

# Team building exercise

Business



8 Aug., Team building exercise Introduction: Team building and conflict resolution are strongly related to each other. It may be possible to resolve the conflicts without building a team but it is not possible to build or retain a team without resolving conflicts. Hence, conflict resolution is one of the most fundamental pre-requisite of team building. This paper aims at discussing an exercise that can help promote team building and resolve inter-personal conflicts in an organizational setup. Improving communication among the members enables the members to settle their issues, remove their differences and work in peace and mutual harmony. Therefore, the exercise discussed in this paper achieves conflict resolution and team building by way of improvement of communication.

Back-to-back drawing: One of the most suitable ways to promote team building is indulging the team members in such exercises which they can enjoy and which can also provide the managers about object clues regarding the problem areas. One such exercise is back-to-back drawing. The following section demonstrates how this exercise can be conducted.

How to conduct this exercise: For conducting this exercise, the group needs to be divided into individual pairs. Partners for each pair should be chosen at random. There should not be any preliminary planning nor should the individuals be allowed to choose the partners for themselves. The two members of each pair are supposed to face opposite each other and sit on the floor with their backs touching each other. In every pair, one of the members needs to be provided with a picture of any shape and the other member facing the other side should be provided with a pad and a pencil. It should be ensured that one member does not disclose his/her shape to the other. Members holding shapes need to be told to help the partner draw the shape upon the pad through verbal instructions with the

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help of pencil provided. Once all pairs are done guiding their partners and drawing the shapes, the shapes thus drawn should be compared with the original shapes provided to the first partners. While this is done, the supervisor should take the following questions into consideration: What was the quality of instructions passed to the second partner by the first partner holding the shape? What was the quality of understanding of the second partner of the instructions passed to him/her by the first partner? Were both the sending and receiving of information problematic in the process of delivery of instructions from the first partner to the second? The supervisor should have these questions in mind and should note down the answers to each of them one by one as he/she visits the individual pairs. This will allow the supervisor to identify the members that are weak in conveying their thoughts to others as well as those individuals that misunderstand the information. Once both kinds of individuals are identified, the supervisor should pass the information to the manager so that he/she may take necessary measures to improve the message passing and understanding abilities of the notified individuals. Analysis of the exercise: Back-to-back drawing provides the managers with an objective understanding of the individualistic capabilities and weaknesses of the individuals that make part of the organizational workforce. The experiment draws its objectivity from disallowing the individuals to choose partners for themselves because without it, individuals will like to make pair with their friends who they already understand and do not have any communication problems with. The activity is ideal for selection as the team building exercise because not only is it entertaining for the members as well as for the supervisor, but also it is very time saving. The whole activity can be completed in less than ten

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minutes. So this exercise would save the precious time of the workers while the managers will be able to gain the required data. In addition to that, all this exercise asks for is some pencils, pads and shape cards, all of which can be accessed in local stores. Post-exercise steps: Once the managers have obtained the required information, they can improve the inter-personal communication by grading the information sending and receiving ability of individual members. The manager should convey the marks obtained by each member individually so that their inter-personal relations are not disclosed to other colleagues. The manager should involve the members with weak information and sending and receiving abilities into organizational tasks, so that they are able to improve their respective abilities. Within one or two weeks, the individuals will not only become better information senders and receivers, but will also make good team members.