



Building Healthy Groups and Teams

List of Group Activities

Notes about this resource: This is a list of suggested activities to help reach your goals and build healthy groups and teams. Many of these proposed activities can complement more than one of the identified group goals. This list of activities is not exhaustive. A (*) indicates the opportunity for the activity or action to occur in a virtual space.

Important to know - all group activities and behaviors, given the circumstances, could become hazing. If the activity is used to exert control over another person or humiliate, degrade, abuse, or endanger them, there are power dynamics at play and harm (psychological, emotional, physical) being inflicted. That is hazing.

INSTILLING A STRONG SENSE OF BELONGING

- *Host casual and optional events and meetups for individuals to have a space to interact with one another.
- Identify common times and spaces for members to get together, such as identifying consistent areas to eat lunch together or a common area in a campus building to study together.
 - e.g. a specific set of tables in the student union as a regular hangout, lunch, or study spot open to all members of the group (but not required).
- *Develop and be intentional about using a communication thread to share information, funny or motivating content, and invitations to events/games/gatherings, and general informal group chatter.
 - e.g., a Slack channel, GroupMe, Facebook group, etc.
- *Participate in an ongoing community-wide game, challenge series, or gathering with your group.
 - e.g. photo challenges, movie nights, virtual survivor, fantasy sports leagues, etc.
- *Provide opportunities and space for group members to gather and share personal and emotional updates or experiences to build trust and relationships, and vent with members.
 - e.g., candle pass ceremonies, talking “stick” sessions, etc.
- Hold a yearly retreat or orientation for the group that provides time and space for everyone to come together. Retreats could include group-specific safe team building opportunities, restoration, games, and activities. All groups retreats or orientations are different and should be tailored by group, membership type, and activity interest.
 - e.g., Outdoor retreats (camping, hiking, professional outdoor adventure activities, etc.), restorative retreats (yoga, meditation), relaxing retreats that encompass enjoying time with one another, group activities, reflection, group planning, etc.
- *Host virtual events using platforms that allow for group members to engage with one another throughout the event, in large and small groups and in pairs depending on the event type.
 - e.g., Movie streaming, cooking/baking class, game nights, gaming tournaments, brain teaser challenges, etc.

LEARNING AND BUILDING AN AWARENESS OF GROUP HISTORY

- *Hold education sessions to discuss and learn about the historical roots of the group and the ways in which it does or doesn't align with the current context; then decide if there is action to take as a group or individually based on what you learned.
- *Invite an older member, alumni, or content experts to talk about the group's early days, founding, special traditions, accomplishments, and prominent former members.
- Document memories and artifacts at group events to collect and showcase to future members later on.

UNDERSTANDING THE GROUP

- *Set a meeting each semester (twice a year) for members to get together and think critically about how they want the organization to move forward. This can be a time for members to voice concerns, share accomplishments, and problem solve any current situations. This could serve as a strategic planning session and then follow-up accountability/progress meeting; or it could be a more informal group check-in.
- Transparently share all rules, expectations, and guidelines for the group so that all members are aware and understand their role in the organization without any surprises. If needed, build out dialogue surrounding these expectations to ensure that members all have a thorough understanding.
- Introduce all leaders as soon as new members join the group so that they understand the roles and functions of the leaders in their organization.

BUILDING TRUST

- *Hold a workshop for personal development and reflection that provides time to explore personal strengths, passions, fears, goals, limiting beliefs that allow members to be vulnerable in a safe and productive way.
 - E.g., vision board making, goal setting techniques, etc.
- *Provide opportunities and space for group members to gather and share personal and emotional updates or experiences to build trust and relationships, and vent with members.
 - E.g., candle pass ceremonies, talking "stick" sessions, etc.
- Create additional leadership roles, committees, and teams within the larger group to spread responsibilities and increase appropriate delegation and collaboration

DEVELOPING PERSONALLY AND PROFESSIONALLY

- *Connect current members with alumni or local mentors to foster relationships regarding: career aspirations, similar interests, identities, etc.
- *Set up optional mock interviews within the group, local/institution career center, or with alumni/working professionals.
- *Create a list of all members organized by their area of study (major/minor) and group or pair members with similar areas to connect about coursework, studying for exams, upcoming course selection, internship opportunities, and career guidance.
- *Host a retreat for all members to attend and participate in leadership development activities. If able, hire an outside facilitator or reach out to campus departments to see what workshop facilitations might be available.
- *Create a Facebook or LinkedIn group of past and present members to ask career related questions and engage in networking opportunities. This can be a great way for members to ask questions before entering the workforce or for professionals to promote internship/job opportunities.
- *Hold a workshop for personal development and reflection that provides time to explore personal strengths, passions, fears, goals, limiting beliefs that allow members to be vulnerable in a safe and productive way.
 - E.g., vision board making, goal setting techniques, etc.
- *Develop a book or podcast club for interested members and alternate the types of books read or podcasts streamed and the ways they are chosen. Set up schedules and think through discussion questions and a meeting structure for the club discussion.
 - E.g., every quarter vote on a new book or podcast(s) as a group, switching between personal development topics, relevant social issues, and fun; commit to reading/listening by a certain date, meet as a group to discuss. Added fun could be had by incorporating a theme or food to the meeting.

PROMOTING A STRONG SENSE OF PURPOSE

- *Connect with other groups that share similar values to plan events. Coordinating a philanthropy or charity event or a community service project with another can be great collaboration for the communities and a great way for groups to get to know each other. There are endless options for projects, fundraisers, and ways to carry these out. (E.g., virtual raffle)
- As new members join the group, provide mentorship opportunities for older members and alumni to connect and share their experiences, wisdom, and leadership.

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