

Client Case Study



Background

The Maritime Aquarium is a major New England attraction complete with an extensive array of displays featuring live animals, a six-story IMAX theater and a collection of vessels with research capabilities. It has been at the center of a major turnaround in South Norwalk Ct., a formerly dilapidated industrial area, which now bustles with a vibrant collection of shops, boutiques, coffee shops, night nightclubs, acclaimed restaurants and high-end apartments.

Emerging Challenges for the Aquarium

After all of its successes, the staff Aquarium faced new challenges. First, the office of President was vacant. The highly-respected and charismatic President who forged the Aquarium into a top regional destination and national center of technical expertise left for a larger organization.

Second, a major five-year federal railroad infrastructure project began next to the Aquarium. The project would disturb the physical habitats throughout the Aquarium and thus endangered the welfare of the animals. It would limit street access to the aquarium as well. Last, it required them to destroy and replace their IMAX theater! They had to address all of this and still remain a vibrant attraction!

Enter The TeamBuildingBand!

The COO, who was the acting president, felt that the extended leadership team needed something to help them bond and get even more energized in the midst of these challenges. They had not met as an extended team for quite some time. The extended team, consisting of the senior leaders and all of the next level of supervisors, gathered to find no agenda on the table. Instead they were greeted by the TeamBuildingBand! oing a quiet jam session just for them.

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What We Did

We introduced the participants to each instrument and the role it plays in creating the band's overall sound. As the band played we asked them to identify who was the leader. As they observed the band they realized that leadership shifted constantly as the song progressed, yet the sound flowed in a seamless fashion. How was that possible?

We explained concepts such as **Shared Leadership** where any member can be in charge of a song or a moment in a song, Using **"Your Big Ears"** a technique to help one follow and support others and **"You Have to Hear It Before You Can Hate It"** as an approach to encourage and nurture new ideas. The participants engaged in interactive exercises with the Team Building Band to experience these skills in action.

After a few more interactive exercises with the band, we presented the group with a task which was to create a song that described why they were successful as a team and how they were going to beat the challenges that lay ahead. Then they would perform their song with the band! They of course were not professional musicians, but if they applied the concepts we just covered they could accomplish the task!

In small groups the participants worked with a Team Building Band member to brainstorm the theme of the song, lyrics and the tune in less than 30 minutes! Each team performed its song with the band to the applause of the rest of the extended team.

The Result

Working with Team Building Band, the extended leadership team created a series of songs to describe why they were proud of their accomplishments and how they would enthusiastically tackle the challenges ahead as a total team.

In the process they forged new relationships across departments. They also found a renewed, common purpose. Finally, they outlined a blueprint for applying the Team Building Band's techniques related to listening and driving creativity to find novel ways to attack these emerging challenges.