

Team Building Games - Improve Employee Engagement

Team building games are not created equal. Be intentional about the games selected for the team. Consider time, complexity and purpose.



Memory Wall: Each team member writes down a positive memory that relates to working on your team. Go around and share each memory. Post them on a large poster board that hangs in a high staff traffic area.

This is a visual reminder of all the great reasons to work at your hospital from the team's perspective. Your team will have a blast laughing about fun times with each other, patients and clients.

The length of activity varies based on team size. With smaller teams you may wish to have each person do more than one memory. Repeat this activity at least every 6 months to continue to add to your memory wall and keep it growing and updating as your team changes.

Focus: Improve morale and fight burn-out.

Supplies needed: pads of colored post-it notes, pens or markers, large poster board.

Prep time: minimal.

Amazing Race: Pick a topic to build the game around. This has so many possibilities and can really focus on any area you want to revive within your team.

Example of topics:

- medical focus like dental health
- trivia version like 'who knows the most about our team and hospital'
- preparing for accreditation (AAHA, Fear Free, Cat Friendly, etc.)

Groups should be approximate 5 people each. Develop 5 challenges for the teams to complete. Place the challenges to complete in numbered envelopes with one set of envelopes per team. Once they complete a challenge, a judge (can be you) will make sure it is completed correctly and then they will get their next challenge envelope.

All teams are competing for best time and are working on their challenges at the same time. The first team to complete all the challenges correctly wins. Make it fun with prizes for the winners (1st, 2nd and 3rd). At the completion of the game, go back through each challenge and discuss as a group.

Focus: Staff buy-in and training.

Supplies: Envelopes, paper, and supplies for your specific challenges.

Prep time: Moderate.

One problem with many solutions: Everyone on your team has a challenge that they face. This game is designed to exercise solution-based thinking in a team environment.

Provide each team member with a blank piece of paper. Allow 3-5 minutes for team members to think of a work challenge that they are facing and write it down. Once completed, each person passes their challenge to the

right. The person to the right writes down one possible solution. The paper is passed to the right every 1-3 minutes until it is back to the original person.

Your time should increase with each pass as each person is tasked with coming up with a unique solution to the original problem. Once the paper is back to the original person, you can allow several minutes for that person to review the proposed solutions and possibly share with the group.

Allow people to take their solutions sheet home.

Focus: Problem-solving. Recognizing there are multiple ways to address issues.

Supplies: Blank sheets of copy or notebook paper and writing utensils.

Prep time: Minimal.

Song battle: Divide into small groups of no more than 10 people. Each team picks a word and writes it on a board where everyone can see it.

Then each team must come up with a song for each word (including the team that picked the word). The song must have the word in the title or lyrics. Give the teams approximately 5 minutes to brainstorm their song lists.

Then teams go one at a time and sing a small snippet of the song as a group. Each unique song gets a point. Points are not awarded for songs that other teams picked as well (*i.e.*, no duplicates). You can go as many rounds as you have time for. The team with the most points wins!

This game encourages teams to work together. They may discover and appreciate the skill sets that each team member brings to the group. You will likely see individuals that are the “brains” (pick a challenging word and identify songs) and those that are the “performers” (belting out those lyrics).

Focus: Team unity and morale.

Supplies: Paper and writing utensils (1 per group).

Prep time: Minimal.

My best day visualization activity: Ask your team to close their eyes and reflect on all the amazing things they have done in their lives. The room can either be quiet or have soft instrumental music playing.

After about 2 minutes, with their eyes still closed, ask your team to identify the one experience that they felt was their best day and visualize it in detail. Now ask them to pinpoint what about that day made it their best day. Give them another 1-2 minutes to gather those thoughts.

The team can now open their eyes and on index cards, write a brief description of their best day and why it was special. Then have each person share their best day with the group. The index cards are collected and hung in your staff room.

Every day the team can look at all the wonderful ‘best days’ from the group. This provides further detail into what your co-workers value and enjoy.

Focus: Team unity and morale. Fight burnout.

Supplies: Index cards and writing utensils.

Prep time: Minimal.