



Rejuvenating Your Team

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Do you have topic ideas? Comments or questions?

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There is probably no better medicine for your team than to take them away from your office for a retreat, think-thank exercise or re-generation – whatever you may call it. It builds company morale, re-charges the batteries, gets buy-in otherwise not possible, and results in new wonderful thoughts.

What is the Main Reason to do it?

Every night we go to bed and sleep for a number of hours. Each week we usually take off Saturday and Sunday from our work. We see similar behaviour in hockey players changing shifts every few minutes, farmers' fields being left fallow and see such regular breaks being exercised by the animal kingdom. Why? Time has shown we need a break to re-charge our batteries to allow us to perform better thereafter. Is there a lesson here? Indeed there is. The main reason for a retreat is to re-charge your corporate batteries. No matter how large or small your enterprise, this re-charging always pays dividends. Understanding that, you can stop reading this article right now, if you want – because 80% of the objective of this paper will have been achieved.

Keep it Manageable

You don't have to break the bank to hold a retreat. Last week we facilitated a session in the business owner's living room, fed people cold cuts at noon and kept the expense to a minimum. The result was an achievement of all the points suggested above: a detailed program for the next year, buy-in by all present, a keen sense of teamwork, a feeling of being valued by the boss because he (Harry) was willing to share his thoughts with all his staff and he involved them in a new and different experience.

Groups sometimes will perform the retreat at a local hotel, again to keep costs to a low level. At the other extreme some companies will hold their retreats at distant resorts feeling it is worthwhile to invest in collective, enjoyable, employee participation. In all cases, however, the retreat should be held away from the office. Otherwise you will not fully charge the batteries.

Reason #2: Build Morale

With the exchange of information among team members, assuming a free exchange is encouraged, staff morale immediately climbs.

Reason #3: Get Buy-in

People who participate in questions, answers

and solutions feel engaged. They almost automatically, buy into the resulting program. It is people outside who have difficulty buying into the proposed program change or shift of ideas. For that reason we say "the more the merrier". That is, the more people who attend your retreat the greater the collective corporate buy-in will be. You will not have to waste your time convincing the sceptics who were not there, of the benefits of your new-found purpose.

Reason #4: Get Results

Our own research shows that 8 people at a 2-hour free exchange session will explore over 600 ideas. Yet each person on their own could only produce about 10 ideas. For that reason we repeat "the more the merrier" phrase – because of the automatic 5 to 10 times multiplier factor. And those many ideas will ensure that the concepts finally developed look at things from every possible angle – leading to a better, more balanced answer, one most likely to be practical to implement.

Get Help if you can

Let's not lose our focus. Hold a retreat at least once a year. That is our main message. Do it yourselves if you must; keep the costs to a minimum if you must – but do the retreat.

However, if you have a bit of money and you want to optimize your retreat to be sure that: it actually takes place; that it begins on time and ends on time; that it ensures full participation and free exchange of ideas; that it follows a proven structure; that it enables actions that will deliver tangible results; that the outcome of the retreat is well documented; that there is a follow-up to ensure execution – then bring in professional retreat experts. Perhaps, you might consider giving us a call.

Inexpensive or extravagant – have a great retreat!

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