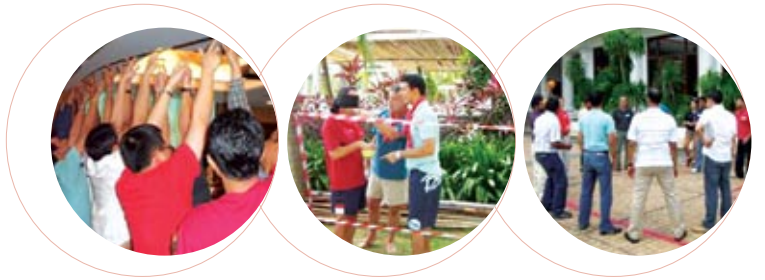


# TEAMBUILDING FOR TACTICAL ADVANTAGE



**W**hat can be done to bring an existing group of individuals to become a high performance team in the shortest possible time? For some, the solution to this dilemma can be found in the tactExchange teambuilding solutions offered by macsimize, which counts UBS, Credit Suisse, BMW Asia, Maersk and BASF among its clients.

Here we take a look at how the organisational development consultancy designed a solution for a major player in the Singapore banking and finance industry. The bank had needed to get the various heads of departments (HODs) to work together in harmony and support each other in marketing its services. There had been long-running conflicts among them, which sometimes lead to extreme cases where businesses were referred to other banks instead of directing them internally, reason being the individual HOD did not stand to gain financially when they do funnel the leads internally. There was a pressing need to for the bank to align the individual department's goals with the overall vision and mission.

### TACTEXCHANGE TEAMBUILDING SOLUTION

macsimize's teambuilding solution was a three-step one:

#### • Step 1: Pre-programme work

**Phase 1.** The project started with a confidential phone survey and face-to-face meetings with each HOD to gather his individual thoughts and areas that he wanted to see addressed in the organisation. The results were kept anonymous, and formed the basis of the customised teambuilding solutions that followed.

**Phase 2.** A tactExchange T8 On-line Survey which comprises eight simple questions was conducted to gather quantitative ratings of how each participant felt towards his other team members and how he thought his fellow colleagues felt about him.

#### • Step 2: During the programme

The programme duration was 1.5 days. The first day was designed to include low to medium intensity physical activities to accommodate the participants, whose mean age was 40 years.

Macsimize designed the programme to include a simple yet powerful experiential learning activity called "Magic Wand" to open up doors to better team communication and bonding. The mission of the team was to lower a magic wand to the ground together while preventing an "evil magician" from drawing the wand away from them. It might sound easy, the reality was that the team found their wand floating up instead of moving down! Typical behaviours that were exhibited at the workplace started to show: too many people were giving orders at the same time, people blaming one another for mistakes and there was a lack of communication from one end of the team to the other.

A debrief was conducted on the spot to draw out the participants' experiences and ultimately, guide them to share how they may transfer and apply their learning at the workplace.

The team members shared that they were rather surprised at how they could not work together to perform a simple task such as lowering a wand. They reflected on how those scenarios were regularly played out at the workplace and realised that the causes of those issues were untested assumptions of one another. They also realised that the group's success was tied to every individual's success.

After this opening activity, the participants became more open in communicating to one another during the rest of the day's programme, strategising as a team before jumping into accomplishing an activity.

The activities on the second day were focused on addressing work issues and setting action plans. Every participant walked away with a commitment card that listed out his respective department's action tasks. The HODs ultimately completed the programme knowing one another better and developing greater trust and bonding with fellow colleagues.

#### • Step 3: Post Programme

**Phase 1.** Telephone surveys and the same T8 On-line Survey were conducted to measure the HODs' pre- and post-programme ratings of their feelings about their other team members. The area of highest improvement was team motivation, which increased by 115%! The results were compiled in a T8 Report with macsimize facilitators' analysis and recommendations for action steps.

**Phase 2.** After 30 days, a follow-up session was conducted, and the good feelings and energy gained from the teambuilding session were recaptured. Participants recalled memorable experiences and shared on how things have changed at the workplace. Further insights on certain activities were shared and performance gaps highlighted for recommendation to the management.

At the end of the exercise, the general manager of the bank told macsimize, "I am really happy that this teambuilding programme has met our objective of helping the team open up to each other and align themselves to meet our bank's overall vision. We especially liked the tactExchange T8 Survey which helped give us a tangible measure of the programmes' overall effectiveness."

Certainly, macsimize's interventions helped the bank to identify the team's sense of purpose, maximise strengths and create a more productive team environment. Participants learnt how to develop internal partnerships and alliances. More importantly, successful teams know how to effectively take individual talents and harness them together to accomplish common goals. From the concluding remark of one of the participants – "We've developed cross-functional team-bonding, decreased stress levels, and came back to work with a bag of new ideas!" – it certainly showed that it was mission accomplished for this bank! 