



## Team building tricks

By Jennifer Kahnweiler, Tuesday, May 2, 2006, 08:39 AM  
The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

I recently heard a wind quartet play and as I listened to the melodious sounds fill the concert hall, I was especially struck by the synergy that this group of four talented musicians demonstrated.

Their communication seemed to be effortless and I could feel their joy and hear their connection in the pieces they played. Can we make beautiful music at work?

Many experts have studied what makes some teams successful and others fail. Focusing on shared goals and respect for the contributions of each member are key, as are a sense of synergy, or 'shared energy.'

Team building activities can be one way to strengthen a team.

Someone recently told me about miniature golf outings that her manager had arranged. "As a small department we really got to mingle and get to know each other as people, not coworkers at these team-building events. Some of us suddenly found out that we have more in common and we also had good times to reminisce about."

I am all for these activities. Depending on your budget and time, you can initiate and plan lunch at a local restaurant or even a picnic at Piedmont Park.

I know one team that took over a pottery studio to throw pots (talk about getting out your frustration on a piece of clay rather than on your team mate!)

Another family friendly company in town encouraged employees to arrange outings together and an afternoon at the spa for the women was a common choice.

Other bigger ticket but memorable days can be spent cooking, sailing or even wine making at Chateau Elan. Check out [www.businessballs.com](http://www.businessballs.com) for lots of free ideas about team building activities.

---

Jennifer Kahnweiler's  
ABOUT  
YOU

Caveat: Keep your expectations realistic. Don't expect everybody to be singing Kumbaya over night.

What has been your experience with team outings? Do you think the spirit de corps we experience transfers to the workplace? How about some creative ideas for the rest of us?