

Team building: Get to know your team

Try this exercise once per year as a team, or whenever a new member joins. Share as much or as little as you're comfortable with.

Exercise option A: Pair, share, and rotate. Everyone, including the manager, pair up and ask your partner one question from this list. After each person has answered at least one question, rotate to another partner and repeat. Continue rotating until each person talks to everyone else at least once. (If your team has an odd number, you may have a group of three.)

Exercise option B: Group share. As a group (or, if the team is too large, split into half or thirds), go around in a circle and, one-by-one, answer as many questions as appropriate. Determine beforehand whether the team wants to answer all or some of the questions or limit the exercise by time.

1. What's something about your background that others at work may not know about you?

For example, something about where you grew up, your family, culture, or beliefs.

2. What's important to you outside work?

For example, being active, community service, trying new restaurants, relaxing, or other hobbies?

3. Tell us about a prior job that had a big influence on who you are today.

What did you like or not like about it?

4. Tell us about one of your goals.

For example, a short-term goal related to your current role, a long-term career goal, or a personal goal.

5. What makes your job here most rewarding?

Tell us about what drives you at work.

6. What's one thing you want people to know about how you like to communicate?

For example, email vs. in-person or short bursts vs. long discussions.

7. What's one thing you want people to know about how you like to give and receive feedback?

For example, scheduled vs. in the moment or active dialog vs. sit back and listen.

8. How do you like to be recognized?

For example, in writing vs. in person, in public vs. in private? What do your preferences say about you?

9. Do you consider yourself introverted or extroverted?

What situations draw out your introverted/extroverted sides?

10. If you had only one year left to live, would you change anything about the way you live now? Why?