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Eight team exercises: facilitator cards

One card per exercise: what it is for, how to run it, the debrief and what the leader does.

Snowball fight

Why and what: Hear what people really think, anonymously. 20–45 min. Identical paper, same pens.

Run it: 3–4 questions on a flipchart; one anonymous answer per scrap; screw up; 30-second fight; everyone reads out the same number, one at a time.

Debrief: What surprised you? How do you feel about what was shared? One thing each of us can do? How can I help?

Leader: Speak last. Never guess authors. Summarise the feelings as well as the facts; commit to your own actions and a date.

Personal shield

Why and what: Get to know a new team beyond job titles. 30–35 min. Flipchart sheet each.

Run it: Shield sections: something you don't know about me; my hopes for the team; me at my best / worst; what I want today; my biggest challenge; claim to fame; 3–4 values; motto. Pin up, walk round, ask questions.

Debrief: What surprised you? What do we share? Where could differences cause friction, or help?

Leader: Go first and be candid: your shield sets the depth.

Before any of them

- Say why you are running the exercise and what will happen to what people say.
- Take part yourself, and go first where it helps.
- Speak last in the debrief, and summarise feelings as well as facts.
- End with your own commitments and a date to come back.

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Market stalls

Why and what: Land several messages with a big group. ~15 min per stall. Whistle, timekeeper.

Run it: Groups of 6–10 rotate. 10 min pitch, no slides, no interruptions; 5 min questions; move on the whistle. Groups then discuss what they heard.

Debrief: Which messages landed? What is still open? How do people feel?

Leader: Keep exact time. Log every question; publish answers within a week.

How do I react to change?

Why and what: Show that people see change differently. 15–20 min. Four signs.

Run it: "Change to me is most like…" a new pair of shoes / a thunderstorm / a roller coaster / a chocolate pudding. Stand by one; say why; groups report back.

Debrief: What does this tell us? What is the risk if I see it differently from you? How can we support each other?

Leader: Say where you stand. The thunderstorm corner is information, not a problem.

Aliens

Why and what: Surface the real culture. 30–45 min. Flipcharts.

Run it: Aliens are coming to work here. In groups, list the top five tips to survive and succeed. Share.

Debrief: What does the list say about our real values? Which tips are we proud of? Which would we like to stop being true?

Leader: Don't defend. Record tips word for word; the ones that sting often matter most.

World Café

Why and what: Involve up to ~200 people in shaping a view (format by Juanita Brown & David Isaacs). 90 min to half a day. Tables of 4–6, a host each.

Run it: One question per 20–30 min round; all but the host move tables; host recaps, new group builds. Culture at its best / worst; take forward / leave behind / introduce; our values. Hosts report themes.

Debrief: Which themes recurred? What surprised you? What is missing?

Leader: Say up front what happens to the output, then do it.

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Back to back

Why and what: Let people feel what change does before discussing the real one. 10–15 min. Nothing needed.

Run it: Pairs back to back: change 1 thing (10 sec), turn and spot it; then 2 things (15 sec); then 10 things (45 sec).

Debrief: Which round was hardest? Did people add or remove first? What would have made ten easier? What does that suggest for our change?

Leader: Describe what you saw: removals first, protests at ten. Anyone may sit out.

Scaling

Why and what: Review how well we do something, without blame. 30–45 min. A 0–10 line.

Run it: Agree what 10 looks like; agree today's score; name seven strengths behind it; name five signs of being one point higher; pick the most valuable; owner and date.

Debrief: What is already working? Did we score it the same? What is the one action?

Leader: Start from what works. Aim for one point. Re-score in a month.

My plan

Which exercise, for which meeting, what question, what I will do with the output

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Does any of this sound familiar?

The organisations we work with rarely come to us asking for a survey. They come with something that is costing them money, time or people. These are the ones we hear most often.

MAKING MONEY

"We hire well on paper and still get it wrong in the role."
Personality, leadership and competency assessment matched to the job, so interviews test what matters and offers go to people who will perform. (FindingPotential)

"Our best people leave and we only find out why afterwards."
Exit intelligence in the leaver's final weeks: what was avoidable, who would come back, and what to change first. (LastOpinion)

"Leaders get feedback once a year and nothing changes."
Forward-looking 360 feedback that lands as development rather than judgement, with the actions built in. (FeedForward)

SAVING MONEY

"Too many new starters are gone inside a year."
New-starter surveys at the points the first-year leak opens, so you act at three months instead of reading about it at exit. (OnBoarder)

"References take weeks and tell us nothing."
Automated referencing with questions that predict, most returned within 48 hours. (ReferenceExpert)

"We run an engagement survey and the results sit in a drawer."
Engagement reporting down to team level in plain English, with the three moves each team's own people chose. (WinningFormula)

SOLVING PROBLEMS

"The board wants evidence on culture, conduct and speaking up."
A confidential always-on channel and a harassment-prevention audit that give you the evidence before a regulator asks for it. (SafeSpace)

"We publish an inclusion statement and cannot show whether it is true."
Inclusion measured at every stage from hire to exit, so you can see where the experience differs and act on it. (ED&I)

"We have the data and cannot turn it into a decision."
Twenty years of UK benchmark data and analysts who turn results into a board paper, not a dashboard. (Workforce intelligence)

Who we are

great{with}talent is a UK workforce-intelligence consultancy, founded in 2003. We help organisations hire better, keep people longer, improve leadership, strengthen inclusion and reduce workplace risk, with a connected set of tools that turn employee data into clear, fast action across the whole employee lifecycle. Independent, GDPR-compliant and Cyber Essentials certified, hosted on Microsoft Azure.

Not on the list? It will not always be. If you are working on something you think we might be able to help with, drop us a note describing what you are trying to do and we will come back to you.

On the list or not, let's talk.

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