



DIY Teambuilding for Project Engineers

An Online Continuing Education Course for Engineers

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DIY Teambuilding for Project Engineers

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A Guide to Getting the Team Performance
You Want without the Cost of a Consultant



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What is Team Building?

Well, the first question we should ask about team building is “what is it”?

The simple definitions are usually something like “Together Everyone Achieves More, “we're getting everybody on the same page”, “everyone working together for the same outcome”, or if you want to be a Musketeer, you can say “one for all and all for one”.



Regardless of the definition that you want to use, it all means the same thing - **that you have everyone working together toward a common outcome.**

So next then the question is, why would they want to do that?



When you think about team building, it seems like an obvious answer – *it's a great idea and everyone should naturally want to do it.*

But when you look at the individuals that make up this team of yours or that are making up the team *trying to function in the real world*, you must ask yourself **why would they want to do this?**

After asking yourself why would they want to do that, then other questions that may come up are typically:

- Why should we do it?
- What do we want out of it?
- Who will do it?
- How will we do it?
- When should we do it?
- How long should it take?
- How do we preserve the gains?



All of those are great questions and we will answer them through this course today.

Why Should We Do It?

There are two primary reasons where team building is an important strategic decision:

1. There is nothing special coming up, it is just that our team's **day-to-day work performance** needs to improve. (This is **NOT** the focus of this course.)
2. There is a **unique project coming** up and we all need to work together for a maximum chance of success. (This **IS** the focus of this course.)

Improved Day-to-Day Work Performance



- There may be a sense of general malaise where no one is excited about doing anything.
 - We find more faults with each other than positive points.
 - Maybe we are arguing a lot or there isn't much cooperation between members.
- There seems to be a lot of grumbling going on or anything else that is occurring which is contrary to what you want to hear.
 - Team members have become clock-watchers barely getting to work on time and can't get out of the office fast enough at quitting time.

If you are seeing those characteristics of #1 above on your team, there are further relevant courses available to you on PDHengineer that address these topics in further depth.

Having clarified the intent of this course, let's get started.

There is a Unique Project Coming Up



This DIY model will work for a wide range of projects from for-profit construction work to public service such as creating youth sports facilities, 4th of July celebrations, school boosters or private church fund raisers for new facilities.



Basically, it's simply a matter of scope, creativity, and your imagination. This model will help your team work together as an efficient and productive group with an excellent chance of success.

Of course, we do not guarantee success, but this will get you off to a particularly good start!

Before You Start Teambuilding for a Unique Project

Before you try to do any team building, it is a good idea to stop a moment and think about this.

Regardless of how well a project is planned, scoped, and estimated there is always an element that cannot be predetermined: *that is how well the people who make up the project team will get along with each other and with the project's leadership.*

We will look at this a little bit more before we get started into constructing our model.

Take a moment to list some reasons why you think your potential team members would want to work together on this team:

- Do they share any common interests?
- What's in it for them to have a successful team?
- Financial gains?
- Personal gains?
- What kind of skills are they offering?
- Why would they want to be on the team?
- Why would they want to have you lead the team?



(The reason for you to think about their desire to join the team is that you may have to remind them of it at times if their dedication or morale seems to slip a little.)

A Project Example

We'll say that we live in the county just outside of the city limits. We all have children whom we must drive some distance to play in the neighboring city's youth baseball, softball, and soccer programs. It would really be great if we had our own facilities here in our area!



One of the traveling parents is also a county commissioner who has told you she can help with the "political environment" if you'll agree to lead the initiative to build a series of fields so the local youth (and parents) will have opportunities for baseball, softball, T-ball, and soccer without having to drive long distances.

And, so, armed with this DIY Team Building manual and fearless spirit, you agree to do it!



Now that you are part of this fictional parent group, take a moment and go back to the previous section and answer the series of questions asked about why the parents would want to be a part of this team.

(Do you see how having those answers will be useful in the days ahead as you try to keep project momentum after the initial enthusiasm wears off?)

Understanding Team Member Motivation

As a leader of this project team, it's essential that you understand something about motivation and your teammates.

Once their initial excitement of becoming a team member wears off, you may notice their general enthusiasm begins to wane. Especially after a few meetings when it seems that nothing gets accomplished. But, if you first lead them through a few activities that we'll show you here, you and they will be better prepared to move forward together through the challenging months ahead.

Let's look at this typical group of bored parents that have been on your team for a while.



If someone asks you, "why would they want to be productive members of your team?", you may be tempted to say, "because they're supposed to" or "it's their job!"

And you would be right. It is their job to do the work, but the *quality of their work* depends a lot on you as their leader. You can influence how well they do. They go about it the way they want.

Look at this diagram. There is a difference between people who are highly committed and people who are not. Highly committed people do as much work as possible.

There is a difference between a team's performance and performance and performance commitment.

To view the remainder of the course material and to take the quiz for PDH credit, you must purchase the course.

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If you stand over them, they will do the most they can do. If you stand back, they will do the least they can do.

Ideally, you want the team to be committed. You are there or not. And that is the definition of commitment. *Someone does their best job whether they are being supervised or monitored.*

Ask yourself, "Do they act like they **GET TO WORK** on this project or do they act like they **HAVE TO WORK** on this project?" In their eyes, is it a chance to **express their talents and show the world what they can do** or is it **a drudgery they have to get through with as little effort as possible?**