

Should you take your staff on a corporate away day or is it a waste of time? We look at the merits and review four of the best

- Research finds that happy employees are up to 20 per cent more productive
- There is value in offering thrilling and novel experiences to help a team bond
- You must tailor away day activity to what you set out to achieve

BY [RON JOBSON FOR THIS IS MONEY](#)

SHED: 08:10, 19 October 2018 | **UPDATED:** 14:35, 19 October 2018

17
shares

17
[View comments](#)

Is it worth shelling out on a corporate away day for your staff or is it just a waste of time and money for your business?

According to research carried out by the University of Warwick, happy employees are up to 20 per cent more productive than other workers.

Since workplace happiness is intrinsically linked to staff morale, it seems logical to implement initiatives to ensure that your employees feel positive as soon as they cross the office threshold.

Small business 

Fancy being your own boss? Read the success stories and find out how 

All Articles Share prices

- [▶ Portfolio](#) [▶ Newsletter](#) [▶ Guides](#)
- [▶ Savings rates](#) [▶ Deals](#) [▶ Calculators](#)

SMALL BUSINESS SERVICES

<p>Bank accounts</p> 	<p>Savings account</p> 
<p>Business Loans</p> 	<p>Credit cards</p> 
<p>Business energy</p> 	<p>Money transfer</p> 

COMPARE MONEY TRANSFER DEALS

Individual

Business

Sending from:

UK (GBP) ▼


Sending to:

USA (USD) ▼

Amount (GBP)

Send ▼

10,000

Powered by 



Team away-days give work colleagues the chance to relax, be themselves, and find out more about the people they work with

While low-key activities like a game of pool or even a pub visit suffice for some companies, there is value in offering more thrilling and novel experiences to help a team bond.

'Team away-days give work colleagues the chance to relax, be themselves, and find out more about the people they work with,' says Peter Lawrence of business consultancy firm Human Capital Department.

'Football managers recognise that teams are made up of players each with different skills. and the team stands the best chance of success if everyone plays their part, ibutes and gives of their best.

'Team bonding sessions are an effective way of building a harmonious workplace and celebrating difference and diversity.'

SHARE THIS ARTICLE

17 shares

RELATED ARTICLES



Which is the best mobile card reader for your small...



'We eradicated our gender pay gap within a year!' Finance...



The art of hiring: Should your business employ candidates...



My wife and I have agreed to divorce but is she entitled to...

HOW THIS IS MONEY CAN HELP

The best small business current accounts with interest overdrafts and bonuses

Away day strategy

Organising a successful away day requires strategy. You must tailor the activity to what you set out to achieve - otherwise it could end up being an expensive but unproductive outing.

Do you seek to improve communication among staff? Consider activities where they are forced to work together towards a common goal.

Team-building activities aren't limited to the old stereotype of orienteering or even raft building. Escape rooms, treasure hunts and even talent contests are among the more modern offerings that encourage employees to work together.

Or maybe you want to reward your team for a job well done? The key here is not to do something you want to but to offer staff something they'll enjoy.

MORE SMALL BUSINESS DEALS

- Need funding? [Best business loans](#)
- Find a better business bank account
- Compare business energy tariffs
- Business credit cards
- Find a commercial mortgage deal
- Find a web hosting service
- Business savings accounts
- Business insurance

DON'T MISS

▶ [What to expect in the Budget - and is a Labour government the real big tax threat?](#)
The This is Money podcast

▶ SUNDAY NEWSPAPER SHARE TIPS

Osirium, Volution, Horizon Discovery, Electrocomponents and high street banks

▶ [The day I won £16,800... for just 80 seconds of work](#)
Champion jockey PJ McDonald on starting out as a stablehand and working long hours

▶ [Now you can switch to a cheaper energy supplier without lifting a finger](#)
We compare the six new auto-switching services

▶ [JEFF PRESTRIDGE](#)
Eye-catching Marcus by Goldman Sachs savings account has set cat among the bank and building society pigeons

▶ [Low cost?](#)
How budget airlines rake in billions from extras that can cost FIVE TIMES quoted price of a ticket

▶ [STOCK WATCH](#)
Big bank stocks 'scream cheap' ahead of results - should you take a look at Barclays and Lloyds?

▶ [Halt the hidden insurance tax raid'](#), top bosses warn
Chancellor as report reveals £126m knock-on

Away days can be a productive way to discuss team strategy, or build staff's understanding of the company strategy, mission, vision and values without the daily pressures of getting on with their jobs.

'They are a great way of getting ideas and encouraging the team to contribute, participate and engage,' Lawrence says.

'They may have a wider purpose or be part of a corporate social responsibility programme as activities could help raise money for a charity, or events might involve working within the community such as in schools or the local church.'

We've put the theory into practice by reviewing some of the most popular away day experiences. Here is what we made of them.

Cookery School at Little Portland Street

Cost: £110 per person plus VAT for silver package, £140 for gold package

Activity: Cookery School at Little Portland Street, based in Oxford Circus, London, offers a host of culinary courses which are tailored for specific goals like team building and leadership training.

We opted for the gold package which is a four-hour experience spent preparing a -course meal.

Aim: The experience was designed with team work in mind. To this end our group of six was divided into pairs - with each pair responsible for an element of every course.

The result: Did it succeed in building a team? I think so. By working together, we produced three delicious course that none of us would have been confident to prepare in our respective kitchens.

For example, we learned how to make ravioli and an accompanying sauce from scratch.

The highlight of the experience was talking about it with colleagues around a large table in a restaurant-style setting as we tucked into the meal we had prepared.

TeamSport Go Karting

Cost: From £30 per person

Activity: The mini grand prix session starts from £30 per person and offers exclusive use of the track during the sessions.

These consist of a combined practice and qualifying session, followed by a short break before lining up on the grid ahead of the big race.

Sign up for our weekly newsletter...

Enter your email [Sign up](#)

▶ [hit to the NHS](#)

▶ [Putting up with a one-hour commute into London can save you 60% on buying a property](#)

▶ [Watchdog probes rip-off pet cover...](#)
no wonder after couple were charged £7,140 for two dogs

▶ [How to give your home the Instagram factor](#)
An Airbnb expert's 10 interior design tricks to make your property stand out.

▶ [A surge in 0% beer popularity means breweries such as Adnams are jumping aboard](#)
Alcohol-free Ghost Ship?

▶ [Warning as retirement pots suffer because pension funds are being badly invested](#)

▶ [Can stock market darlings Boo-hoo and Asos continue to defy the High Street gloom, or is B&M or even Debenhams the bargain bet?](#)
How the top retail shares stack up.



▶ [Aberdeen house prices slump 17% in four years - but as oil bounces back, is this really the best buyer's market in the Scottish city for 20 years?](#)

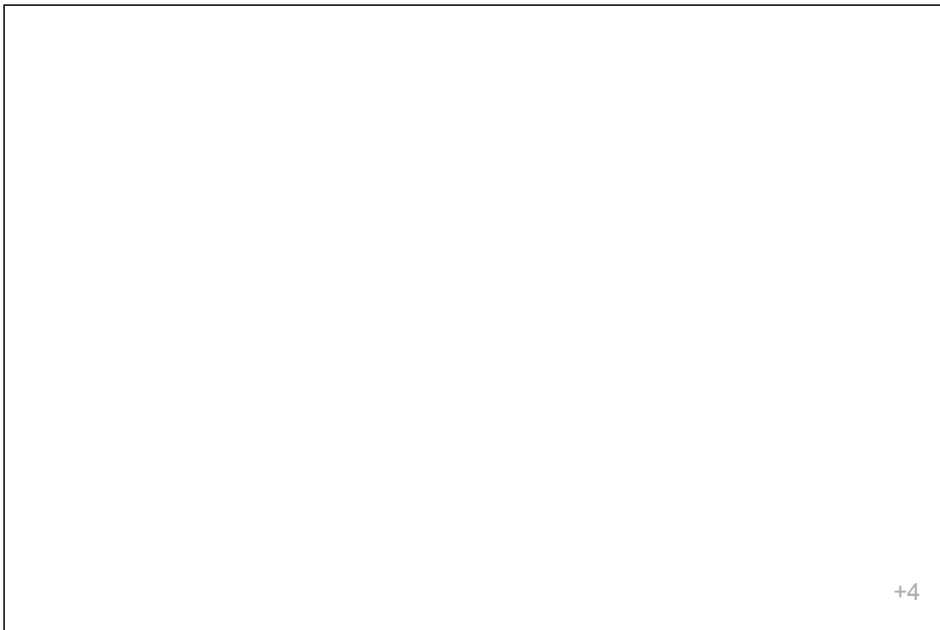
▶ [Bumper year for income investors with the FTSE 100 set for 10% dividend growth...](#)
- but just 10 stocks pay out more than half the £90bn total.

▶ [Britain's most prolific speed cameras revealed...](#)
- and there's one region in particular where drivers need to slow down.

Cookery School at Little Portland Street offers a host of culinary courses which are tailored for specific goals

QUICK WAYS TO SAVE MONEY

<p>Credit cards</p> 	<p>Cheaper insurance</p> 
<p>Savings accounts</p>	<p>Best mortgages</p>



A lot of the fun of go-karting comes off the track in discussions on what happened in the race

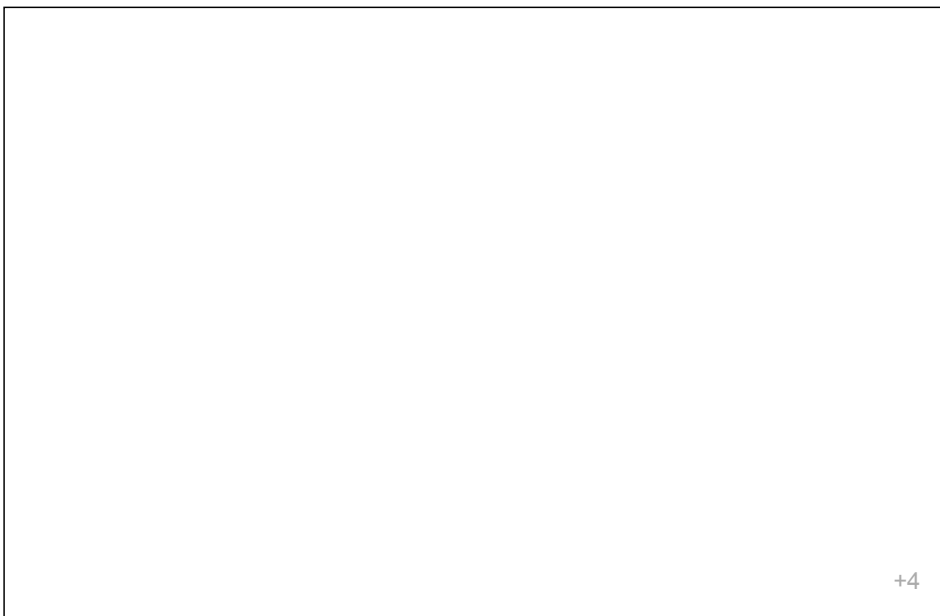
Aim: Team work is relegated to the sidelines here. Go-karting is one of those activities that will bring out your competitive streak. However, team bonding is the name of the game here.

Result: As well as the exhilaration of racing around in an electric kart that can reach speeds of 40mph, a lot of the fun comes off the track in discussions about what happened on it.

My personal highlight was overtaking a colleague only to crash into the back of another's kart shortly after. I spun out and heard a roar of laughter through the buzz gaged electric engines as the former retook his position.

It wasn't my finest hour but certainly helped with team bonding as we had a good laugh about it after the race.

Whistle Punks - axe-throwing



Whistle Punk's axe throwing experience costs £22 per person during off peak hours

Cost: From £22 per person

Activity: This is one of the more oddball activities on the list but also one of the cheapest - costing £22 per person during off-peak hours. Put simply, the experience is akin to playing darts, but with axes.



Cut your energy bills



Current accounts



Cheapest loans



£12.50 share dealing



DON'T MISS

▶ [My son has asked to borrow £15k to fund his business - what safeguards could I use to make sure I get my investment back?](#)

▶ [The art of hiring:](#)
Should your business employ candidates with the right skills or those with the right mindset?

▶ [High Street suffering from vicious circle as bank closures put off shoppers and hit local shops](#)

▶ [The very modern family businesses... run by the children](#)
Meet the bright young things who have recruited mum, grandad and even a little sister to sell fashion online

▶ [Can coffee help homeless people off the streets?](#)
Change Please, backed by Will.i.am, is taking on Costa and Starbucks after winning global award

▶ [Should your business bid for government contracts?](#)
The number of public sector tenders given to small firms is soaring - here's how to win one

▶ [Start-up Doctor](#)
How do I raise money and find investors to back my business idea?

▶ [Does your business qualify for the new £8million Government grant to bolster SME productivity?](#)
Here is what you need to know

▶ [My wife and I have agreed to divorce but is she entitled to some of my small business?](#)

The one and a half hour session starts kicks off with a training session where participants get a few practice throws and are coached by on site staff on how to improve their technique. You then have a tournament with up to 12 people.

Unlike darts however, alcohol is prohibited during axe throwing - for obvious safety reasons.

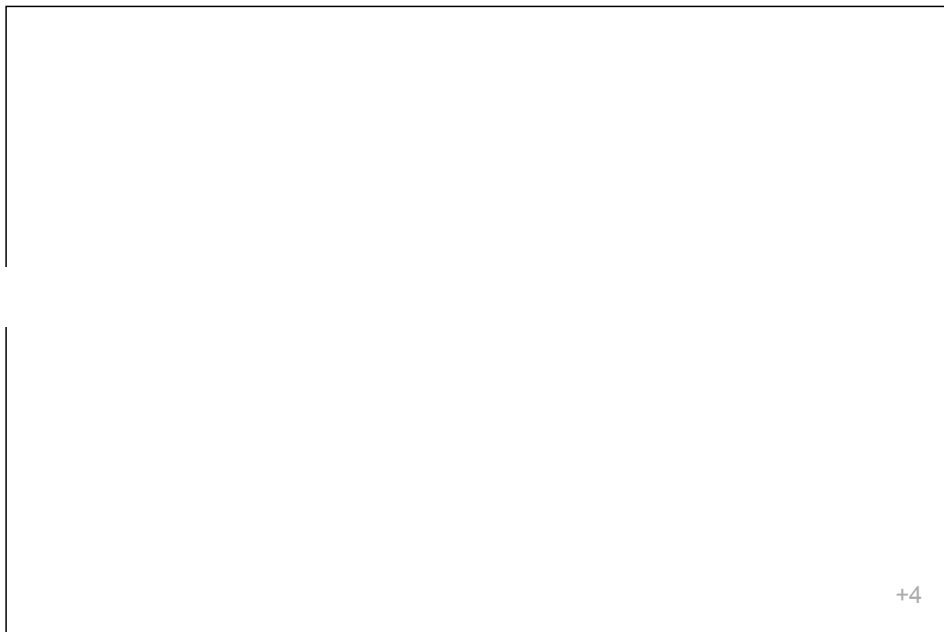
Aim: Similar to go-karting, team work is not the name of the game. The lure here is the enjoyment and banter you experience when competing against colleagues.

Result: Overall, the experience was good but the novelty of throwing an axe quickly wore off after successfully hitting the target a handful of times.

Did it help with team bonding? It did - especially once the tournament kicked off. Successful throws were met with cheers and high fives from colleagues. Unsuccessful throws were met with light-hearted banter which broke the ice for those who didn't know each other well.

Overall, while the novelty of the experience wore off before the hour and a half session was up, it is a good option for employers who wish to treat their staff without breaking the bank.

Tough Mudder



+4

Tough Mudder Full event entrants are required to negotiate their way through a plethora of obstacles between a 10 and 12-mile course

Cost: Varies. Earlybird tickets from £49

Activity: Tough Mudder is a 10-or-so-mile obstacle course which is guaranteed to leave participants exhausted, exhilarated and covered in mud.

If that sound too gruelling, the Tough Mudder Half - a five mile course - might be more palatable.

The experience is not exclusive to die-hard fitness fanatics and it attracts people of all shapes and sizes.

These events usually take place on limited dates every year so you'd need to book in advance.

Aim: Unlike similar events, Tough Mudder is not timed and there are no winners. The ethos is teamwork and camaraderie will see you through to the finish line.

Result: The experience certainty ticks the team bonding box. The whole idea is that rank and role are left outside the course which is designed in a way that makes it

▶ Plumbers and handymen, Amazon needs you

New service for customers to find someone to fit a new washing machine or build the bed they bought

SMALL BUSINESS TOP FIVE

Running a small business? Don't forget your own finances - five top tips to make more of your money

'Now I'll be able to take on three more staff': Small business thumbs up to £2,000 tax break

VINCE CABLE: 'It's time to help small and medium firms and act on rising London house prices'

Lloyds chief Antonio Horta-Osorio in £5bn pledge over small business lending

Thinking about starting up a business? Top tips to make it a success

ADVERTISEMENT

BUSINESS GUIDES DON'T MISS

▶ VAT rules are set to change post Brexit: here are the key points SMEs need to know so they aren't caught out

▶ Could you make thousands a year from a fancy shed? Unusual places to stay are all the rage

▶ SIR JAMES DYSON How to come up with a great invention and then protect your idea from copycat cheats

▶ How to write a business plan to tempt lenders or investors A practical step-by-step business plan formula

▶ Crowdfunding, venture capital, angel investing? How to find the best way to raise money for your business idea

▶ How to fix your own finances: Five top pension planning tips for the self-employed Tips on how business owners should build their fund

nigh on impossible to negotiate without a helping hand - be that an actual push to help you on your way or words of encouragement.

Witnessing your boss fall face first into muddy water in failed attempt navigate through an obstacle is a) priceless, and b) makes for a good story to share around the office.

However, it's important to highlight that there is a real risk of injury which could put your workers out of action for an extended period. Such was the fate for one of my colleagues who broke her arm - thankfully she's fine now!

▶ **Six tricks to get your business noticed**

Charlie Mullins' Pimlico Plumbers has a reputation for being head-and-shoulders above the rest when it comes to marketing

▶ **Five of the best current accounts for start-ups with interest, overdrafts and perks**

Which banks are offering the lowest fees, in-credit interest and best free perks?

▶ **Has your small business been rejected for big bank funding? The new Bank Referral Scheme might be able to help**

▶ **How to protect your small business idea**

You've had a great business idea. How do you go about protecting it? Find out in our guide.

ADVERTISEMENT

Are employers liable if an employee is injured during an away day?

Employers beware. You can be liable for accidents that occur outside work premises according to Nicholas Hagi-Savva, a personal injury lawyer at Slater and Gordon.

He said: 'Applied to an office away day scenario, the employer would have to make its own health and safety assessments of the activities to ensure that it is keeping its employees safe, especially if it is a core part of the work calendar and more of a requirement – as opposed to opportunity – to attend.

'Liability is more likely to fall on the organisers of events like these as it is more straightforward to prove negligence, for example, if someone injured themselves on a poorly constructed obstacle.

'However, it could also be argued that the employer is responsible and at least jointly liable if they have not gone far enough to protect their staff.'



SMALL BUSINESS ESSENTIALS



Business loans

Compare best-buy deals

Bank accounts

Best business banking

Business cover

Find the insurance you need

Working abroad

Save £250 with a currency card

Get online

Build and design your own website

Pocket some **savings** with these **Debenhams offers**

Get more value for money with **John Lewis discounts**

Enjoy **extra savings** on fashion, beauty and more from **Very**

Share or comment on this article: **Should you take your staff on a corporate away day? We review four of the best**

17 shares

Sponsored Links by Taboola

YOU MIGHT LIKE

The Real Reason Meghan Is Required To Stand Behind Kate

Trendchaser

Get Life Insurance That Pays Your Premiums Back If You Don't Claim

Refundable

Look Up Your Name To See If You Are Owed A PPI Payout

PPI Wise