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Not Just Fun and Games:

Designing Teambuilding That Works

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- Identify the root issues underlying most teambuilding requests
- Design a collaborative session to address those issues
- Facilitate in a way that puts the Team back in teambuilding

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- Worked well together for the past year
- Missed three consecutive milestones on their primary project
- Worked through several organizational changes
- Morale is noticeably low

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Digging Deeper



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Getting to the Root

- Needs assessments
  - Team leader
  - Team
  - Subset of team
  - 1:1 with team members
- Use open-ended questions to delve deeper into the request
- Consider anonymous surveys to gather team insights
- Look for clues that there may be a leadership issue

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Leader sees:

- Silence in team meetings
- Work duplication
- Finger pointing
- Resistance to change

Team sees:

- Unclear roles and ownership
- Leader not responsive to emails
- More changes coming
- Lack of communication

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Design a collaborative session

- Design to focus on the root issue
- Design so they're talking more than you are
- Avoid blended sessions (part of the group in person, part virtual)
- Start off safely with something lower pressure
- Expect people not to talk as much if leadership or HRBPs are present
- Set session goals together at the beginning
- Keep it simple – more complex is not the answer!
- Give them time to go deeper where they feel
- Have a backup plan or additional exercises

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Design Roadmap

Discover

Identify the issue



Explore

Brainstorm options

Decide

Choose a solution

Plan

Design a path forward

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Teambuilding Toolbox

- Start, Stop, Continue
- 5 Words
- Team Charter
- Team Motto
- What topic is most important to discuss today?
- Gallery Walk and Vote

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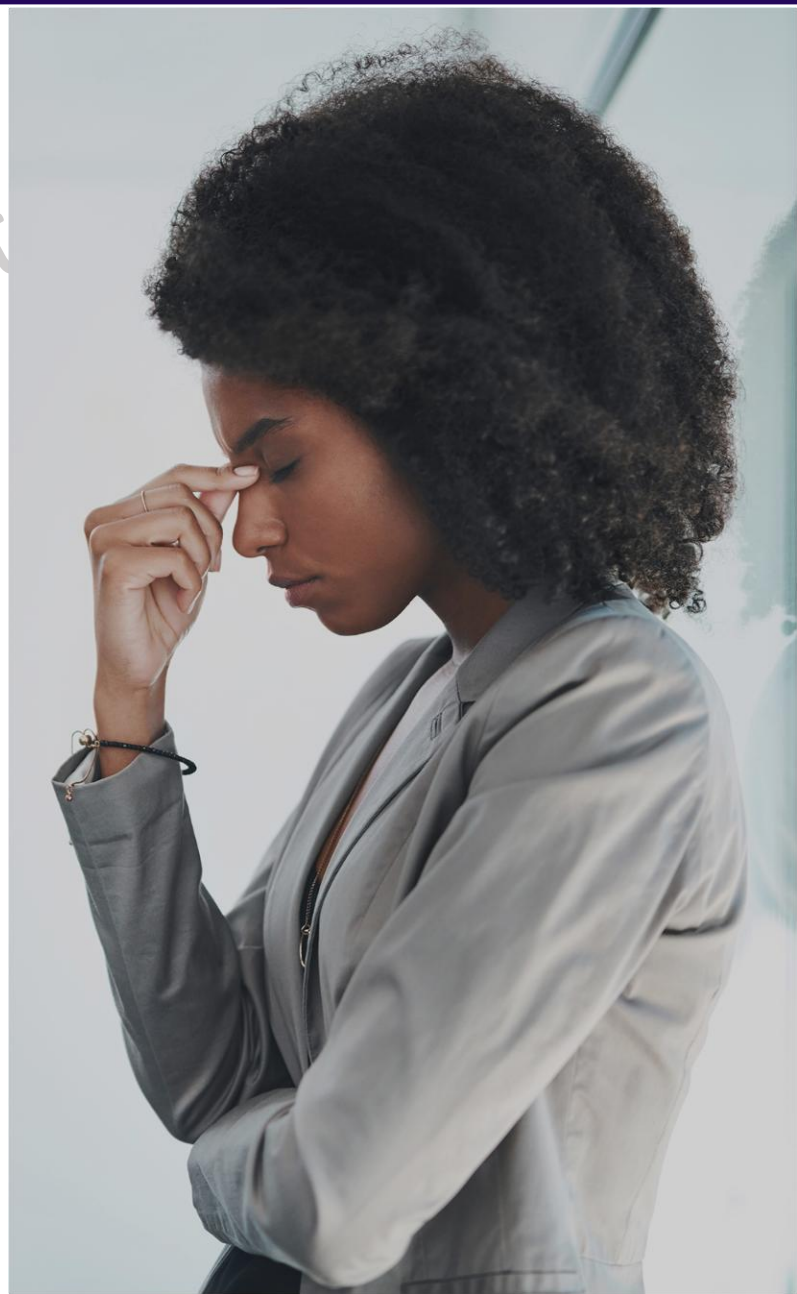
Elements to Avoid

- Physical contact
- Personal sharing
- Performing – singing, dancing, etc.
- Leader worship
- Exclusionary activities
- Silly activities*
- Competitions*
- Gifts*



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- In pairs, what they want to get out of the session today
- Gallery walk to vote for most important responses
- Group discussion on why those topics surfaced
- Group discussion on what good looks like
- Trios do Start, Stop, Continue on priority topics
- Group creates action plan based on Start, Stop, Continue

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Virtual Teambuilding

- Use the tools available to you - whiteboards, polling, reactions, and chat
- Aim for session lengths between 60-90 minutes
- Warm up with an easy activity to introduce them to the tools in the software
- Ask participants to turn on their cameras if possible
- Alternate between discussion, visuals, polls, breakouts, and whiteboards
- Give people time to think
- Consider external interactive tools with care, such as Mentimeter, Miro, Kahoot
- Enlist a colleague as your producer
- Have a backup plan in case of issues with virtual tools or disconnections
- Have fun and be creative!

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Facilitate for the Team

- Prepare a warm welcome, clear agenda, and inclusive ground rules
- Put the participants at the center of the session
- Talk less than they do
- Guide the discussion with open-ended questions and active listening
- Debrief every activity as a group
- Let them discover their truths
- Watch for dominant voices in discussions
- Use energizers or breaks if the group feels flat or distracted
- Prioritize key activities and be transparent about adjusting the agenda
- Aim for worthwhile, not perfect

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The best laid plans of mice and men often go awry.

- Robert Burns



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- Gallery walk → lack of communication around change as biggest issue
- Role clarity concerns also tied to unclear change communications
- Focus shifted to creating a communication process for changes
- Action plan built for better leader and team communication planning
- Scope includes focus on regular updates to shifting responsibilities
- Team now feels safer asking leader for change updates

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Questions?

Let’s keep in touch!

LinkedIn: Kelli-Nottingham
Kellinottingham.com

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