



Team Building Resources

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Team Building Avoidance: The Excuse Array...

by Frank J. Whyte

Some organizations avoid team development programs. Often, they have seemingly good reasons for shunning an investment in team growth.

However, their excuses sometimes underscore their need for teambuilding!

Let's look at the top three team building avoidance scenarios, along with the deeper issues revealed by those excuses...

Excuse One: **We Get Along Fine.**

It's a great excuse! Why invest in team building when the team is functioning well?

The truth is that communication and cooperation challenges exist, even in seemingly functional work groups. In functional environments, effective team building is preventative medicine--a proactive step toward avoiding an emergency intervention session later. When "we all get along fine," the team is ripe for training, since there aren't any contagions to prevent the full use of the insights gained in the team-building program. When "we get along fine," team building is a savvy, strategic investment.

Excuse Two: **It's Not In the Budget.**

This is another great dodge, since you can't buy anything you can't afford. However, further consideration of this excuse betrays some challenges with the organization's perspective regarding team development.

If an organization can't (or won't) allocate even minimal funding for team growth and interpersonal cooperation, it's probably clear to employees that their needs aren't a high priority. Quality team building programs are available at a per-person cost of less than \$160. It's not exactly a major purchase.

Organizations that use a cost rationale to avoid team development programs are saving pennies at the expense of dollars. One of our customers did the math for us: If productivity in their organization increased by only .4 percent, or

if only one employee turnover cycle were prevented, a team building program would pay for itself. It's not unusual for us to discover that team building is most appropriate in an organization asserting that "it's not in the budget."

Excuse Three: [We Don't Have Time.](#)

It's tough to argue with this one: If your team is already overworked and overstressed, where will you find the time?

This is reminiscent of (then Chrysler Chairman) Lee Iacocca's story about the manager who was "working so hard" that he "hadn't taken a vacation in four years." Iacocca fired the manager, citing his poor time management skills as justification.

If an organization is working quickly, dealing with high-speed stress factors, it's the perfect time to take a break, regroup and refresh. Team building isn't just useful for fast-moving teams; It's critical. There's no doubt that it takes some fortitude to pull a team out of the grinder for a day, but good planners achieve the best results. If team building isn't workable for your team because your fast-paced, high-burnout task load doesn't leave time for it, you unquestionably need to schedule a team building program.

Frank Whyte is chief curriculum officer for Training Services On Demand: www.tsod.com

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