



Team Building Activities

Team Building is an ongoing process that helps a group of individuals evolve into a cohesive unit. When a department develops team-building skills, employees collaborate and unify around a common goal and ultimately generate greater productivity. To help build your department's team building skills below are some fun and creative ways to get your team working together.

1. Back-to-Back Drawing

This fast, fun activity is a quick take on Pictionary. You can do it outdoors or indoors, though the physical nature of this activity makes it more suitable for relaxed outdoors environments. Use it as an interlude between longer activities or at the very start of the event to get people in a relaxed state.

Number of participants: 6-20 people

Duration: 30 minutes

Objective: Improve communication skills

How to play

1. Head to your favorite stock photography site and print a number of vector shapes on separate sheets of paper. These can be shapes of signs, objects, or even abstract shapes. Think "Statue of Liberty", "Formula 1 car", etc.
2. Divide participants into teams of two people each. Make them sit back-to-back.
3. Team Member A gets a pen and a sheet of paper. Team Member B is given one of the printed shapes.
4. The objective of the game is for the Team Member A to draw the shape using only verbal instructions from Team Member B. B cannot state what the object is; he/she can only describe its uses or give instructions on how to draw it.
5. Give each team 2 minutes to draw the shape.
6. Teams that get the most shapes right win.

Strategy

This game focuses on communication skills - giving and listening to instructions. At the end of each game, evaluate what went wrong, what went right while communicating. This is not only great for getting people involved, but it can also highlight flaws in how your team members communicate verbally.

2. Blind draw

This activity is similar to back-to-back drawing, except that it focuses on teams instead of individuals. The goal is the same: draw an object using only verbal instructions. Teamwork and communication are vital to be good at this game.

Number of participants: 6-20 people

Duration: 30-45 minutes

Objective: Focus on teamwork and communication skills in a group setting

How to play

1. Get a flipchart, markers and a bunch of everyday objects (such as a lampshade, bicycle, etc.). Alternatively, print pictures of objects. This game works best with more unobvious objects (say, a trampoline vs a coin).
2. Divide all participants into teams of 4-6 people.
3. Ask each team to pick one person to be the "artist". Ask the artist to take his place next to the flipchart.
4. Face the team away from the flipchart and give them an object from your pile.
5. The team will then instruct its artist on how to draw the object based on verbal instructions alone. They can describe the object but not state its name. The artist can't see the object at any time, nor can the team see what the artist is drawing. Each team gets 3 minutes for a drawing.
6. The team whose drawing comes closest to the actual object wins.

Strategy

To be good at this game, teams have to a) delegate effectively (i.e. pick the right artist), and b) communicate well (within the team as well as between the team and

artist). In your evaluation, focus on how teams chose their artists and whether they were able to pick a team leader for relaying instructions (if yes, then how).

3. Memory Wall

A physical activity that establishes and re-lives the team's shared memories. Teams sketch their shared memories with each other and place them on a wall. The wall remains up throughout the event, working as a focal point of the team's camaraderie.

Number of participants: 6-50

Duration: 45-90 minutes

Objective: Build camaraderie between team members, foster relationships

How to play

1. Give each participant sheets of paper, markers, and tape.
2. Ask each participant to survey the room. Take 15 minutes to write down positive memories of shared experiences and moments while working together.
3. Once participants have a few memories listed, ask them to draw a few of these memories on fresh sheets of papers. The drawings can be abstract renditions of the "memory scene". They can involve partners who've shared the memory to create this drawing. Give them up to 30 minutes to do this.
4. Once the time is up, ask participants to tape their memory drawings to the wall.
5. Ask for volunteers to approach the wall and expand on the memories they just taped on the wall with the entire group.

Strategy

A visual "memory wall" creates a welcoming environment and reaffirms the positive relationships between team members. Rendering each memory - individually or in groups - as a drawing adds much-needed levity and camaraderie

4. Odd Couples

On any team, you'll have people with different personalities. But sometimes, these different personalities actually have things in common. Getting these team members to appreciate their differences and similarities can improve team bonding.

Number of participants: 6-20 people

Duration: 45-60 minutes

Objective: Improve team bonding and communication skills

How to play

1. Create a list of odd pairs of objects that, for some reason, go well together. Like "Peanut butter & jelly", "chocolate & coffee", "salt & pepper", etc.
2. Write down the names of objects from each pair on separate sheets of paper.
3. Tape a sheet of paper to a participant's back. Do this for all participants. Try to tape opposing pairs on people with opposing personalities, though this isn't necessary.
4. Ask participants to mingle with the group. Their objective is to figure out what's written on their backs. The trick is: they can only ask yes/no questions ("Do I add flavor to food? Do I make the food spicy?").
5. Once participants figure out what's written on their backs, they have to find the other half of their pair.
6. After they've found their pairs, participants have to find three things they share in common with their opposing pair.

Strategy

In any team building event, one of your biggest challenges is bringing different people together. An exercise like this can give participants a reason to sit down and share experiences with people they might not mingle with otherwise. The focus on yes/no questions also improves communication skills.

5. Truth and Lies

A simple game to get people to open up. Teams gather together in an intimate environment. Each team member says three truths and one lie about himself. Team members have to guess the lie out of the four statements.

Number of participants: 4-16

Duration: 30 minutes

Objective: Break the ice and get people involved

How to play

1. Ask the players to sit in a circle.
2. Each player has to think up three truths and one lie about himself.
3. Each player then gets up in the center of the circle and says four statements about himself (three truths, one lie).
4. The rest of the group has to guess which of the statements is a truth, which one is a lie.
5. The process repeats for all other players.

Strategy

There is no competitive element to this game. Instead, it's designed to get people to open up and get to know each other better. The opportunity to lie can also get some hilariously outrageous statements from players, which further improves the group's mood.

6. Shipwrecked

Your plane has just crashed on a deserted island in the middle of the Pacific. You have just a few minutes to salvage some items from the wreckage before the whole plane burns down. What items will your team choose?

A great activity inspired by classic shipwrecked stories. This one will inspire collaboration and creative problem-solving skills.

Number of participants: 8-24

Duration: 30 minutes

Objective: Inspire problem-solving, [leadership](#), negotiation and collaboration

How to play

1. Set up a play area with a number of survival items such as different types of food, water, weapons, knives, tarp, flares, matches, etc. You don't have to actually buy these items; you can take printouts of pictures on index cards as well.

2. Place all of them at one end in the "wreckage" area. Ensure that the quantity of each item is limited such that teams will be forced to barter and collaborate.
3. Divide participants into two teams (or more if you have a lot of participants).
4. The teams have 25 minutes to get items for survival from the wreckage. They also have to rank the items in order of importance.
5. Since some items are vital, but limited (such as water), teams will have to collaborate and barter.

Strategy

This seemingly simple game becomes complex when you consider the gravity of the situation. Teams often devolve into chaos when they can't come to a consensus about the importance of each item in a survival setting. Successful teams will choose a leader and plan their procurement process carefully. They will also have to negotiate with other teams to get objects they want.

7. Share Your Bucket List

If you want to know somebody, you have to first know what they want.

That's the premise behind this remote team building activity. Participants share their bucket lists, telling each other what matters to them and why. This gives team members a much better understanding of each other's beliefs and motivations than simple personal trivia.

Number of participants: 4+

Duration: 60+ minutes

Objective: Break the ice, team bonding

How to play:

1. First, ask everyone if they are comfortable sharing their bucket lists (i.e. things they want to do before they *kick the bucket*) publicly. If they are not, exclude them from the activity. If a large number of people fall in this camp, it might be better to choose a different activity.
2. Ask one person to share the top 5 things on his/her bucket list. Also ask them to share why it matters to them and how they plan to achieve it. Keep in mind that

bucket lists are meant to be achievable, not outright fantasies (“make a million dollars” is a legitimate goal, “make a trillion dollars” is not).

3. As the participant shares his/her bucket list, team members talk about whether any of the items fall on their bucket list as well, and if yes, why.

4. If two or more participants have the same item on their bucket lists (happens more than you realize), encourage them to team up and find ways to achieve it. A shared goal can be a powerful source of team bonding.

5. Do this for every participant. You don’t have to necessarily follow any structure - just be casual and conversational.

Strategy

Bucket lists often reveal deep-seated motivations and passions. If you want team members to *truly* understand each other, sharing these motivations is a great way to break the ice and build real team camaraderie.

Website Resources

<https://www.workamajig.com/blog/team-building-activities>