



# 8 Biggest Team Building Mistakes

*Get the most out of your team building by avoiding these common pitfalls*

## **1. Not including the boss in the team building**

When the team leader is not a part of the team building, the rest of the group has a hard time taking the event seriously, even if the goal is just to have fun. Try to arrange your event when everyone can make it for the entire program.

## **2. Scheduling workplace team building on personal time**

Scheduling a team building session during what is normally personal time can have a negative impact on your event before it even starts. If the goal is to improve the work place and work performance, the event should be scheduled during work hours, whenever practical.

## **3. Scheduling team building too late in the day**

Events that run too far into the evening can cause people to shut down during the program. It is tempting when you have people from a range of time zones to compromise on the schedule, but this can leave some people exhausted. Try to wrap up your team building event by early evening whenever possible.

## **4. Not balancing program length with expectations**

The loftier your goals for the team building, the more time the goals will need. A simple energizer can be as short as 30 minutes. A more substantive program will need 3-4 hours to accomplish something worthwhile. True team development can take a day or two, maybe more if there are deep issues to resolve or a lot of foundation to build.

## **5. Trying to do team building in regular meeting space**

Most team building programs integrate a combination of hands-on activities and small group discussions. Trying to do this in a space only big enough for a standard meeting is uncomfortable and limits the depth of learning and integration dramatically. Try to get a room that is roughly twice the size of what you need; half the room for tables and chairs, half the room wide open.

## **6. Making team-building a one-time event**

Make sure that you leave the team building with specific action steps for the team, with people assigned to those steps and due dates for completion. Hand-outs should be given at the event, as well as additional materials and reprints e-mailed after the program. Keep talking about the event and referring to the lessons from the program in future meetings and other communications.

## **7. Using an out of town company**

Working with a company that has flown in to town just for your event can be risky and expensive. By working with a local vendor (like Atlanta Challenge) you know you have someone who can adapt to last minute changes quickly, efficiently and economically.

## **8. Not including hands-on learning**

“The brain can only absorb what the butt can endure.” Most groups dread sitting through another meeting. A quality team building event should have a good mixture of content and interactive projects and conversations to help the team understand and apply the material and ideas.