

A yellow ribbon banner with a 3D effect, featuring two grey cylindrical elements on the top surface.

A PUBLICATION OF TEAMBONDING

CHARITABLE HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES

HOW TO GET STARTED



Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strengthens work teams and builds employee skills and professional development. Employers gain higher retention rates and employees pursue more promotion and professional development opportunities when CSR is encouraged through volunteering and other charitable programs.



62% of workers 18- to 26-years old would prefer to work for a company that provides opportunities for them to apply their skills to benefit nonprofit organizations.*



START THE COUNTDOWN (*EARLY!*)

Whether you're planning a large company party or a small team outing this holiday season, take fun seriously. The more you plan, the more relaxed you will be and the more fun you'll have with your team. The worst part of planning a last minute activity, is that it will feel last minute, and the only solution to last minute, is to break the bank.

If you're thinking about your holiday plans now, then you already have a few ideas about tasks and timing. Start jotting them down and organize as you go along.

Remove anything that you decide to omit from your event and cross off tasks that you complete. This will keep you motivated and help you avoid missing anything.

Create a checklist

This can be a simple excel sheet or a fun, engaging template from [Pinterest](#) or a [simple web search](#).

- ☐ Write down your initial to-dos.
- ☐ Add to your list throughout the rest of your planning process.
- ☐ Revise and organize as necessary.

Create a schedule

This can also be a simple excel sheet or a fun, engaging template from [Pinterest](#) or a [simple web search](#).

- ☐ Create a timeline or schedule for your planning process.
- ☐ Create a timeline or schedule for the day of your activity.

SAVE MONEY

and time!

Give the charity some notice.

As you start to narrow down your selection of non-profits for your team activity, start reaching out to discuss availability. A lot of people volunteer around the holidays and many employees, which means there will be fewer and fewer opportunities for a charity to host your team. Don't save this part of the plan for last! Finding a charity is harder than it seems.

Once you do have a charity lined up, stay in touch with them. One of the pitfalls to planning ahead is that people can lose track of the details or an organization can have turn-over that leads to loose ends.

Start lining up discounts.

Everyone knows that when you travel and you book early, you save. This also applies to *venues, wine, food, entertainment, transportation...the list goes on*. Consider negotiating around costs, minimum numbers and the final package with venues and other suppliers.

Even if you don't get a deal, starting early is key. You will pay a premium for extras added close to your event. Although some vendors may not be willing to negotiate if the holidays are their peak season, many will still be open to giving you a deal if you ask and you make a deposit.

Venues that require in-house catering often lead to the highest food expenses. If you are limited to in-house catering, ask for a custom menu that will fit your budget. And don't be afraid to ask about trades. Just try to keep the quid pro quo details clear and simple.



Photo Credit: Nicole McDermott | 94 Creative Ways to Save Money Today | 2014

Is your timing flexible? You can cut your costs by up to 50%. However, this may mean planning your activity during office hours if your team typically works 9-5PM. Is this an event you'd like to run annually? Ask your suppliers about multi-year discounts.

If you can't get an adjustment on the pricing, you may still be able to get some perks. Having a fancy party? Ask your venue if they can knock \$5 from your linen or chair cover rentals or your caterer to throw in free napkins and utensils.

Don't limit yourself to traditional modes of transportation. Are you in an area with temperate weather during the winter months? Can your team bike or walk to the charity or venue? If so, you'll save and your team will incur additional health benefits through alternative modes of transportation, putting them in a great mood to kick off your activity. Just make sure that your plans fit with the team culture and limitations.

Save The Dates + Take A Look Back

Mark your calendar! Let your team know that you're planning something. Surprise activities are generally a [bad idea](#). The end of the year is a busy time for everyone. Provide basic details about the activity in your invitation. This gives you time to make adjustments, if necessary.

Existing Company Calendars:

Outlook, Google Calendar, Intranet

Potential Pros:

- 📌 Familiar platform
- 📌 Update notifications
- 📌 Consolidated information

Potential Cons:

- 📌 Easily buried
- 📌 Update notifications (*too many?*)
- 📌 Boring

Paper Invitations:

Hand deliver, when possible, to avoid missing someone.

Potential Pros:

- 📌 Personal touch
- 📌 Significant meaning

Potential Cons:

- 📌 Impossible to update
- 📌 Easily lost

Virtual Invitations:

Evite, Smilebox, Celebrations.com, Facebook, EventBrite

Potential Pros:

- 📌 WOW factor
- 📌 Update notifications
- 📌 Consolidated information

Potential Cons:

- 📌 May get blocked by spam
- 📌 Unfamiliar platform
- 📌 Personal & professional overlap

Now that you have the date:

Start with reviewing last year's event.

- Who were the key decision makers?
- Where was it held?
- What was the turnout?
- Did the timing work?
- Were there any issues around food? Alcohol?
- Did people like the activities? If not, why?
- Are there elements that you can improve or expand on?

STEPS TO STRESS-FREE PLANNING

Over the past ten years companies have become some of the biggest supporters of volunteering, investing more money and resources into community engagement projects. Indeed, volunteering has been steadily moving towards the center of many corporations' corporate social responsibility initiatives.

Step #1

Start The Countdown (*Early!*)

Step #2

Revolve Around Your Guests

Step #3

Chew On The Extras

Step #4

Sell The Sensation

Step #5

Evaluate Your Success

Bonus: Research Your Resources

GET FULL GUIDE

UNIQUE HOLIDAY IDEAS



Looking for a unique idea for your next company holiday party or outing? TeamBonding offers a diverse selection of activities to make a fun and memorable experience.

We can create an engaging holiday, charitable or culinary activity for your team. One that'll help build a sense of community both during and after the event. While the primary focus will remain on acknowledgement of your staff and the amazing work they've done, we'll also turn the activity into an opportunity for networking and team building. Win, win.

[GET STARTED NOW](#)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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Sam is the Director of Marketing at TeamBonding. Her experience managing small teams, company outings and larger corporate events has accumulated a vast base of knowledge around meeting individual needs and planning for the unknown!



TeamBonding

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Over twenty years ago, TeamBonding started with a simple question: how can we facilitate true, authentic bonds between members of corporate teams? We took a long hard look at what was being offered as team building activities for work.