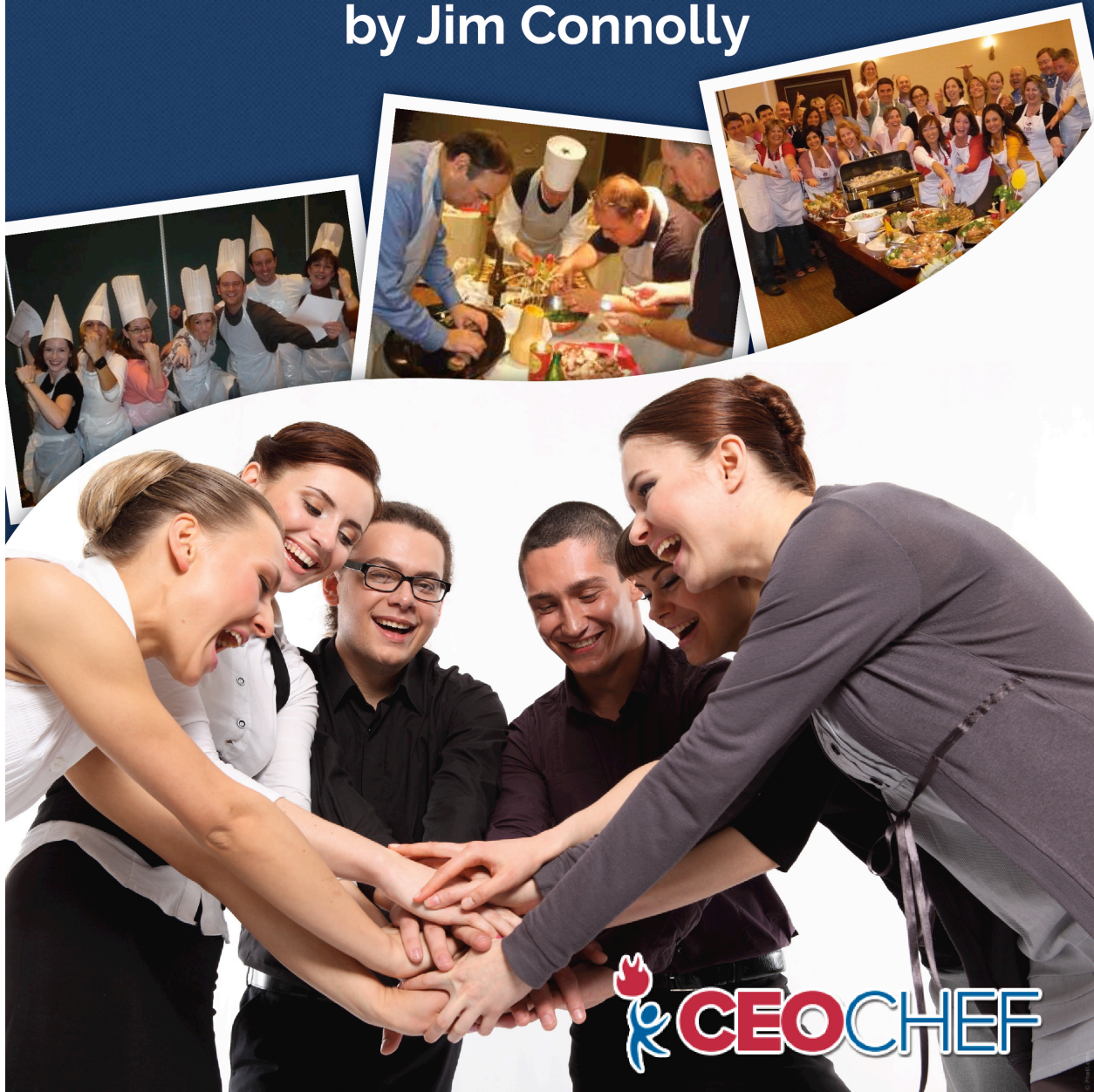


THE TOP 10 TEAM BUILDING EXERCISES & WHY

by Jim Connolly



“The Top 10 Team Building Exercises & Why”

What Makes Up an Effective Team Building Exercise?

- An effective team building exercise has the following distinctions that make it beneficial.
 - The foundation of your team building exercise or program is based on your team’s objectives of improvement or fixes that will make your team grow.
 - It must have a transformational element that supplies the group as a whole to experience an “A-ha” moment.
 - It must be challenging, but not to the point of being offsetting.
 - It must have a period of debrief and reflection after the team building experience is complete.
 - It must create a place of possibilities for your group to grow.
 - It must then anchor these new possibilities to the groups state of being.
 - It must have a real outcome to achieve or complete.
 - It must be FUN!
- One process (the process we use at CEO Chef) is Team Associative Conditioning (“TAC™”). This is a fancy way of saying we take your team, scramble their paradigm or belief of who they are, and imprint a new blueprint of being onto your team that builds relationships, empowers creativity and innovation, and changes the course of your organization forever! Other quality minded team building organizations offer similar type team building systems of change that they have branded differently. For ease of explanation, we will refer to TAC® in the context of all tools of transformation.
- Another important point that must be addressed was alluded to in the “scramble your team's paradigm” section: there must be rapport with the program type and your team. Programs must match up with your team’s characteristics: personalities, intelligence, emotional intelligence, physicality, cognitive skills and interpersonal skills.
- For example, a very popular team transformational program during the 80's and 90's was ropes courses. A good ropes course would challenge a team to greater heights (pardon the pun!) by having them perform tasks 50 feet above

the ground. A professionally run ropes course can use all of the TAC® characteristics but one: building rapport.

- Currently we have an overabundance of Baby Boomers in the workforce whose athletic prowess is quite a few years behind them. A rope course for this group would be disastrous. Participants would focus so much on their own physical limitations or challenges that even if they did complete the program, they would miss the whole point of doing so as a team. So, maybe personal transformation happens, but not team.
- What does transcend all cultural barriers is music, food and experiences based in the arts! Programs with one or more of these elements challenge a team in a very different way than physical type team programs. If a music or culinary program follows some form of the TAC™ plan (see above), you will achieve team transformation and create a new, empowering, and effective team state of being beneficial to the success of your business or organization.

What's the Difference Between an Effective Team Building Exercise and a Team Activity?

- Unfortunately many people tack on the word “team building” without understanding what they are saying. If a program claims that it’s a real team building exercise, it should pass the scrutiny of the former chapters description. Anything else is a team activity, which is beneficial in it’s own way, but not to be confused by the title.
- First and foremost a team activity must be FUN, and that’s basically it!
- It’s best used a few months to six months after a real team building program has been experienced by your team.
- It should be viewed much like recess was for elementary school, it supplies the “ying” to our hard work “yang”.
- Here are a short list of excellent team activities that are confused as team building exercises:
 - Bowling
 - Movie day
 - Murder Mystery Theater
 - Dine-A-rounds
 - Amusement Parks
 - Ball games, viewing and partaking
 - Cooking Classes (alas, the biggest confuser of all)
 - River boat cruises “a la The Office team building episode 11”
 - Paint Ball
 - Scavenger Hunts

How It's Scored

- The scoring is based on the beginning chapter's characteristics of an efficient team building exercise.
- Each team building exercise is scored on a 10 point scale, 10 being the highest or most efficient and highly suggested to 1 being the lowest score and not suggested.
- The score is represented by the highest 10/10 and the lowest 1/10 with a brief pro and con comment.

"The Top 10 Team Building Exercises & Why?"

#1 – Culinary or Cooking Team Building Challenges 10/10

Pros: Meets all of the criteria to an effective team building exercise especially since it is the one thing that everyone on the planet likes to do, eat! Great outcome, food!

Cons: Outcome greatly depends on the quality of the facilitator; most mislabeled as a team building exercise so beware!

#2 – Music & Rhythm 9/10

Pros: Meets all of the right team building criteria.

Cons: The finale outcome doesn't cover as many senses

#3 – Art (Mandalas) 8/10

Pros: Meets all of the right team building criteria

Cons: Could be too sedate for some people especially if they have been sitting all day

#4– Team Sailing or River Rafting 8/10

Pros: Meets all of team building criteria

Cons: Seasickness: limits on size of groups

#5 – Indoor Team Games 7/10

Pros: Can meet all of the team building criteria

Cons: Doesn't appeal with as many people, can lack a good final outcome or result and needs a strong facilitator to keep it interesting

#6 – Team Orientation with Compass (old style) or GPS 7/10

Pros: Can meet all of the team building criteria; many combine local history or outdoors

Cons: Limited to smaller group experiences and doesn't pull in the whole group together; can get lost.

#7 – Charitable Project 6/10

Pros: If facilitated well it can provide a good team building criteria; good feeling of gratitude

Cons: Bike building projects can turn-off the non-engineer type; more focus on the charity and not the team building, therefore best to apply as a team activity

#8 – Outdoor Team Games (Team Olympics too) 5/10

Pros: Has the possibilities to provide team building criteria; fresh air

Cons: Weather dependent; tends to get too physical and scares off the “non-athletes”; someone always goes too far and injuries occur thus the team message is lost.

#9 – Ropes Course 4/10

Pros: If well facilitated provides a great personal performance message; fresh air

Cons: Weather dependent; a great individual empowering tool but misses the boat for team transformation; too physical and height phobias exclude team members.

#10 – Battle Simulations 4/10

Pros: Can provide a different simulation and can provide team building criteria; matches well for a company that provides services to the military; indoor

Cons: Military simulations are not everyone's cup of tea; violent theme can divide a team.

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