

TEAM WORK

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

A small conference room. CHARLIE, SUE, MIKE and JENNIFER sit around the table wearing name tags and looking bored.

PAUL walks in, closes the door behind him and passes an envelope out to each person.

PAUL

Alright, who's ready for some team building!

Silence.

PAUL (CONT'D)

OK guys, now I know it's Friday afternoon and no one want to be stuck in some boring meeting, but I think you'll find Paul does things a little differently.

Sue raises her hand.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Yes?

SUE

Who's Paul?

CHARLIE

He is. Jeez Sue, he was trying to break the ice with the group and you screwed it all up. Please continue Paul.

PAUL

Ummm- OK, team building, right- it all starts with your envelopes. Now don't open them yet...

MIKE

Fishing line.

PAUL

Hmmm?

Mike's envelope lies shredded in front of him as he reads from an index card.

MIKE

It says I have fifty feet of fishing line and three hooks.

PAUL

OK, well we weren't supposed to open them yet...

Everyone else tears open their envelopes.

SUE

Emergency beacon!

JENNNIFER

Desalinization tablets, lame!

CHARLIE

Flare gun- sweet!

PAUL

OK, I appreciate the enthusiasm so let's get this scenario started. You were all on a deep sea fishing trip. The captain smells smoke and goes below deck to check on the engine. Suddenly an EXPLOSION rocks the boat. The captain is dead, the boat is sinking, and you manage to launch the life raft and grab the items on your cards.

Jennifer pulls her cell phone and dials.

JENNNIFER

Which ocean was it?

PAUL

The scenario doesn't specify but... who are you calling?

JENNNIFER

911

Paul snatches the phone away from her and cancels the call.

PAUL

Whoa there! It's just a thought experiment, no need to call the police.

(MORE)

PAUL (CONT'D)

Besides, your cell phone wouldn't work in the middle of the ocean.

JENNNIFER

Well you didn't say that.

PAUL

We didn't really have time to go over the rules.

CHARLIE

Yeah sorry Paul, I should have warned you. Jennifer here does crazy shit all the time. She calls it "thinking outside the box." I'd love to choke whoever taught her that phrase.

PAUL

I appreciate the candor Charlie, but I do think that as a manager you should try to find a more positive way to describe a team member's unique perspectives.

MIKE

Yeah but she really is bat-shit crazy.

SUE

She took a dump on a client's desk...

JENNNIFER

One time! And it wasn't a dump, it was like one or two small...

PAUL

OK, you know what, we're getting off track here. Let's just go over the scenario rules. Each of you has access to the item on your card and nothing else. Each item alone cannot save you, but if you work together as a team, you can all survive. Any questions?

JENNNIFER

Can I have my phone back?

Paul starts to hand it to her but hesitates as Charlie, Mike and Sue shake their heads in disapproval.

PAUL

You know what, I'll keep it to make the scenario even more real for you, OK?

Jennifer shrugs and Paul pockets her phone.

PAUL (CONT'D)

So who wants to start? Just tell me what you 'd like to do. There's no wrong answer here.

CHARLIE

I'll go first. I'm going to ensure my flare gun is loaded, then move to the other side of the raft, a safe distance away from everyone else.

PAUL

OK.

Charlie mimes a gun with his fingers and points it at the rest of the team.

CHARLIE

Everyone listen up or you'll be choking on a face full of flare! Mike, hand Jennifer your fishing line.

Mike looks to Paul for help.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

DO IT!

Mike passes Jennifer his index card.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Jennifer, you take the fishing line and wrap it around Mike's neck.

MIKE

Wait a minute!

PAUL

Alright I know I said there were no wrong answers but...

CHARLIE

This is life and death! We're going to have to do some things we don't like if we want to survive. All I'm suggesting is that we kill Mike, use the eyeballs, ass meat, and anything else no one wants to eat as bait. The rest we brine in sea water and let cure in the sun.

MIKE

The boat just sank! No one is starving.

CHARLIE

Not yet! But it might be weeks before we catch anything and it'll take at least that long for your meat to dry. Plus you're the meatiest. Who am I gonna butcher, Jennifer? She's got as much meat on her bones as the buffalo wings at a cheap buffet.

JENNNIFER

Awww, thanks.

CHARLIE

It wasn't a compliment. I'm not playing favorites here, this is life and death. Your low BMI makes you much less likely to survive this. Mike is the meatiest so his death will benefit the team the most.

MIKE

We weigh about the same, why doesn't the team eat you!

CHARLIE

Cause I'm your manager and the one with the flare gun!

PAUL

OK, I'm going to pull the plug on this scenario.

MIKE

Thank you.

CHARLIE

Oh like you've never thought about eating a team member...

PAUL

Enough! I know it was an extreme situation, but you are all supposed to work together as a team. Difficult situations bring successful teams together. If everyone contributes, everyone succeeds.

JENNIFER

Technically Mike was contributing meat.

PAUL

That's not what I mean! Look, why don't we try something where the stakes are a little lower?

Paul yanks the index cards from everyone and passes out new envelopes.

PAUL (CONT'D)

In this scenario some nice new playground equipment has been donated to the local park. You have each been given a different tool. No one can complete the playground alone. You must work together as a team to assemble the playground equipment for the neighborhood children.

SUE

Oh this one's nice.

PAUL

Right, it's a nice positive, low-stress, situation for the team.
You may all open your envelopes.

Everyone politely opens their envelope and examines their index card.

SUE

Screwdriver!

MIKE

Pliers.

JENNNIFER

Hammer.

Charlie smiles then lowers his index card.

CHARLIE

If you don't mind Paul, I'd like to go first again.

PAUL

Sure, go ahead.

CHARLIE

Mike, may I borrow your pliers for a few moments? I have an idea which may let us complete the playground ahead of schedule.

MIKE

Sure, I'd be glad to help the team.

Paul nods as Mike hands Charlie his index card.

CHARLIE

Thank you Mike. I will now use Mike's pliers to pry off the safety catch on my nail gun making it a FULLY AUTOMATIC NAIL MACHINEGUN! Everyone on the ground!

MIKE

Oh Jesus Christ!

SUE

Why does he always get the gun?

Paul snatches the index cards from Charlie and crumbles them up.

PAUL

OK, no more scenarios, let's stick to reality. How about you describe a time that you worked together as a team to get something done.

Silence.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Anything? I don't care what it is. Making coffee? Deciding where to eat lunch? How about finding this conference room, did you do that together?

Charlie raises his hand.

PAUL (CONT'D)

This isn't going to be some story about how you got your team to do something by holding them at gunpoint?

Charlie lowers his hand, then raises it again with a new idea.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Fine, go ahead.

CHARLIE

I think we did a good job on the Acme back office project.

GROANS from the rest of the team.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

What was wrong with that?

SUE

All you had me do on that project was wax and detail your car!

CHARLIE

I had some inside info that the Acme project manager was a car guy. I wanted to make a good impression.

JENNNIFER

With a freshly waxed '97 Honda Civic?

PAUL

Charlie, that doesn't sound like good use of team resources.

MIKE

You wanna hear about wasting resources, I'm a software engineer- he put me in charge of typing for the project.

PAUL

Typing?

MIKE

Yeah, I had to type everything on the project, user manuals, meeting notes, everyone else's emails, everything! He said I must like to type cause I'm always texting my whore girlfriend.

PAUL

Is this true?

CHARLIE

OK, three point's I'd like to make. One: I put him "in charge" of typing. That was a test of his supervisory skills which he obviously failed. Two: I've seen him type and he is by far the fastest typer on this team, so that was just a smart use of resources on my part. And three: I thought his girlfriend was a whore because she was way too young and attractive to be dating someone like him.

SUE

I heard she was blind.

JENNNIFER

I thought she was one of those mail order brides.

MIKE

You know what, you're all wrong!
She was being hazed by a sorority
she was trying to get into!

PAUL

OK, that's enough! Team building
over! You know what, I don't think
this team should be built! I think
the best possible scenario is that
none of you ever works with anyone
else ever again!

(pointing at Charlie)

And you're supposed to be their
manager! You're worse than Hitler.

Paul leaps up from his chair and stomps out of the room.

The team sits in stunned silence.

SUE

Being a worse manager than Hitler
isn't really that bad. I mean he
was good at getting a lot of people
to do what he wanted. Did you ever
see the way the Nazis marched?
Very organized...

CHARLIE

Ten minutes! This was supposed to
be a four hour team building
exercise and you scared him away in
ten minutes.

He stands, a smile growing on his face.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

I have never been more proud. Now
that was some freaking teamwork!
First round is on me!

The team leaps up and high fives Charlie on the way through
the door.

FADE TO BLACK.