked out of the ballpark!

CHOOSE THE BEST EVENT FOR YOU

Define Goals: Do you want more input from the staff, better flexibility, better working relationships, being able to adapt to change better, etc. This helps you to choose the type of event that will provide you with the most benefit.

Style: Will your team be more receptive to an indoor seated event or something that takes place outdoors and is more physical? High energy, collaborative, competitive, challenging and creative are other types to consider. Depending upon your goals, sometimes the best choice is to pick something against type to "shake things up" for them.

Consider any special circumstances: Is your team currently experiencing a specific situation that is affecting their ability to work together? The team building event you select should be chosen to take these factors into consideration:

- Is there a large influx of new staff?
- Has your business or organization recently relocated or merged with another company?
- Is the company changing its direction?
- Are your staff overworked and stressed?

PREPARE YOUR TEAM

Apparel and Footwear: Ensure that you are clear with the participants what clothing attire should be worn. Team events often need something different than regular business attire (especially footwear).

Naming: Don't call the session "team building." Employees think they know what to expect from "team building" events and they aren't always excited about them. Instead, instead refer to the activity itself such as Cardboard Castle, or Gladiator Olympics. This will minimize the amount of sighing and eye rolling from the start!

No Surprises: It may seem like a good idea to surprise your team with an event but this is generally not a good idea. It is much easier to encourage participation, have fun and enjoy an event when participants are not surprised. That being said, don't tell them everything about the event, because it will ruin the fun.

Expectations: Set the expectation with everyone that this is going to be a focused time period of time and that unless they have an emergency, the expectation is that they will be present and that their cell phones will be off (or whatever is appropriate).

Timing: Starting on time is really important for a successful event. If people are going to be coming in for the event make sure their transportation is arranged for and that everyone is on board with the start time (and end time, leaving early is a bummer too!)

PREPARE THE SPACE

Minimize Interruptions: Make sure that the coffee break service is outside of the room (where possible). Having someone come into the meeting room when you are mid play can really hamper the mojo.

Event Space: Be a space hog and make sure that wherever you are holding your event has enough space. If the program calls for them to be up and active, space limitations will damper their enthusiasm and level of involvement.

Handling Supplies: Make sure to select a venue that will accept shipments of event supplies at least two days prior to your event. Also, to manage your budget, check to see if the venue charges a fee to hold and/or to handle packages.

Location: Take your program outside weather permitting but have a back up plan in case mother nature does not cooperate. If your event is off-site, make sure the staff on site is aware that you are doing a team builder event. Let them know to expect your employees to be running around, etc if the event calls for it.

Details, Details: When planning an event, remember to allot time for the details! Do you have time for the event staff to set the room up? Will there be time for breakdown? Will the group be meeting in the room prior to the start of the program? A successful event starts with proper planning!

Snacks! There is always a post-lunch slump. Be prepared with coffee and healthy afternoon snacks to help people through the crash!

PREPARE THE EXTRAS

Prizes: Small prizes for the winning team drive competition and team work. They also encourage participation.

Breaks: When the event is one part of a larger meeting be sure to schedule a break between the heavy content and the start of the fun.

USING AND PREPARING WITH THE FACILITATORS

It is critical to make sure the facilitator of the event is up to date on all the details surrounding your event. These are the types of items you should share with your facilitator.

Any disabilities, special needs or physical limitations within the group to make sure those individuals can be included

- Fun facts that can be included within the event like a recent happening at work that was amusing, the fact that your CEO will be in the room, a new program that was just launched at work, etc
- The goals for the event
- The personality of the group, age, length of time they've worked as a group, whether they are likely to be excited for the event, etc

USING AND PREPARING FOR OUTSIDE FACILITATORS

Professional facilitations are the best way to get the most out of your team building event for your staff. You may think you know your people but outsiders have an ability to get them to think, do, and see things differently.

Once you decide to use them, you should prepare yourself to let them do their job.

Trust and let go. After all the decisions and planning there comes the toughest stage and that is to allow the professional facilitators to take over. They have spent a great deal of time to develop the programs, facilitators and materials. They are familiar with the timing, task content, the words to use and to not to use. Your role is to allow that to happen and to participate or watch the action develop into the positive results we work toward.

Team building is inspired for teams, not for the leaders. The point of having an outside facilitator is to allow you to experience a new vision. The programs have a long history of providing fantastic results. Trying to over-tailor the event can cause diminished results.

YOU SHOULD . . .

- Make sure that on the day of your event you have all of your contact people and vendors information all in one place, so you can reach out to them quickly if you need to make any adjustments.
- Remember to follow up with all participants. A successful day is great, but look for ways to help keep the energy alive after the training or event.
- Remember that it takes reinforcement for positive changes to take hold over time.
- Plan small follow up events that will reinforce what was introduced at your event.
- Learn it like you were going to teach it.

Now lets put some of these strategies to the test...

STARTER TEAM BUILDING EXERCISES

This section provides a few simple team building exercises that you can try yourself. Let us know how you get on!

GET STARTED WITH TEAM BUILDING!

GOAL:

To create an icon that serves to represent and unite the participants as a single team.

TAKE AWAY:

From this event, participants will:

- Experience what it is like to work as a group towards a common goal;
- Identify personal attributes that lend themselves effectively to achieving the group goal;
- Examine how to communicate within a large group; and,
- Have fun.

EXERCISE 1: MAMMOTH MONUMENT

Begin by talking about how each group is individual and quite spectacular

Ask individuals within the group to pull out an object they brought with them that represents who they are (i.e. broken clock for someone who's always late, teddy bear for someone who's cuddly, etc.)

The group must construct a Mammoth Monument to themselves

To do that each individual must participate by:

- saying their name
- saying what the object is
- explaining why it is a good representation of a positive quality they possess for the monument (with a large group you need to find some way to run people through the activity at a steady speed)

A Sample Presentation

“Hi, my name is Tyler Hayden and this is my favorite work glove because when push comes to shove you can always count on me to get the job done.”

Then the individual affixes the object to the other objects (you should have on hand nails, glue, etc. and a structure for the group to stick the objects to - i.e. a wooden chair, a plywood sheet, a section of tree, a piece of material, etc.)

When everyone has placed and introduced their object, the group is to name the structure. Then the monument can be put in a place of honor for all to see.

Debrief

- Discuss the content of the activity around such issues as:
- Maintaining individuality
- Letting everyone be seen
- Playing an important role in the group
- How each person is required to complete the task
- How you will function within this large group, etc.

TEAM BUILDING THROUGH INTRAPERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

GOAL:

Participants will gain a deeper understanding of themselves and those around them.

TAKE AWAY:

Participants will be able to:

- Comfortably discuss personal thoughts and feelings
- Help others to increase their self concept
- Summarize the experience they just had
- Verbalize positive personal attributes
- Have fun

This session is designed for you to get to know yourself and others better, so the more you give the more you will receive.

EXERCISE 2: TOYS-R-US

- Gather up a bunch of toys and put them in a box
- Take the box of toys and dump it into the center of the circle of people
- Have each group member choose a toy that they feel represents themselves
- Take turns and describe the toy and its application to you

EXERCISE 3: WARM FUZZIES

- Get the entire group to write their names on the outside of a large envelope
- Then have each member of your group write everyone else in the group a warm fuzzy
- This warm fuzzy should express positive attributes that the receiver possesses, things the writer saw them do well, things they would like the receiver to know, etc.

Once the note is finished, fold it and enclose it in the envelope of the respective participant.

WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR YOUR FEEDBACK ON THESE ACTIVITIES:

It is our hope that these “starter” team building exercises have shown you the tremendous impact a good team building event can have on your employees. Also, that the right preparation and approach can greatly enhance the effects.

How did the event go?

Did your employees respond well?

Did you see any improvement in the way they worked together after the event?

Get in touch at the information below with any feedback or questions, we'd love to hear from you.

CONNECT WITH TEAM BONDING

If you are ready to speak with Team Bonding about the dozens of events that will not only help with your Team Building, but also your Team Bonding, please contact us below. We would love to discuss your staff and your goals and come up with the perfect event for you!

Jeff Davies

Direct line: (781) 793-9702

jeff@teambonding.com

Schedule a Call

Nanci Kirkland

Direct line: (339) 230-0919

nanci@teambonding.com

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Please feel free to share this booklet with your colleagues if you think they are in need of some team building help!