

Tips for Innovative Meetings/ Events (T.I.M.E.)

Topic: Sharing Your Toys

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WELCOME

Hello and welcome to T.I.M.E. If you are a new subscriber to T.I.M.E., this is the final issue of the year. An index of our past issues is included in the last section.

Best wishes for joyous Holidays and a Happy New Year. Now that I have finished writing this issue on toys, play, creativity, sharing and brainstorming, I am off to finish buying toys for the children on my list.

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For your ease, sections are numbered and separated with “___’s”; Scroll down or use Ctrl +f to locate a specific section.

1. TOYS

In anticipation of the holiday season, what child doesn't have a long list of toys they “have to have”?

In a child's world, “play” is really their work. Play is the way they discover the world, learn about relationships, and develop problem-solving skills.

But, “Play” is usually viewed as something you have to give up when you grow up. There is also a risk attached to suggesting an adult is playing. Work is respectable, play is not.

However, research from education, psychology, and anthropology suggests that play is a powerful tool that is useful throughout a person's life.

You can easily harness the power of play during a meeting. Use toys to create the following results:

- Increase creativity
- Diffuse tension or boredom
- Surprise meeting participants

Even absent-minded, subconscious playing with a toy, will open your mind to new possibilities, new relationships, new contexts.

Stress balls, Nerf balls or other toys that people can fidget with during a meeting, can relieve tension and boredom.

The surprise element of toys will create a more memorable event and will catch people off guard.

2. S-H-A-R-I-N-G

Can you still hear your parents' voice reminding you to share? Sharing, as a child, was a good thing.

And in our personal lives, sharing is also a requisite for successful relationships.

But relationships in business are another story. In this world:

- Knowledge is Power
- Information is Power
- Winning Counts

Sharing is not an attribute historically rewarded in large, formal organizations especially the for-profit corporate world.

However, the climate has shifted with customer teams, supply-chain management, and attempts to get people working together.

The next time you are confronted with a need for a Teambuilding program, don't only think about competitive team programs.

Think about "Sharing". We offer a simulation based upon a race across the Centaurus A Galaxy that causes teams to rethink their definition of a "team". The surprise twist on collaboration and thinking outside the box is sure to get your team all pulling in the same direction.

"The Journey Home" is perfect for

- Different teams across an organization
- Departments that interact across organizational lines

- Newly merged companies
- New teams
- Management retreats
- Customer teams
- Strategic alliances

Here's what participants have said about "The Journey Home":

"Strengthened by view of teamwork and collaboration. Keep doing what you're doing – a great program!"

"Definitely helped me to realize that you need to have the goal in sight...As well as knowing that successful people share their success."

For more information on "The Journey Home" visit <http://www.ontrackusa.com/>.

3. PLAYFUL QUOTES

You can learn more about a person in an hour of play than a lifetime of conversation. – Plato

There is a direct link between play and problem-solving. – Maria T. Allison, Ph D. in The Psychology of Play

I'll ask what people were like as kids, and they'll basically tell me everything I want to know about them ... their energy level, how playful they are, how they get along with people. – Geraldine Laybourne, CEO, Nickelodeon

4. OPPOSITES ATTRACT

What's the opposite of "play"?

Is it "work"?

No, play and work are not opposites and you can incorporate "Play" into your business life.

Child's play is all about experiencing – feeling, seeing, hearing, smelling and tasting (who didn't eat dirt as a child?) the world around them.

Play means getting people involved in your world – the world of a presentation, the world of a meeting, the world of your sales pitch.

Ponder how much more effective a sales presentation, a team meeting, a product launch, a sales conference, an association meeting would be with involved participants.

When you are selling your idea, vision, product or service, it will come alive if your audience can see, touch, taste, feel or somehow interact with you. (You are trying to create a micro-world, just like the sandbox of days gone by.)

Recently, I worked with an associate on a sales presentation. She was interested in making it more experiential, more playful. But she was concerned about looking silly. We incorporated a theme, a few props, and a way to entice and surprise and, importantly, involve the audience. The presentation was a huge success.

How did she manage to walk the line between silly and success? My advice to her was that as long as there was “meat” to the presentation – a real, targeted reason for the meeting, with her presentation specifically addressing that reason, then the “playful” aspects would augment not detract from the meeting.

Play does not mean silly nonsense in the adult business world. It can be an effective way of differentiation, it can be clever, it can be fun but it must have a true purpose, a message.

My message: Take the value of play seriously and have fun!

5. FREEBIES

Want a new creative solution??

Brainstorming is one way to create breakthroughs in thinking.

But brainstorming as a technique requires creativity.

Effective brainstorming follows a few important rules. Email us for a list of brainstorming rules and ideas. Send an email to stinnish@ameritech.net with the word “BRAINSTORMING” in the subject line.

6. HOW TO STAY ON TRACK?

We would like to help. We are the distributor of On Track’s high-impact conference and training simulations.

Our programs and workshops address such issues as sales skills, teambuilding, communication, leadership, and value alignment. We offer many already developed workshops, simulations (3-4 hours in length) and can customize programs to meet your specific needs.

If you would like to learn how we can help you meet your business objectives, our clients, and our programs, please contact Sue Tinnish, 1415 N. Salem Blvd, Arlington Heights, Illinois 60004, 847.394.9857, email stinnish@ameritech.net or visit the On Track website at www.ontrackusa.com.

7. FUTURE T.I.M.E.

We welcome any comments or suggestions about the newsletter or topics you would like to read about. Our January 2001 issue will discuss the topic of sales.

Please forward this newsletter to your associates and colleagues! Your recommendations are key to our success. Or anyone can subscribe by sending an email to stinnish@ameritech.net.

Past issues of T.I.M.E. can be requested by emailing us. Here is an index of topics and “freebies” offered in the past:

May: Teambuilding and (freebie) New York Times reprint and summary on why teambuilding programs miss the mark.

June: Green Meetings and (freebie) list of books that have 20-30 minute exercises for meetings and events.

July: American (Values) and (freebie) Meeting Analysis, a 1-page document that will outline the scope and needs analysis for your next meeting.

August: Minimum/Minimal Meetings and (freebie) Web Winners (web resources to make you and your meetings more productive).

October: Evaluations and (freebie) sample evaluation questions.

November: Politics and (freebie) on-line experiences

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