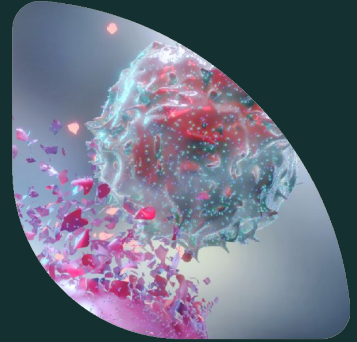




Plumtree
Services

Getting To Know Your Team Guide





What is - getting to know your team

Getting to know your team is one of the most essential components in building a high-performing team. It establishes the groundwork for meaningful collaboration and trust by fostering connection and psychological safety. These activities are designed to spark engagement and create the space for authentic interaction, especially when your team is distributed geographically or newly formed.

Why is it important

Strong teams don't happen by accident. They are built through small, consistent moments of connection. These activities help teams:

- **Build Human Connection:** Invite people to bring their full selves, not just their expertise
- **Encourage Engagement:** Boost participations and energy, even in virtual meetings
- **Create Psychological Safety:** Make it easier for every voice to be heard and valued
- **Set the Tone:** Signal that how we work together matters as much as what we're working on
- **Accelerate Trust:** Lay the foundation for faster collaboration, especially across functions or time zones



How to embed these activities into your meetings

You can use connection activities to start meetings before diving into business topics, or you can use them as longer activities that may require more planning and coordination, but will add a bit of fun and team building to the work day.

Step	Action
Plan intentionally	Choose an activity that fits your team's mood, size, and purpose - use a light one for check-ins, a reflective one for retrospectives, etc..
Select a facilitator	If the activity requires pre-work or facilitation, you will want to identify someone on the team to organize it.
Set time boundaries	The amount of time needed will depend on the activity and number of people - you may want to use breakout rooms if appropriate.
Normalize participation	Leaders should go first, use prompts that don't require oversharing.
Make it a habit	Rotate who brings the activity, add it to recurring agendas like "Quick Connect (5 min)".
Link to purpose	Occasionally tie the activity to the charter, work, and values, to keep it meaningful.



Putting it into practice when you are short on time

Activity Name	Time	When to Use	Short Instructions
One word check-in	5 mins	Quick emotional temperature check	Ask each person to share <i>one word</i> to describe how they're arriving to the meeting
Show & Tell	15 - 30 mins	Build personal connection	Bring an object near your desk and explain why it matters to you
Zoom Background Story	15 mins	Spark fun and storytelling	Set a custom background and share the story or meaning behind it
Two Truths and a Lie	15 - 30 mins	Lighthearted connection	Share 2 truths and 1 lie; others guess which is the lie
Emoji Weather Report	5 mins	Quick, low-effort check-in	Drop an emoji in chat to reflect mood or energy
First Job / Worst Job	15 - 30 mins	Humor and storytelling	Share your first or worst job, and what you learned from it
Rapid Fire Round	15 mins	Energizer and low-pressure sharing	Ask a fun question (e.g., "What's your go-to snack?"), then go around quickly
Photo Prompt	15 mins	Visual storytelling	Bring a photo that answers a prompt like "A place I love"



Putting it into practice when you want to dedicate 1 hour with your team

Activity Name	Short Instructions
Core Values	Using a template, each person completes the following statements: • My personal core value that I gained from my youth that serves me professionally is.. • My core value is important for me and my team because... • This is how and when my core value can become a derailer for my team... • My ask from the team is...
Who Am I	Using a template, each person answers the following questions (or come up with your own!): • What was your first science experiment as a child? • What do you like to do in your spare time? • What is your life motto? • What are my unique strengths or experiences that I bring to the team? • What gives me energy at work? What drains my energy at work?
History of Hits	Using a blank piece of paper, each person to list of 5-6 key moments in your life that shaped you into the person you are today. Share your personal motto or favorite quote at the end.
Superpowers and Inner Villains	Using 2 sheets of paper, each person completes both sets of questions: Superpowers • What are my unique survival skills that I've applied to my career? • What makes me feel "strong"? • What are my hard won skills? • What made me unique as a child? • What's easy for me that's difficult for others? Inner Villains • What are my blind spots? • What makes me feel "weak"? • What is my reaction to conflict or tension? • What is hard for me that I recognize as easy for others?



Tips for leaders and facilitators

- **Be the first to model the way:** Go first. Be human, be brief and be real.
- **Keep it low-pressure:** Choose prompts that don't require vulnerability upfront - build up over time
- **Start small:** A 5-minute activity can shift the tone of an entire meeting
- **Read the room:** Select activities that match the team's energy, size, and familiarity
- **Make it a habit:** Embed connection time into recurring agendas. Name it so it sticks, such as "check in"
- **Tie it to purpose:** Reflect back what you're hearing and link insights to how the team collaborates or works best together



Want help building connection with your team?

Plumtree partners with leaders and teams to evolve how they work together. Contact us to learn more about our adaptive teaming services.

Let's explore what's possible together

732.232.6805

info@plumtreeservices.com