

Hospitality and Tourism

Event hospitality

by Keith Harding

Level: Intermediate (to Upper Intermediate)

Target age: 16+

Time needed: 90 minutes

Grammar / language objective: Team-building and event-planning

Materials: Materials for the warm-up team-building exercise. Worksheet 1: *Successful teamwork*. Worksheet 2: *Organizing a trade fair*.

Note: This lesson mainly consists of a simulation: organizing a trade fair for the tourism industry. As such, language work is incidental to the larger task of planning the event and working as a team. If you are working with monolingual students, you will need to establish from the start the 'rules' for use of first language – e.g. a complete ban or limited and specified use.

1. Warm-up

- This is a team-building exercise. Bring in some simple materials. These should include: sets of playing cards or index/file cards, Blu-Tack/Sellotape, matchsticks, empty yoghurt pots and any general every-day items.
- Divide the class into groups of four and share out the materials, roughly equal.
- Tell the students that they have to use the materials to build a model of a hotel complex and that they have ten minutes to do it.
- Do not give any other instructions (except perhaps, that they can only use English). The idea is that they will work out their own strategy for working together – e.g. a leader might emerge, disagreements may have to be resolved.
- At the end of ten minutes, get the groups to present their models to the rest of the class, briefly explaining the different features.
- Discuss how the activity went. For example:
 - Did they feel like they worked as a team?
 - How did they delegate roles?
 - Did a leader emerge?
 - Did people have particular specialities?

- Was there an overall plan or did the model just evolve?
- Were there any disagreements? How were they resolved?
- How did they feel?

2. Successful teams

- Put this statement on the board: 'A team is greater than the sum of the individuals in the team.'
- Ask what it means. Can they think of examples of successful teams? This can be teams they have been part of or teams they know about and it can include sporting teams.
- Give out Worksheet 1 (Successful teamwork) and get them to discuss the questions in pairs. If there's enough time, get the pairs to report back to the whole class.
- End by asking how they would do the team-building exercise in 1 differently next time.

3. Set up tourism trade fair simulation

Part one

- Explain that the students are going to be organizing a tourism trade fair for the tourism industry in the place where they are studying. The aim is to showcase what the area has to offer in terms of tourism opportunities to tour operators and interested parties from around the world. It will be a mega-event with thousands of visitors, taking place over several days.
- Get the class as a whole to agree on the broad shape of the fair:
 - where to hold it
 - what to include (e.g. there should be an opening reception, some presentations and demonstrations of local tourism activities, a speech by a VIP and a closing ceremony)
 - who to invite
 - how long it will be

Part two

- Explain that the class is going to be working as one big team but initially they will be working in smaller teams. Each of the smaller teams will have a specific area of operation. (However, if you have

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a small class of fewer than six students, it is best to work as one team and concentrate on just two or three of the areas of operation).

- Elicit or give out the areas of operation. These could be:
 - organizing the venue
 - agenda and schedule
 - invitations – tour operators, speakers, VIPs
 - entertainment and hospitality in general
 - the welcome reception
- Allocate these areas of operation to groups of three or four students (you can duplicate with larger classes).

4. Trade fair simulation

- Students get into their groups and prepare.
- First they need to discuss *how* they're going to work as a team (refer back to sections 1 and 2).
- Then they need to plan what needs to be done for their area of operation. Some 'questions to think about' are given in Worksheet 2. This will be the main part of the activity and you should allow about 30 minutes for this.
- Managing the activity: teacher's role
 1. Move furniture so that the groups are sitting and working together appropriately.
 2. Give each group either a whiteboard, a flip-chart or a large sheet of poster paper on which they record their plans. They may want to appoint a 'scribe' for this.
 3. Each of the 'questions to think about' sections contains an instruction to 'liaise with the other groups'. This is important for the activity, not just in order to achieve a coherent trade fair but also to give authentic practice of working as a team in event-planning. One way of liaising is to get each group to send a 'messenger' to another group when they need to check something or tell them something. If the activity is going well, there will be a lot of moving around, with 'messengers' visiting the different groups.
 4. Your main role as teacher will be to ensure the groups keep on task, individually and collectively. If a group is struggling, give them some help. If a group is going too fast (or doing too well!) give them some extra problems in the form of 'breaking news' (e.g.

celebrity guest has cancelled, strike by local hotel workers).

5. Don't forget the language role. Ensure students are using English. Feed in any vocabulary or functional language that they need. Make notes of any errors you want to look at later.

5. Presentations

- When you think the groups are ready, give them five minutes to prepare their plans for presentation to the rest of the class. They should use the whiteboard, flip-chart or poster to deliver the presentation and, of course, they will need to decide how they are going to present (e.g. one person, as a team, etc.)
- The rest of the class should stay in their own groups and roles to listen, take notes and ask questions during the presentations.
- To finish the activity, give your own summary of the Trade Fair to the class, pointing out any unresolved contradictions.

6. Feedback and evaluation

- When all the presentations and your summary are finished, get students to evaluate the whole activity. They can do this as a class or in small groups (but not the same groups as for the simulation).
- Here are some sample questions to ask:
 - Are you pleased with the final product?
 - What went well / badly?
 - Do you think you worked effectively as a team and as a group of teams?
 - Was there anything you found frustrating? (e.g. other colleagues' attitudes, not having the right words in English, not having enough time)
 - What would you do differently next time?
 - Did you enjoy the experience?

Successful teamwork

Read this advice sheet from an invented business training manual:

Twelve ways to make teams work

1. First of all, start with the work, not the team. Does the work need a team at all?
2. If a team is required, decide who is going to lead the team.
3. Make sure you have a clear overall plan.
4. Decide which responsibilities need to be shared and by whom?
5. Delegate other tasks and responsibilities to individuals.
6. Have deadlines for the completion of different tasks.
7. Ensure that everyone understands their role.
8. Spend time on preparation. Don't just rush into the task.
9. Be aware of the different strengths and weaknesses of the team members.
10. Help people succeed – in other words, don't give tasks to people who can't do them.
11. Establish a friendly cooperative atmosphere but be efficient as well.
12. Make sure there is a reward at the end for the whole team and for individuals.

1. Do you agree with the advice on successful teamwork? Which points do you agree with most / least?

2. Were any of the points evident in the team-building exercise you did at the start of the lesson?

3. Were any of the points evident in the successful teams you identified?

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Organizing a trade fair

Questions to think about:



Organizing the venue

- What type of venue do you need?
- Is there anything in the area where you are studying? Does it have all the rooms and spaces you require? (You can add on things if you want, even if they don't actually exist.)
- Think about transport links. How are people going to get there?
- Think about accommodation for visitors and people working at the fair.
- Liaise with the other groups, e.g. the 'agenda and schedule group' about the room requirements for the different events they are planning.

Agenda and schedule

- What different events and activities are you going to have?
- Think about speeches but also music, culture, folk demonstrations, food and cooking.
- When and where will the opening and closing ceremonies take place?
- What order will all the events happen in, and on which days?
- Liaise with the other groups, e.g. the 'welcome reception group' about how their event fits in with the overall schedule.

Invitations – tour operators, speakers, VIPs

- Who are you going to invite?
- Think of one famous celebrity to invite (someone local perhaps?)
- How are you going to advertise to the tourism trade?
- Design an official invitation.
- Liaise with the other teams – e.g. the 'welcome reception group' about who to invite to that event.

Entertainment and hospitality in general

- What events will be organized during the days (e.g. displays and demonstrations)?
- What are the arrangements for refreshments and catering (drinks, meals, snacks)?
- What extra events can you arrange? For example, evening tours, an optional tour after or before the main trade fair.
- Should there be non-trade events, e.g. for the partners of people attending the event? Liaise with the other teams, e.g. the 'agenda and schedule group' about the displays, demonstrations and exhibitions.

The welcome reception

- What type of event are you going to hold (e.g. drinks only, buffet, sit-down)?
- Are there going to be any speeches?
- Is there going to be any entertainment provided?
- When and where do you want to hold it?
- Liaise with the other teams, e.g. the 'entertainment and hospitality team' about the entertainment and catering you want to provide.