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**Anything But Team Building**

**By Chris Impeterelli**

Mention "team building" in almost any office or company and you will likely get long faces, groans,

and maybe even some good old-fashioned heckling. People avoid voluntary team building seminars and classes like voting. You practically have to bribe them and close down the bars and liquor stores in order to get them to attend—much like voting! But, team building is an important tool that will help any organization remain competitive in this fiercely global marketplace.

One of the main forces driving the increasing need for team building exercises is the changing nature of the workforce itself. At an ever increasing rate, company resources are being allocated with scarce margin for error. Companies simply are not hiring or they are doing so only after the need is so acute that it can no longer be ignored. Even then, it can take weeks, even months, before the Human Resources department can add additional personnel and get them through the process.

The need for team building has become so severe because resources are so very scarce. Businesses had the luxury in years past to completely dedicate personnel to projects which arose throughout the year. In these razor thin times, the only option to contend with projects such as accounting changes, new product line launch, software upgrades and training—any issue that is out of the norm but significantly demands time and resources—is to create teams out of existing resources.

Team building is now a critical factor in Corporate America. Specialists from an assortment of departments from within the company are asked to dedicate a portion of their time to complete various projects throughout the year. The people chosen to form these teams depends upon the nature of the project itself. Different projects will demand different skills and personnel. People must constantly immerse themselves in these teams and bring their particular skill set and experience to the table and help solve the "big picture" issue.

Team building training is a crucial aspect in having the quality personnel in place when special projects arise throughout the year. It is impossible to just throw together various people with different skills and expect them to cooperate and come up with a solution to a problem. People have always required addition training to acquire additional skills. Team building training gives employees the tools they need to better work together in high stress, demanding projects and complete them in the time frames

allotted.

Team building training needs to be continuous and updated and practiced regularly in order to keep people effective during projects. A training specialist or human resources professional should conduct all team building training as they have the skills and experience necessary to improve group productivity.

Team Building Hub is an information site that contains links, a directory and other Team Building Information. It can be found at:

<http://www.teambuildinghub.com>

### **Evaluating Your Team Building Activities**

**By Brett Danielson**

Team building has become one of the newest buzz words in the corporate lexicon. In fact, for at least the last decade surveys of business leaders in every industry have shown that the prime characteristic they look for in new hires is the ability to work with a team. And why not? Research has shown that when people work in teams, they can accomplish far more than a group of individuals working together. But not all team building activities are created equal. Over the last few years, some industry experts have leveled criticism at the 'quick-fix' attitude that has been adopted by many companies who attempt to create or sponsor their own team building activities.

In order to be effective, say experts in corporate teams, a team building event must:

- Be integrated with real work goals.

- o It's not enough to plan a fun day of activities for your team. The team building event that you plan should help focus the members of the team on what's not working and what needs to happen for the team to work together.

- Be part of an overall company goal.

- o Plan team building activities and events as part of the company's overall plan for success. That means more than just a one off event to go buggly riding. Team building events should be an ongoing, annual or semi-annual event.

- Be planned by a team. o After all, the goal is to promote teamwork. The planning team should model the behavior that you expect it to promote.

- Be followed up with real work integration.

- o A one off event that has no follow up in the work world will be seen as a holiday at best – and a cynical attempt at manipulation at worst. To be meaningful, team building efforts must continue beyond

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the event day.

– Be reinforced by rewarding teamwork and team behavior.

o Once you have a team that's working as a team, you need to reinforce that behavior by rewarding it. Recognition of teams that are working exceptionally well, special corporate events to mark team accomplishments and notice in the company newsletter are all ways to reinforce and reward teamwork within your company.

If planning an event that will do all that seems daunting, keep in mind that there are companies who make this their business. A company like that specialises in building team activities can offer your company custom team building activities that are designed to help your employees and coworkers focus on the importance of working together as a team.

Brett Danielson works for

[www.chillisauce.co.uk](http://www.chillisauce.co.uk)

, a leading UK tour operator that specialises in

planning unique

<http://www.chillisauce.co.uk/corporate-events/>

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