THE
LEADER'S
GUIDE
TO SUCCESSFUL
TEAM BUILDING

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CONTENTS

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INTRODUCTION

From an early age, we understand the importance of teamwork and team building. It's vital to our playground survival and, as we get older, it's just as important to our business success.

Despite our instinctive nature, it's not always easy to build a winning team. Creating a team building culture starts with an organization's mission, values, and organizational culture. Team building takes many forms. It's an ongoing process that encourages a work group to evolve and perform as a cohesive unit. Team members not only share tasks, but an end goal, and ideally work together with trust, support, and respect.

Team building is imperative in creating and maintaining engaged employees who are happier at work, more productive, and routinely go above and beyond their job descriptions. They also encourage other employees to be more engaged and productive. Most importantly, these workers are proud to be a part of their companies, and are more likely to stay long-term. There is no clear-cut set of actions for team building to create increased engagement levels; you will need to identify opportunities, simplify solutions, take action, and hold people accountable for following through with the policies and plans you put in place.

Team building is so much more than activities and monotonous "ice breaker" or "familiarizing" exercises. If you want to create an atmosphere that fosters collaborative team building and a high engagement levels, this eBook will illustrate the importance, hurdles, and ways to help your company achieve successful team building.

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AESOP'S FABLE:

A Tale of Teamwork

HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF AESOP'S FABLE, The Belly and the Members? If not, the fable reads:

"One fine day it occurred to the Members of the Body that they were doing all the work and the Belly was having all the food. So they held a meeting, and after a long discussion, decided to strike work till the Belly consented to take its proper share of the work. So for a day or two, the Hands refused to take the food, the Mouth refused to receive it, and the Teeth had no work to do. But after a day or two the Members began to find that they themselves were not in a very active condition: the Hands could hardly move and the Mouth was all parched and dry, while the Legs were unable to support the rest. So thus they found that even the Belly in its dull quiet way was doing necessary work for the Body, and that all must work together or the Body will go to pieces."

When we underestimate the importance of each member on a team, group dynamics has a tendency to fall apart. Getting a feel for how an individual responds to conflict could prevent some major stress and tension within the group down the road. The easiest way to reveal this vital information can be through the use of assessments. Similar to Aesop's Fable, it is important to recognize an individual's distinct skills, behaviors, and strengths in order to utilize the team dynamics and achieve an effective team.

"So thus they found that even the Belly in its dull quiet way was doing necessary work for the Body, and that all must work together or the Body will go to pieces."

Team dynamics can be complex because each individual brings a different skill to the table. One person may be more productive, one may handle conflict better, one may take initiative, or one may be better at problem solving. When the team understands what each person's skills are, then they will be more supportive and tolerant towards that individual. Knowing each person's strengths will bring the team closer together.

In team dynamics, each person may have diverse behaviors. From the time you are born you develop behaviors. It's likely that no two team members had the same upbringing or type of household, therefore they may have different values, beliefs, or social norms. Behaviors could lead to group conflict as well. Again, knowing and understanding each team member's behaviors will encourage the team to be more supportive of each other, which in turn opens up communication amongst the team.

Also, personality plays a key role in team dynamics. Not everyone has the same type of personality. Your personality is made up of your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, and that is why it is unique to you. Team members may misconstrue another member's position if they cannot identify with that individual's personality. One team member may be shy, quiet, or calm, and another person may see that team member as withdrawn or lazy. In reality, that is not the case. That is why it is important for everyone to recognize and adapt to each individual's personality.

So how do you understand skills, behaviors, and personality traits? The best way is through assessments. Employee behavior is often compared to an iceberg— about 90 percent of our behaviors are explained by factors that, on the surface, cannot be easily observed or understood. Assessments go below the surface and provide you with in-depth, reliable information. They give specific data on how to reduce conflict, open communication, and increase productivity with an individual. They can also tell you an individual's thinking style, behavioral traits, and if they have the right characteristics for a specific position. When building a successful and effective team, assessments are the place to start.

So what's the moral of the story? Each person brings a different skill set, behavior, and personality to a team. Sometimes, it may seem that certain team members are doing more work than others, but that is not always the case. That's why team communication is a key focus for organizations worldwide!

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4 REASONS

To Focus Your Team Building Around Team Players, Not Just High Achievers

EVERY TEAM IS DIFFERENT, BUT ALL HAVE A common interest in the desired end goal. This is the reason the team exists. Pursuit of this end goal is the measure of a team's success. It does not matter if a team is comprised of the best employees at your company; if they are not making timely progression toward a goal, the team is likely to fail. It may seem that selecting the highest-performing employees would make the most successful team possible, however, grouping them together may not yield desired results.

High performers who lack teamwork skills are typically results-driven and eager to show managers how they alone have contributed to improving the bottom-line. Their emphasis on personal results can cause them to lose focus on what is in the team's best interest. The foundation of a team should be high-performing employees who are also team players. Team players are excited to identify themselves as a part of the team, and this enthusiasm gets other employees excited. Every manager building a team should create them based on team players. Here are four reasons why:

1. **They are passionate.**
   Team players give up personal benefits for the team's gain. These employees are so enthusiastic about a team's goals that they are willing to take on any task, even if it is not one of their typical job duties. High performers who lack teamwork skills tend to prefer to stick with what they know, because it is the best way for them to shine.

2. **They are not on the team for personal gain.**
   The days of loyalty to one or two companies during an employee's career are over. Employees today often accept jobs that may not seem attractive to them at first to gain skills and then move on. Managers, however, still value loyalty and dedication to the

company. Successful team members typically believe in the company and see themselves as a piece of a puzzle helping to move the company forward.

3. Their personality fits well with other potential members of the team.
How well a team engages with each other can be the difference between a soaring success and an embarrassing failure. No matter how great the team looks on paper, poor attitudes and clashing personalities can halt productivity. Team players tend to be cooperative and good listeners. High performers who have a difficult time cooperating with other people may not be the best fit for a team. Assessments can measure and describe the behavioral characteristics of individuals, helping team members get to know each other far more thoroughly than through experience and interaction alone. Talent assessments can provide insight into how an individual may perform, but people often act differently as members of a group than they would act alone. A team analysis assessment provides invaluable insight into how members may respond when they become members of a group, and how to

guide that response to ensure optimum performance of the team and its members.

4. Team players are more likely to ask for input from all team members.
High achievers often have great ideas and are aware of their capabilities. This can make them likely to discount other employees' ideas if they are not accustomed to being on a team. An effective team member listens to everyone, because they understand that collaboration brings to light new ways of fixing problems.

Asking employees directly why they want to be a part of a team is a good idea. This all stems back to the company culture. If leadership and management encourage this kind of behavior and communication from the top down, employees from all departments are likely to adopt these practices. Don't just focus on high-performers; build your team and engage all employees to create a solid foundation of 100 percent team players. With a little focus, engaged team players can easily become your next best-performers. Encourage each and every employee to be active and involved in company team building.

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INDIVIDUALS Into

How Team Assessments Turn "INVALUABLES"

WHEN IT COMES TO SELECTING A HIGH- performing team, team assessments are essential, especially when conflicts arise. Here's a common scenario:

You've assembled an expert team of workers who fit their jobs well and are aligned with organizational goals. They are high performers, and you could not be more pleased with each of them individually.

Yet, something is off. For example, Jake almost never appears satisfied with answers to his questions, feedback from his team leader, or anything related to work. He's impatient, irritable, and his dissatisfaction is rubbing off on other team members. Individually, he's extremely skilled at his job and plays a vital role in the team.

Jake's manager, Sarah, consistently ensures her team is performing superbly by meeting deadlines and communicating well with internal and external clients, but there is friction between her and Jake within the team.

Let's say you have a big plan for the team: a project that they will spend most of the year developing before presenting to external clients. You believe they have the talent to get the job done, but you have an intuitive feeling about their chronic inability to get along. You've seen how the small annoyances between two people can fester and grow, which in turn threatens the entire team.

So what do you do now? Before you involve Sarah's team in the new project, step back and assess. Literally. Take a few minutes to examine the source of the friction

and figure out how to dissolve it, before it dissolves this high-performing team.

Profiles Performance Indicator™ and its Team Analysis Report are the prescribed methods of finding the underlying cause of conflict in your team and improving team communication. Its reports can help you form new teams, or help team leaders like Sarah understand the team better so that they can dissolve any friction.

Organizations utilize team assessments to motivate and coach employees and resolve performance issues. They can measure a worker's motivational intensity and actions related to:

- Productivity
- Quality of work
- Initiative
- Teamwork
- Problem solving
- Adapting to change
- Response to conflict, stress and frustration

As mentioned in the articles in this eBook, assessments can measure and describe the behavioral characteristics of team members, helping them get to know each other far more thoroughly than through experience and interaction alone. Assessment reports can explain how team members' characteristics may complement each other for maximum team effectiveness, or counter one another leading to challenge areas for the team. Knowing how other team members are likely to perceive and approach certain situations helps team building in a number of different ways. Team communication improves, group effectiveness is enhanced, and productivity soars.

8 DAILY TIPS
TO BUILD A WINNING & MOTIVATED TEAM

WILL YOU MAKE A CONSCIOUS EFFORT IN YOUR daily routine to fire up your team like never before? The sooner you can launch a new employee into productivity, the better off you, the employee, and your organization will be. We've outlined eight simple steps you can add to your daily and weekly routine to help you boost engagement and morale.

Employees want management they can look up to, not management that looks down on them. An honest respect for all and a genuine recognition confirming that everyone has something to offer is at the heart of a successful motivator. Without respect, so-called motivation becomes manipulation, and manipulation is never successful in the long term. Here are tips to get your team excited about work:

1. **Take an interest in the career and personal goals, aspirations, interests, lives, and families of those who work for you.**
   "Motivation" is about giving your people a "motive for action." Understand what your employees value, and you can easily formulate a way for them to fulfill their personal goals as well as your own. Take an honest interest in every one of your people, and the means to motivate them will become readily apparent. Make it a goal to learn something new about at least one of your people every day. Don't get "too personal," but make a point to understand each individual's personal goals. For example, did you know your IT director has a passion for blogging? Connect him or her with your blog editor to see if they can contribute to the corporate blog. Perhaps your sales intern is struggling

with accounting in school. If appropriate, check if they can have a working lunch with your head of accounting to ask some questions.

2. **The best way to knock a chip off a person's shoulder is to let them take a bow.**
   Do you know anyone who complains about getting too much recognition or praise for a job well done? Unlikely! Yet, research consistently shows that people will go to extraordinary lengths for a leader who takes the time to catch them doing something right, and when they do, provides them with sincere praise and recognition in front of their colleagues. Praise and recognition are more motivating than money or any other thing leaders can offer.

3. **Don't criticize, condemn, or complain.**
   Dale Carnegie nailed it with this gem: "When you must draw attention to poor performance, don't criticize—coach!" Don't criticize what is being done wrong, but focus all of your attention on the new behavior or action that will put things right. Always finish with a positive comment to let them see that the reason you've raised the matter is that you have seen they are capable of so much more. Correct the errant action, provide some positive feedback, and then forget it. Act like you expect better performance next time, and you'll get it.

4. **Request—don't order.**
   Real leaders lead from the front—they don't need to push from the back. Everyone rebels to some extent against being "bossed around." No one minds being asked for help.

5. **Discuss—don't argue.**
   Maturity is about being able to disagree agreeably.

6. **Be careful with humor.**
   Avoid any kind of demeaning humor. If there's the slightest chance of being misunderstood, keep it to yourself. "If in doubt, leave it out!"

7. **Listening is the greatest compliment you can pay anyone.**
   Our opinions are all sacred to us. Listen and hear the concerns of your people.

8. **Most important of all…**
   Model the behaviors, attitudes, and morale level you expect others to display. Show them it works.

Take the topics discussed above and apply them every day. You will discover that in a short amount of time, you will be doing all of these things naturally. And, the level of motivation in your team in general—even in your "toughest cases"—will achieve an all-time high.

Team building is easy if you care enough to put in a little extra effort. Anyone can motivate, and anyone can be motivated. All it takes is the right person in the right place, managed by someone who cares. Invest a little time over the next year, and fire your team up like never before!

WHAT **NOT** TO DO WHEN TEAM BUILDING

TEAM BUILDING AND TEAM DEVELOPMENT ARE important in order to have a highly-functional, productive team. However, all too often managers have the wrong idea about what team development is. There is a difference between team building and team fun. Sure, fun can cultivate bonding—and should be enjoyed—but it is not the same as team development. In an NPR interview, Peter Brooks recounts one incident of how team fun went horribly awry, all in the name of team development:

"We were issued safety goggles and paintball guns, one of which immediately misfired. It hit a district manager in the crotch. A lot of people pointed their guns right at their supervisors, me included. I shot mine right in the middle of the back, and then when he spun around with revenge in his eyes, I surrendered. I think we were all really unprepared at the impact, literally —emotionally and physically— the impact of shooting paintballs at each other," Brooks said. "People were very mad at each other. There were apologies. There were heartfelt apologies." While stories like these are amusing, it should be noted that team building can be inappropriate and get out of hand. The following list details five ways you can guarantee a bad team building experience, with real-life examples from The Fast Track:

> People should be challenged in the workplace so they can learn and develop themselves, but being forced into situations—especially physically dangerous ones—is not an effective approach to team development.

1. Wrong activity at the wrong time.

When you effectively plan a team building exercise to incorporate learned skills with appropriate workplace skills, the effects will be lasting and every employee will go home feeling fulfilled, most likely bringing what they learned in their team building experience to work with them. That's not always the case. One person wrote about a team building retreat held after an employee was let go due to a poor work ethic. "It was all fun and games until the consultant held an increasingly uncomfortable debriefing session where we had to write down what we didn't like about the associate who was fired, then had to go around and share aloud. Then the consultant passed around a box for the slips of paper and presented the box to the owner and very seriously said, 'When you are all at the office again, you need to have a purging ceremony and burn this box with all the baggage inside.'" That type of activity is irrelevant and unhelpful to all parties involved.

2. No application to work/life.

Spending time away from work during work hours should be time spent doing something equally productive. What employees learn in team building activities should be applicable—and relatable—to their actual work or personal advancement. Another team building horror story is: "One of the top people at one place I worked organized a mandatory party on a weekend afternoon and made it clear people had to show up at 1 p.m. Hourly workers didn't get paid for their time but had to show up (he had someone take attendance), and when everyone got there, they discovered that the food and the big prize drawing were not going to be held until three (or maybe four) hours later. The party was outside and he supplied a lot of beer and not much else. Partway through, it started to mist and drizzle. He wouldn't let anyone who wasn't a supervisor inside his home—not to get out of the rain, and not to use the bathroom. There were no other facilities. And they took attendance again when the food came out to make sure everyone had stayed."

3. Make it a "therapy session."

Putting a focus on personal feelings in a small team development setting is a terrible idea that will only result in hurt feelings and animosity. Unless the team is assembled so that everyone can learn and take away something from the activity, it should not

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done. One person said, "During a previous job, I worked on a team that was having trouble getting along, so they brought in someone to help us work together as a team. First activity? We had to go around the room and tell each other what we didn't like about each other. We might have also had to add what we did like about each other, but I honestly only remember the criticisms and the people bursting into tears. We went from simply not being able to work together to actively disliking each other in about 30 minutes. Then we ate a boxed lunch and ended the day by filling out personality tests."

4. Focusing on getting out of the comfort zone.

This seems to be a trend in team development—making people uncomfortable in order to build trust. People should be challenged in the workplace so they can learn and develop themselves, but being forced into situations—especially physically dangerous ones—is not an effective approach to team development. Consider this story: "My boss was organizing an event for an offsite, and he decided that we should go canyoneing [sic]. He knew that a colleague and I were afraid of heights (me) and small enclosed spaces (her). Both of us had been trying to slowly push our boundaries, and he thought this exercise would be fun because it would also assist us in something we were trying to accomplish privately. The event began with a 50-meter rappel. That's a 165-foot drop. And as you dropped, the walls of the cliffs narrowed into this dark narrow space, with a mountain lake in the bottom. We gritted our teeth and did that part, only to realize the next stages were worse. It was a half-day event, and having started, the only way was to finish the course. There was hyperventilating and actual tears."

5. Putting all the focus on fun.

Fun is good. There's no reason the boss can't take the team out bowling sometime. Also, people's ideas of fun differ. So, while a manager may think organizing a sky diving team development activity sounds exhilarating, employees may find it terrifying. Don't discuss or do things outside of the workplace that you wouldn't do inside the workplace. It's very easy for the best of intentions to have awful outcomes. If you're planning a team development activity, stick to the following:

- Don't choose activities that might violate people's dignity, privacy, or personal space. Something you might enjoy with close friends isn't always appropriate for the workplace.
- Realize that what's fun for some people is unpleasant for others. This especially includes athletic activities and public performances.
- A top complaint about team building exercises is that they have no bearing on how people spend their time outside of work, so ask yourself whether the activity really relates to the work people are there to do.
- If the team building is meant to fix a communication or morale problem, it's probably not the right solution. Those issues require management to step in and take action.

Team development has a time and a place, just like everything else. Do things that will actually improve relationships and functionally develop the team. Luckily, there are seven ways to build a winning team and boost morale in the workplace, up next.

BETTER. TOGETHER.

The ProfileXT® Team Report evaluates 12 unique scales concerning the cognitive abilities and behavioral characteristics for each of your team members, ranking each scale in one of four areas of emphasis: Low, Moderate/Low, Moderate/High, or High. These scales include:

- Learning Index
- Verbal Composite
- Numerical Composite
- Energy Level
- Assertiveness
- Sociability

- Manageability
- Attitude
- Decisiveness
- Accommodating
- Independence
- Objective Judgment

The data compiled by the **ProfileXT® Team Report** is invaluable, providing you with:

- A better understanding of how the characteristics of your team members fit with one another
- A better understanding of how work-related behaviors of your team members fit with yours as the team leader
- A better understanding of the conflicts that can arise between team members with differing characteristics and behaviors, which will aid you in conflict resolution

The inside information provided by the **ProfileXT® Team Report** will give you comprehensive guidance for coaching your team to reach it's maximum potential.

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AS YOU ARE BEGINNING TO SEE NOW, TEAMWORK is probably one of the most crucial drivers of success in an organization. Of course, hiring the right group of people is important, but once you have the right people in the right positions, building a winning team doesn't just happen organically. Like in any relationship, it takes work. These seven recommendations from Inc.com can help build a winning team:

1. **Create a culture of "We"**

   Swapping out "I" for "we" is a major first step to building a winning team. Everyone will feel included, supported, and equal. This also can boost innovation, because employees won't be afraid to voice their ideas. Make sure everyone feels involved, connected and free to contribute. It may be as simple as making a conscious effort to reduce first person pronouns in your vocabulary.

2. **Define employees' roles**

   When employees know their roles—their work identity—there will be less competition inside the team. This way, managers can build a team that comes together collaboratively, and employees will only work against themselves for personal improvement and advancement. Basically, creating comprehensive job descriptions and development plans.

7 WAYS
To Boost Morale in the Workplace

3. Recognize success

Most of the time, the really stellar ideas don't come from a single person. It's especially negative to assume only senior-level management can generate good ideas. The most successful organizations encourage creative thinking from everyone, and recognize everyone for the company's success. Recognition is perhaps the most important aspect in building a winning team. You can do this by openly praising team members for their individual ideas, or mentioning them in a newsletter or pin-board flyer. Be sure to continue to recognize the team as a whole for its contributions to the organization.

4. Educate and train

When managing teams, almost any situation can be turned into a learning experience. Effective managers keep their ear to the ground for such occasions, and use them to train employees and build a winning team. Instruct your employees in your business's best practices, and even role play scenarios to teach how different situations can and should be handled.

5. Win and lose as a team

Major success and failure should equally be shared by the team. Just as often times one single person can't be credited with success, no one person should be blamed for failure. Blaming individuals breeds contempt and demotivates quickly. It can even hurt an organization's credibility if others hear of a bad situation being handled that way.

6. Get together

When employees know each other on a personal level, they are more likely to feel attached to the organization. You should encourage social outings with team members, but keep it organic. There's a difference between supporting and sponsoring—don't make employees feel forced to attend. They should want to attend because of their personal, friendly team relationship.

7. Develop team-building exercises

It's a good idea to keep employees informed and "in the know" about their organizations by bringing the team together to learn, celebrate achievements, and develop their teamwork through team-building exercises.

When managing teams, leadership needs to keep in mind that there is no quick fix or overnight miracle elixir to build a winning team. It takes time, effort, and the right people in the right positions. The preceding seven tips are an easy first step in the right direction.

THE SECRET TO SUCCESSFUL TEAM BUILDING

BUILDING AN EFFECTIVE TEAM IS HARD WORK.
To begin, you have to select the right people to be on the team. This involves finding high-performing, engaged employees with the right skills to do the job. Once you have completed this difficult task, you have to handle the even more difficult task of establishing how work in the team will be done and how communication will flow. It's still not over after that! Now, you have the headache of dealing with the conflicts that are almost certain to arise. Talk about hard work!

It's discouraging to add even more to this already overflowing plate, but before any of the actual work can begin, you have to earn the buy-in of your team members. Buy-in is earning the support and dedication of your team members. It is a fancy way of saying everyone is on board. You need buy-in from everyone and you need to earn it early. Otherwise, you run the risk that your team members will approach their work with half-hearted enthusiasm and, in turn, produce subpar work. Team members with buy-in understand why the team's work is important, and they are more likely to do the work enthusiastically and at a high-quality level.

This buy-in does not just appear magically when you form your team. It has to be earned. Luckily, there are a few steps you can take to make it happen:

1. **Make sure the resources the team needs to succeed are in place.**
   There are few things worse than being told to accomplish a task without the money, time, or other necessary support to do it. Your team may be full of high performers, but they are not supermen or

superwomen. Make sure that the money and administrative support your team needs to work is ready to go. It is also important to make sure that the team has a realistic time frame to complete their work. Be realistic about setting project deliverable dates so that your team does not feel the need to rush through important tasks.

2. **Tie team goals to company goals.**
   If your team members are passionate about the work that your company does, that does not automatically mean that passion will transfer over to each team project. Sometimes, the day-to-day grind can leave employees jaded. Remind your team members on a regular basis of how this project helps the company achieve its larger goals.

3. **Make it clear to employees how they will benefit from achieving the team's goals.**
   Even if your team members are passionate about the company's goals, they will still have goals for their own professional development. Share with individual team members how this project can help them advance professionally. These reasons can include the chance to meet influential people, learn new skills, or travel to somewhere new. Employees are more likely to be highly engaged in team projects when there is a way for them to develop professionally.

There are many hurdles to cross in team building, but gaining buy-in from each member of your team is crossing one of the biggest hurdles. A team that is committed to the work they are doing will be engaged, dedicated, and produce high-quality work. What more could you ask for?

You need buy-in from everyone and you need to earn it early. Otherwise, you run the risk that your team members will approach their work with half-hearted enthusiasm and, in turn, produce subpar work.

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