

Splitting Pins: The Case Against Bowling for Productive Team Bonding



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What's the allure of a manager taking a team bowling? It's fun, easy, and mostly everyone can participate. It's usually local and not expensive. Often, leaders want their team to spend time together to create a connection. By having them focus on a goal and allowing for some natural conversation, the hope is that that team members will bond. But is this the real outcome that the leader and the team are looking for?

To have a strong team, building connections is a typical first step. The result from building connections is the creation of trust, which is central to a functioning team. When there is trust amongst the group a subsequent product is increased collaboration which leads to the desired outcome of increased productivity.

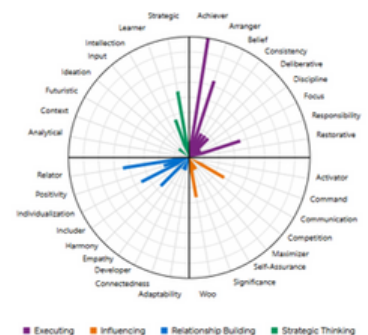
So leaders should ask themselves: does taking the team bowling result in the final outcome of increased productivity? If yes, how long does it take to get there? And are there faster ways to complete the path? If no, why am I spending time and money on this activity? Bowling focuses simply on connection, not productivity.

What if leaders could take the same 3 hours and speed up the path to productivity without missing a step? **When teams have an opportunity to learn about their Strengths, their productivity increases significantly.** They have a stronger connection because they have spent time learning about themselves and each other. They trust each other more as they have learned why they each behave the ways that they do AND by understanding how each individual works, they can collaborate more effectively.

“Bowling focuses simply on connection, not productivity.”

Most of us are looking to achieve – whether as a leader or as an individual contributor. The more we accomplish, the more we gain (compensation, feeling valued or having an impact) and the more successful we are as individuals, leaders and teams.

Spending time together as a team is important and let's find more effective ways to achieve the goals around building connections and ultimately increase productivity!



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