

INTRODUCTION

Each year I get many calls from organizations across the country asking for help in establishing teams. I refer them to many excellent sources including videos, books, and audiotapes. It is not long before they call back saying, “The sources are great but we have a few problems. First of all we don’t have time to read all the books. Second, we don’t really know how to transfer the information to real life.” So, I find myself packing my suitcase and traveling thousands of miles to offer assistance.

As I reflect on my journeys to these organizations, I find that most of them cannot afford the number of consulting days that it takes to institute quality team building. Their main problem is not in understanding what they read but in how to process the information. I can’t tell you how many times someone says to me, “Carol, if we just had something that would be fun to use and help us process role clarification, how to select a leader, how to celebrate our successes, or any of the other topics you have mentioned we could do it on our own.”

I pondered the problem and decided that maybe an easy-to-use recipe book on the essential areas of teaming would be the answer. That’s how *100 Ways to Build Teams* was born. I would like to make two points clear: This is not a book on the theories of teaming. There are many excellent books that cover this adequately. I have listed them for you in the bibliography. This book does not cover all aspects of teaming; it covers the essential components of teaming. If these components are not included in team development the team will not function.

I feel compelled to mention that two important areas not included in this book are problem solving and conflict management. My rationale for leaving them out is that an attempt to cover them in a chapter would be

an injustice. However, in the chapters on Code of Conduct and Managing Meetings I have activities that include a way to learn about these two areas if the team is willing to invest the time. As an experienced team player let me say that it is worth the price you pay in time.

WHO SHOULD USE THIS BOOK?

One of the nice things about this book is that it can be used by anyone who works with people.

- Teachers can use it in cooperative learning.
- Principals can use it for faculty meetings.
- Students can use it for clubs and organizations.
- Superintendents can use it for school boards and other meetings.
- Businesses can use it for meetings.
- Professional organizations can use it for meetings.
- Any type of work team can use it to establish teams.

All you need to do is pick up this book and let it work for you.

WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO USE THIS BOOK?

I would like to invite you to walk through the different sections with me so that you will become familiar with the book.

INTRODUCTION

Each chapter is preceded by a short introduction that explains why the chapter is important. Sometimes I have included stories or examples from my own or others' personal experiences that enhance the meaning of the topic. Feel free to use these stories in your own team training. At times there is additional information that might help you if someone asks you a question or wants to know more about the topic.

QUOTATIONS

Each section has a quotation that captures the essence of the chapter. I have found that quotations have a way of awakening the brain. People love them, and often the quotation is so powerful that you can hear people sigh. It's almost as if they are saying, "Ah, yes, now I understand." My suggestion is that you use the quotation as your opening line to the study of the topic.

BACKGROUND

Each section has a true story that makes important points about the topic. If you use humor and stories, you make important points and hit on touchy issues more easily. You might want to use humor and stories to introduce the topic or later when you feel a story would be powerful.

INTRODUCTION

One of my stories may spark a memory of something that happened to you that you could share. The key point here is that from the beginning of time stories have been used to convey powerful messages. Use them!

DID YOU KNOW

This section is a list of some important points that the team needs to know. All points come from resources I have collected over the years. I wish they were all original but they are not. They are a collection from the best minds across the world on teaming.

It is from this section that you can develop a mini lecture. If you would like to develop a longer lecture I suggest that you look under the DID YOU KNOW sections for all three levels of the topic. For example, each chapter has three levels: *Simple Things to Do*, *Things That Take Effort*, and *For the Committed*. Each level has more facts. You can take all three levels and put together an extensive lecture.

SIMPLE THINGS TO DO

Each topic begins with activities that are simple. This level is designed for teams who are in the “forming” stage. This stage is characterized by excitement, optimism, pride, suspicion, fear, and anxiety. During this stage there is not a high level of trust. Team members don’t do business any differently than before. *Simple Things to Do* will get a team started. If you do not have a lot of time this is the section for you.

THINGS THAT TAKE EFFORT

This level is designed to help team members move through the “storming” stage which is characterized by arguing among members, defensiveness and competition, establishing unrealistic goals, and concern about excessive work. During this stage members realize something is not right. They aren’t really collaborating and functioning as a team. They are beginning to realize that teaming takes effort. This level is for teams who have some time to spend learning about teaming.

FOR THE COMMITTED

This level is designed to help team members move to the “norming” and “performing” stages. In the norming stage the team has realized that teaming as a way of doing business takes a lot of work. They accept teaming as a way to do things and believe that everything is going to work out. They attempt to gain harmony, they are friendlier, they confide in each other, they share problems, and they have a sense of team cohesion, common spirit, and goals. They are ready to establish and maintain norms. With commitment and hard work they will move to the

performing stage which is characterized by a better understanding of group processes, better understanding of others' strengths and weaknesses, a high level of trust, and satisfaction at the team's progress. They work through problems and have formed a close attachment to the team.

It is up to your team to decide where they want to begin. My suggestion is to look through the activities on all the levels and select the ones that best suit your team's needs. It could be that you are on one level for one topic and another level for another topic. The beauty of this book is that you can mix and match to suit your needs.

MATERIALS YOU WILL NEED

After each activity the materials you will need are listed. I have seen many an activity fail because the team did not have the materials. Resources are sometimes limited, so I have tried to suggest materials that organizations already have. Most of the activities can be done using only chart paper, magic markers, and masking tape. Please feel free to add any materials you think will make the activity better. There will always be a sample in the directions or an illustration of the handout.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The bibliography is not extensive but the sources listed are excellent. You can get them in most book stores.

That completes our tour of the book. I hope you found it helpful. Do not limit your potential by using the book only as I have suggested. It is my hope that you will find *100 Ways to Build Teams* user-friendly and that it will make your journey into teaming fun, exciting, and successful. Have fun! Teaming is the right thing to do.