

The Necessity of Conducting Teambuildings as a Prevention Response to Pandemic and War Times

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Abstract

The CoVid-19 Pandemic with all the imposed rules and restrictions that varied from country to country and even within a country, or from region to region, has resulted in considerable changes for the employees. Furthermore, the armed conflict that has already started to have an effect, not only on those two countries that are in conflict, but also on the other countries. This is due to the fact that both Ukraine and Russia had very intensified economic relations. The shortage of raw materials, petrol, gas and other products delivered by these two countries can generate a greater and long lasting impact that even the pandemic has caused. More than ever, organizations have to build even much stronger relations and do their best to offer their employees a set of skills that in peace times are not needed. Teambuilding is a way by which the organization tries to increase the productivity of their employees and to strengthen the way different individuals, groups, departments interact in order to increase productivity and profitability of the company. Although during the pandemic most events were canceled due to the restrictions or being deployed online, but without having the same impact on the direct audience. We are going to analyze the types of team-buildings that can be used by different types of organizations and the potential outcome resulting after attending them.

Keywords: teambuilding, interactive, motivation, skills, survival

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Introduction

In the last two years, organizations and employees have faced some peculiar concerns, never witnessed and encountered in modern times (Belostecinic et al., 2022). Firstly, there was the CoVid-19 pandemic that caused (Seijts and Milani, 2021) a worldwide shock, owing to its healthcare emergency causing problems at different levels and economic sectors (Mogos et al., 2021). Secondly, there was the latest armed conflict on the outskirts of the European Union that will affect many countries because we live in a Global World and there are many economic transactions with both of these two countries. One of them is not able to respect their contracts and deadlines as a supplier, being under siege, the other faces many international penalties and restrictions for starting the conflict and targeting even civilians. Furthermore, many multinational companies (Michaud and Audebrand, 2022) have withdrawn from the aggressor country in order not to damage their brand image and to be considered still conducting their business in a country that does not price peace, love as well as communication and understanding. The fear of the uncertainty regarding the future was never grater as, unfortunately, the conflict may also expand engaging other countries in the conflict.

Organizations must conduct teambuildings, as many restrictions related to CoVid-19 Pandemic were lifted (Popescu et al. 2021). Although some companies still allow their employees to work remotely and to choose if they want to return to the offices, or stay in the comfort of their homes. During the pandemic, in companies, changes also occurred, like the layoff of some staff, the resignations of others, hiring others so

the teams have changed and it is imperative to get the teams together, in order to increase the cohesion of the organization (Sarbu et al., 2021).

1. Review of the scientific literature

The employee’s motivation (Gustiani, 2020) is the method through which the management ensures that all workers work together to achieve the company's objectives. The notion of engagement is examined in this context. Managers are responsible for motivating their staff, ensuring that they work (Berry, 2021) effectively, and fostering their employees' innovation. The expertise, abilities, and competences of various groups of individuals should be combined to establish teams capable of solving issues, discovering opportunities, and using the massive quantity of information that is already accessible (Balu et al., 2021).

A few years before Maslow introduced the Pyramid of Needs, Australian academic, Elton Mayo captured the attention of many people by discussing people's job behavior and the social requirements discovered a few years later in Maslow's pyramid. Between 1924 and 1932, Mayo was regarded as the "Father of Human Resource Management," conducting an experiment at a Western Electric plant factory in Hawthorne (Mahoney and Baker, 2002). Changing people's behavior, when they believe they belong (Kozlowski, Chao and Fossen, 2021) to a group, may be characterized as a behavior change that matches the expectations of those who founded the organization. The Hawthorne Effect is the name given to this effect. The group heavily influences the individual (Burlacu et al., 2021). From the way an individual behaves in school to the way the same individual behaves at a wedding, the shift in behavior caused by the group's influence may be detected and considered to be very strong. Recognition of an employee's connection and importance, as well as integration into the pack, are regarded as more significant than income and working circumstances. Tuckman proposes (Putro, Rosmansyah and Suhardi, 2020) a five-stage program to build a performing team. The stages can be seen in figure no 1. Effective teams must communicate, listen actively, building ideas, involving everyone from the team and at the same time, to commit to excellence both for the individual.

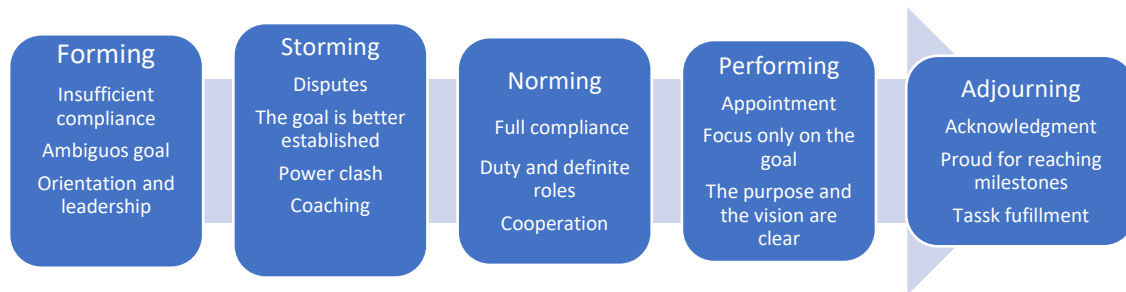


Figure no. 1. Tuckman’S Model – The Five stages of building a performing team

Source: Putro and Suhardi, 2020

The first stage is Forming – is characterized by a low level of productivity, seeking the leaders guidance and involvement, while the emphasis is on keeping things simple solving the tasks and out of contention. Although the goal is ambiguous and there is insufficient compliance. The second step Storming – appears due to small conflicts that can escalate competition among the team members. The main issues that can appear are caused by those who want to take charge regarding authority and leadership imposing different structures through power. The team members can have two possible reactions, either to comply in silence, or to dominate, by imposing their own ideas and values. It is vital, in this stage, that active listening should be enforced, as power clashes between alphas and betas might occur. High emotions can drive to lack of involvement, or too much involvement.

The third stage, which is Norming, includes reconciliation between the team members, relief, decreased anxiety, members who are active and helpful, and the development of cohesiveness. The group's leadership is split, and the small groups between the team disband, behaving like a whole. This phase's strategies include acknowledging individual and group efforts, offering learning opportunities and feedback to the entire team and in the same manner, to each individual, and moreover measuring (Renz and Posthuma, 2021) the group's 'energy' is very important. The informational flux is at its highest level and creativity can heavily increase. Both personal and tasks information are communicated more freely.

The fourth stage is Performing, starting from this point, the team should be very productive. The authority and the roles are dynamically adjusting. The members of the team are self-confident and they are (Lechner and Mortlock, 2021) not waiting for approval any more. At this point, the group is more united, with high moral and loyal sets towards the organizations. All the members are offering constructive feedback one to

each other, and they are expecting feedback from other groups. Intensive communication is necessary and they should pay respect and be fair one with each other and they have to demonstrate that they are competent. The fifth stage – Adjourning, stands for a planned closing, generally includes praising participation and success, as well as the chance for members to revise the lessons learned. The most successful interventions at this point are those that assist the task's end and the process of relinquishing engagement and recognizing change.

2. Benefits offered by using Teambuilding

Teambuilding refers to the practice of encouraging employees via a series of activities tailored to the specific needs of the team members in order to increase their performance. Team building is critical since it helps to strengthen interpersonal skills such as motivation, communication, and bargaining. Feeling useful, important, and part of a team, the individual will enjoy (Grossman and Johnson, 2017) his or her job and become more efficient and effective in the workplace. The amount of employee motivation is intimately related to an organization’s better performance (Rădulescu et al., 2020). Earning, advancement, avoidance of punishments and criticism, and the environment of understanding within the team are all key aspects in professional competence. Work motivation may be classified into three types (Basalamah and As’ad, 2021): 1) Internal motivation- the mood among the team, the direct manager consultation. (Dahlin, Chuang and Roulet, 2017); 2) Good external motivation like self-esteem, wages, and opportunity (Martinez and Hurtado, 2018) for advancement in career; 3) Negative external motivation – like avoiding unconstructive criticism (Graham, 2020), avoiding the possibility of losing the job.

In terms of structure, there is (Hastings, Jahanbakhsh and Karahalios, 2018) teambuilding centered on activities such as skill development, issue resolution, and personality evaluation. Away from the workplace, workers will concentrate on learning new skills, connecting with one another, and defining the organization as a whole (Rădulescu et al., 2021). The majority of the time, firms pick teambuilding activities that take place at sea, in the mountains, or somewhere else away from the company's headquarters. The pandemic obliged most of the companies either to fully stop teambuilding, or as a solution to shift them in an online environment. Of course, the online teambuilding does not have (Reyes, Luna and Salas, 2021) the same impact and effect on the members of the team, as the interaction is done virtually. Also, online (Rapp and Rapp, 2021) platforms, apps or different software are considered interactive online games that can be used when deploying online teambuilding (Bodislav et al., 2020). We can mention thematic teambuilding like (Anon., n.d.): AI2045, Escape the Firm, Xmas Advent Calendar, Festive Social, Xmas Remote Challenge, Hack the System, Bridge the Virtual Gap, Guess the Artist, Comic Strip, Treasure Hunt Digital, Ad makers, Coffe Time, Quiz Wars, Team Bingo, Cocktail Challenge, Funny T-shirt Party, See the big picture, Game Show, The Classified Project, Creative Domino, Imagination, Movie Makers and many more. There are many types of offline teambuilding that can be grouped by the technology used (Pryimak and Faichak, 2017) while deploying them. As they are described in table no. 1, we can mention the Rope course, Active gaming, Interactive teambuilding, Culinary Teambuilding, Filming and City Quest. The main reasons to conduct and to appeal to a teambuilding are finding effective solutions using in the same proportion, rational and interpersonal skills. The participants are also asked to appeal to their knowledge and resources, as well in order to resolve the given tasks.

Table no. 1. Different Types of Teambuilding

Technology	Description
Rope course	The most successful method of personnel evaluation, the main objective of which is the unification of the employee team, where the element of unification is the team's win.
Active-gaming Teambuilding	The tasks take the shape of a game and are solely intended to establish a team.
Interactive Teambuilding	For any situation, that does not need particular effort from participants, board games or brain rings are used.
Culinary Teambuilding	Team cohesion occurs when members of a team work together to achieve a common objective, despite competition and inter-team rivalry.
Filming	The foremost compelling organize of human association with the prospect of reincarnation and concurrent cooperation within the curiously inventive prepare of both dynamic and conditionally inactive players.
City Quest	Organization of group labor in the form of a competitive battle of enjoyment within the framework of 'urban orientation'. Included are the following components: entertainment, don, and mental element.

Source: Pryimak and Faichak, 2017

Some of the most requested, required and necessary teambuildings, bearing in mind the latest pandemic and the geopolitical conflicts that are going around and which can escalate, are peculiarly: survival and military camp. Both of the themes can be considered wise to be carried on due to the uncertainty of the future. In a survival teambuilding, different real techniques of endurance are thought and applied, but not only for one person but also for the entire group. Of course, not all the group members are going to be asked to endure extreme temperatures or feeding with some unwanted stuff, like bugs or plants that they find them unsavory or even gross. The voluntary participation of an individual in-group activities that appear to him to be the limit of his own possibilities, provides him with the following benefits (Derlogea and Bota, 2011):

- The opportunity to try a seemingly dangerous (Grolleau, Marciano and Mzoughi, 2021) action (for him) in an atmosphere of understanding and help;
- The freedom to give back (Kirkman and Stoveink, 2021) or give up when the stress of performing "performance" or distrust of one's own strength becomes too great, but knowing that he always has the opportunity to try again;
- The ability to do difficult things safely, recognizing that the attempt is more essential than the outcome;
- Respect for the ideas and judgments of others.

Teambuilding instructors can appeal to a variety of themes when the season should also be taken into account (Profiroiu, Rădulescu and Burlacu, 2020). Some of the most common survival situations can be (Human Synergistics, 2022): desert, forest, reef, tsunami, subarctic, cascades, cascades and others regarding the specific of geographical relief. Another successful and useful teambuilding theme can be Military Camps and Self-defense, which can come in very handy in these turbulent times. The team will be taught the most important combat techniques. Following a meticulous and dignified (Team Building 4u, n.d.) training of the Special Forces, a genuine military training with shooting applications, training to avoid the enemy and move on different types of battlefields, like urban and rural ones, and concluding with a military exercise between two teams.

We have used Zelist Monitor to see in what degree terms like teambuilding and survival camps were mentioned in social media platforms and how they analyzed the outcome results. Facebook was the most used social media network platform, with 48% use, where people mentioned and discussed about teambuilding, either to attend or to choose a type of this kind of event. This platform is followed by online press with 21.7%, and Instagram with 17.3%. In forums, it is on the fourth position with 6.7%, as seen in figure no 2 Number of Appearances in social media networking platforms. In Figure no. 3 and 6, we can observe the comparison between the two periods, with a high increase in teambuilding as in survival camps, after the war started. Regarding the time line, as in figure no. 4 and 7, we can draw the conclusion that the interest into teambuilding plunged when the war started, while the survival camps presented a much higher interest. Survival camps were seen as a more important issue, while on Facebook, they had a coverage of 24.2%, while on online press 21.4 and very closely with Twitter 20.7%. Online aggregators had a coverage of 13.1% as shown in Figure no. 5. We have compared the two terms, throughout only one year, as it is revealed in Figure no. 8 Survival Camps vs Teambuilding, demonstrating that survival was considered a more important and useful theme to be talked about.

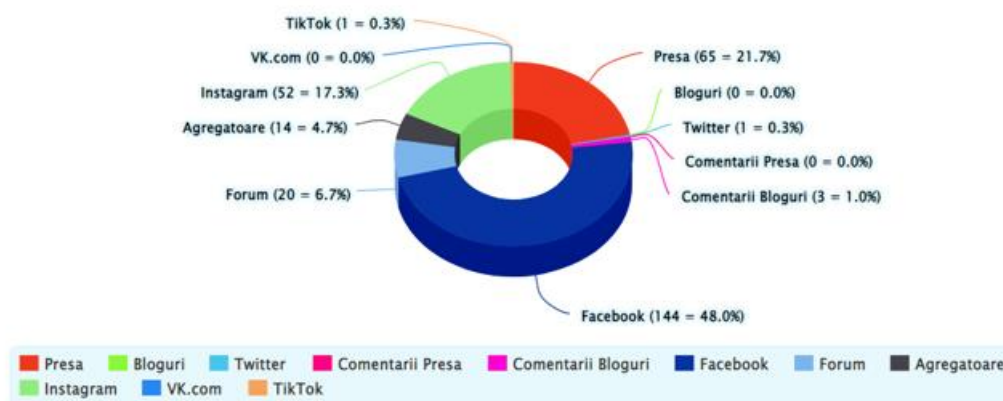


Figure no. 2 Number of Appearances in social media networking platforms

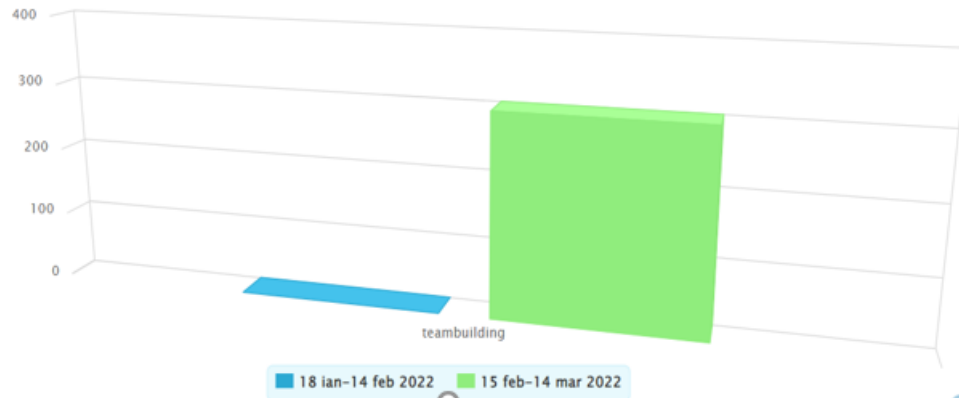


Figure no. 3 Comparison between two periods

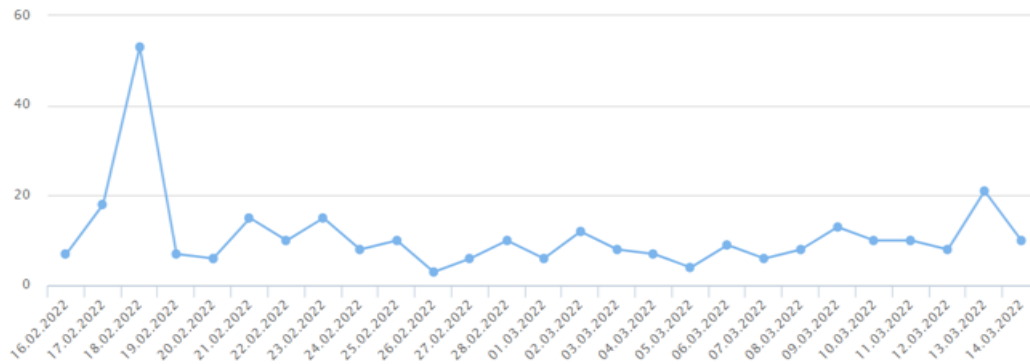


Figure no. 4 Timeline for Teambuilding

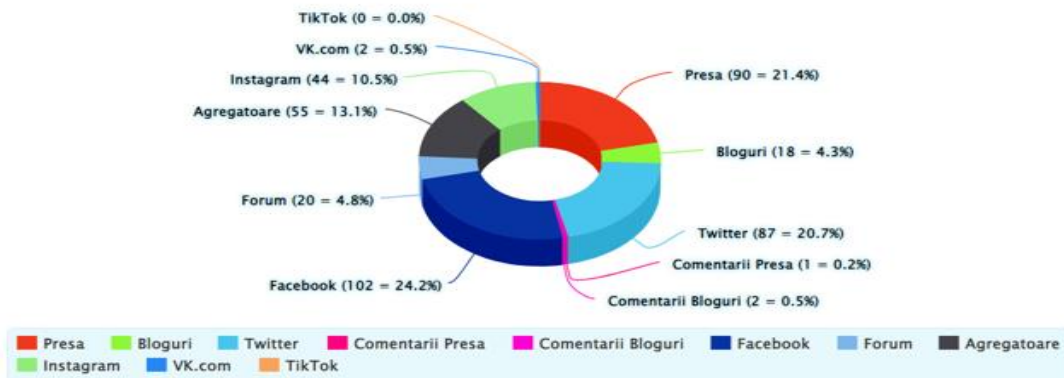


Figure no. 5 Number of Appearances in social media networking platforms

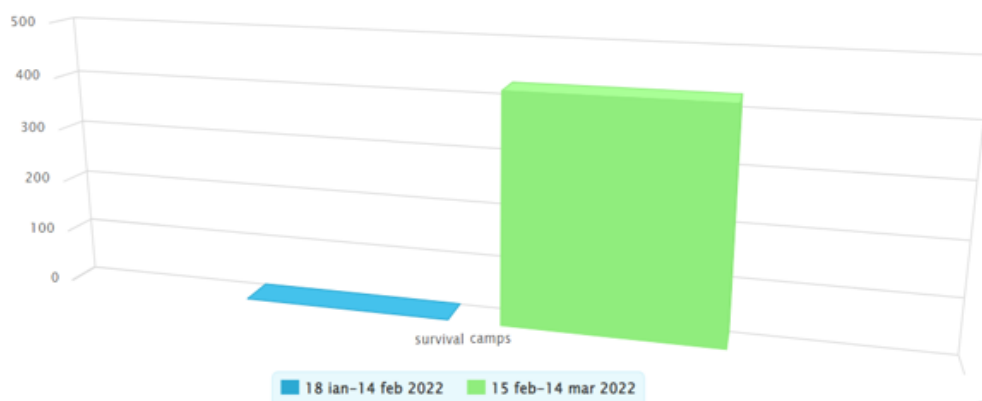


Figure no. 6 Comparison between two periods

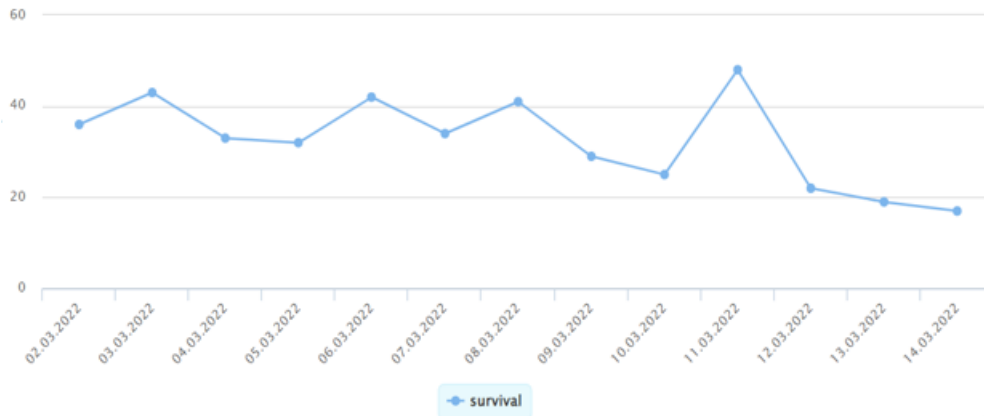


Figure no. 7 Timeline for Survival camps

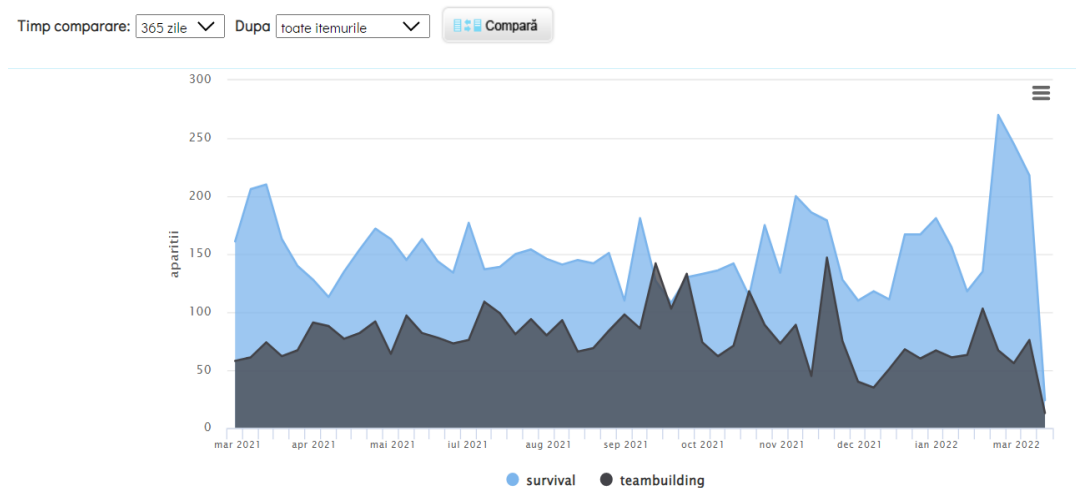


Figure no. 8 Survival Camps vs Teambuilding

Conclusions

In a very turbulent environment, as we witness, feel and live, people and organizations are trying and seeking to gather set of skills in order to overpass these kinds of external threats (Bran et al., 2020). While some are forming long queues at gas pumps in order to purchase fuel for their cars, or buying sunflower frying oil based on a rumor, as well as staying in line either to have their passports issued or renewed for just in case the armed conflict escalates and expands (Negescu et al., 2020). Others are trying to learn and acquire a set of skills that might come in very handy and useful. More organizations should arrange teambuilding, not just to increase the team productivity and cohesion, but at the same time, to offer their employees, skills that they might use just in case. Survival camps, military camps, first aid, self-defense, skills in case of earthquakes, boy scouts and even off-road courses can be considered in our days very important to carry on. This kind of teambuilding should be even mandatory to be conducted especially for youngsters, like undergraduates' students and high school pupils.

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