



benefits of team building

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THERE ARE 168 HOURS IN A WEEK. With approximately 40 hours a week spent at work we share almost a quarter of our entire week with our work colleagues. It's no wonder that companies are increasingly finding ways to improve relationships between its team members!

Employers focus strongly on the technical aspects of their business, often neglecting the fact that social relationships are a crucial part of our everyday lives. Anyone can put a group of people together, give them a task and have them produce a result. However, if we want that result to be of a high quality, and equally, of benefit to the organisation, more effort is needed, and having a strong team that works well together can make a world of difference.

To attract and retain staff in today's competitive market, it is critical to have a successful team environment. Fostering teamwork should be a top priority for employers and the benefits include increased productivity in the workplace, improved client service and employees who actually enjoy coming to work! Having a team who have a strong sense of camaraderie, experience growth as a team and feel that their combined input is contributing to the overall success of the business tend to be more motivated and committed to their job, have a stronger sense of belonging and are less likely to take days off.

There are a growing number of companies that specialise in organising team-building activities that aim to develop and improve team relations within organisations. These events aim to reinforce company relationships and unity, break down barriers between colleagues, promote success within the company, and aim to be cooperative rather than competitive. Just as importantly, these activities can be a lot of fun!

So where do you begin? When organising a team-building event, it is important to involve your employees in the decision making process. Ask your staff to make a list of potential activities they would be interested in, sort through the options and come to some mutual agreement. Some suggestions of activities are listed below:

- A golf tournament
- A tennis clinic
- A picnic at a local park
- An evening trivia night
- Cooking classes
- Group yoga lessons
- Scavenger hunt
- Motivational session
- Abseiling course

- "How to Host a Murder" night
- Fundraising events for a charity
- Create a unisex basketball/netball team and compete against local area teams

The list is endless. The most important thing to do is take onboard your employees' personalities, needs and interests. For example, a group of men who despise the ballet are going to be reluctant to put on tights and have a group dance lesson! The type of activity chosen also depends on the size of the organisation, the financial capacity of the company and you also need to take into consideration the location and time factors. You can either delegate the coordination of the event to employees or you can go through a company who will organise it all for you.

When you are choosing a team-building activity, keep in mind the things that your employees will be able to gain from the experience:

- Will the activity bring employees together with a common focus?
- Will they learn a new skill?
- Will the activity promote a relaxed atmosphere and help people to feel comfortable around one another?
- Will it help to break barriers between colleagues?
- Will employees be both intellectually and emotionally challenged?
- Will the activity provide awareness of the importance of communication between employees?
- Will it create a real experience of teamwork where everyone's contribution is required and appreciated?
- Will it allow employees to get to know each other on a more personal level?

As an employer, it is crucial to acknowledge and take responsibility for creating a sense of team purpose and provide a stimulating environment that promotes camaraderie, responsibility, communication and team growth. Team building activities can be a great tool in ensuring that your employees work better together, appreciate each other's talents, stay motivated and move to a higher level of overall performance.

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