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# **A new body of knowledge for more effective team building**

What do we mean by team building? What are you trying to achieve? Typically, you're looking to align around a shared vision, reduce conflict, bring the team closer together, improve communication and knowledge of individual strengths and weaknesses and increase morale. You may even have to work with the group's - or members of the group's - resistance to change.

### Using the body to build teams

While there are a multitude of approaches to building teams, Embodied Management Training offers real benefits, not least because the body is usually the area that remains unaddressed by most people who commission training. Working with the body - eg breath, movement and posture - gets great results in team building as it is a fundamental part of being human and a big part of how people coordinate.

When doing Embodied Management Training I tend to utilize what I call a 'tapas' approach. What I mean is that there are lots of different training activities available, so myself and the group choose the ones that fit best fit the challenges and specific aims of the session. We also like to explore an issue from several angles to get the best leverage. This is aligned with the integral model proposed by people like Ken Wilber and I find it works through balance, flexibility and focus.

### My top tips for team building

Here are some body-focused team building exercises you can try with your people:

Learn some simple non-athletic coordination practices Encourage an office culture where touch is acceptable - not excessively touchy-feely; simply shaking hands on arrival or departure for example Build trust and relationships through phone and face-to-face contact, rather than just disembodied methods such as e-mail Encourage smileys where you have to e-mail :-) You'll convey tone and emotion to improve work relationships Arrange outside activities that require physical proximity and interaction - such as drinks on a Friday after work, or sporting activities with the emphasis on fun. Avoid promoting competition between teams or individuals, though Spare 30 minutes to lunch as a team. Food is the oldest team building! Have one-to-one meetings while walking - it stimulates ideas and helps fall, literally, in step with others For the adventurous - organize a short daily group stretch, yoga or tai chi session

Remember that people are more highly motivated when they're [Provigil online No prescription](#) involved in planning their activities, so discuss the alternatives with the group - and do the same thing later on, when participants' feedback can be invaluable.

### Office-based training

There's a tradition of taking teams away to a retreat or activity center for training. While this can be extremely effective at the time of training, things can fall apart when the team returns to its workplace. The remote training has failed to tackle the challenges that exist at work, and is less efficient in terms of time and money due to travel - a clear argument for the newer office-based training approach.

Moreover, if the location for team training is in the workplace, everyone benefits from being able to train often, rather than maybe just once or twice a year. Incorporate team building exercises into your monthly schedule, and see the benefits build for your teams.

Mark Walsh is the founder of Integration Training, which is the UK's leader in [Embodied Management Training](#), a powerful body-based methodology that can be applied to [team building](#) and many other challenges faced by organizations today.

You can also find this article published on [A new body of knowledge for more effective team building](#), and on the tag pages [Effective Team Building](#).