

Topgolf offers plenty of space, and fun, to host a networking event. Photo:Topgolf



10 CREATIVE CORPORATE NETWORKING ACTIVITIES

By Hayden Seder

Who says corporate events have to be stiff and boring? Not these ten locations in the Treasure Valley, all of which are great sources of entertainment and can be customized to suit your business or organization's needs. Whether you're team building, onboarding new hires, or just trying to show clients a good time, try one of these ten activities for your next corporate networking event.

LET'S ROAM SCAVENGER HUNTS

What better way to get to know your co-workers and your city than a scavenger hunt? National company Let's Roam has four scavenger hunts available throughout the Treasure Valley—in Boise, Nampa, Caldwell, and Idaho City—that can be customized for your next corporate event. Once you book your scavenger hunt, a dedicated event specialist will help to coordinate your hunt based on group size, time, and budget. Scavenger hunts are applied and will lead you between a series of city landmarks as your team earns points by solving riddles, answering trivia questions about your company, and completing photo challenges; the team with the most points wins!

TOP GOLF

Rather than go the traditional corporate route of meeting up on the links, why not try Top Golf? Based in Meridian, Top Golf features 60 all-weather, climate-controlled hitting bays that accommodate up to six people each and come with HD TVs as well as a bay host to help set up your game and deliver drinks and food from the onsite restaurant and bar. You can use Top Golf's complimentary clubs or bring your own; simply line up and aim at outfield targets, then sit back while Top Golf's high-tech, microchipped golf balls score themselves. Top Golf has all-inclusive packaging for corporate events that includes game

play, food, drinks, and a dedicated staff to make sure everything runs smoothly. Just tell the Top Golf team when you'd like to have your event and they'll give you menu, size, and budget options. If you're looking to take your event to the next level, Top Golf also has private meeting spaces, live team leaderboards, lessons with a pro, exclusive games, and gifts for guests. If you'd like your event to specifically focus on team building, Top Golf will provide a three-hour team-building activity in addition to three to four rounds of competition, an icebreaker activity or discussion, and lessons on culture, change, collaboration, strategy, and strengths of team members.

ROCK CLIMBING AT THE COMMONS

Doing something new is a great way to bond with your peers, and The Commons wants to teach you how to rock climb! The Commons is Boise's only full-service climbing gym, with 45-foot-tall rope walls with about 60 routes total as well as a bouldering area (climbing without ropes or harnesses). Kevin Schmelzlen, General Manager at the Commons, says climbing experiences can be customized for each group, depending on how long you want to climb and whether you want Commons staff to belay climbers or want to teach your employees to belay. "I think it's a more fun experience when you're belaying your partner as opposed to having people climb and having to wait turns," says Schmelzlen. "If we teach everyone to belay, which for the most part people can get certified in about 30 minutes, they can belay for their team." The Commons can accommodate up to about 60 people in a group without having to shut down the gym, but for larger groups, the price will include renting out the entire facility. Pricing for groups includes gear rental (harnesses and shoes), day

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passes, lessons with group rates, and use of a studio space for eating, meeting, or just hanging out!

THE CHARITY BIKE BUILD

Using your time to give back is a great way for your company or organization to build comradery. There are many organizations in Boise through which you can do a team-building charity bike build, where you'll build bikes from scratch to then donate to children in need. Bikes for Goodness Sakes (BFGS) is a non-profit that helps companies of up to 180 people put on a charity bike building event. Based on the number of people you want building each bike (typically four to six members per team), BFGS will work with a local bike shop in the Boise area to deliver the bikes, helmets, and tool kits, as well as provide a bike mechanic to check over your bikes. You can identify a charity of your choosing or BFGS can help identify one and will work to have the recipient children there for you to deliver the bikes to personally. Other organizations that work in a similar fashion in the Boise area are Build-a-Bike, which ships DIY kits for your event, or TeamBonding, which oversees all the logistics regarding venue, charity, and in-person recipients for events of up to 1,000 people.

CAPITOL CITY CULTURAL AND FOOD WALK

Indulge Boise offers walking culinary tours of Boise, Eagle, and Meridian, a great way to get your employees out of the office for a memorable experience. Standard tours, like Downtown Boise Brunch & Arts or Capital City Culinary & Cultural, are available, though owner Angela Taylor explains that tours can be curated for a more customized experience for corporate team building, conference/symposium activities, employee onboarding, and more. No matter which tour you pick, you'll discover the charm of that city while you're led by a guide through historic neighborhoods, iconic landmarks, and delicious food and drinks.

SEASON AND TASTE COOKING SCHOOL

How do you combine cooking, competition, and team building? By planning your next corporate event at Season and Taste Cooking School! While the school can do a variety of team-building workshops and customized events, the most fun option is their competitive Chopped/Top Chef challenges. Run by professional chefs, Season and Taste's Chopped challenge is just like the popular TV series, where you'll receive a basket of ingredients that you must use to create a dish in a set amount of time. Events are typically three hours, and you'll all get to taste the fruits of your labors when the challenge is done! From planning to prepping to doing the dishes, Season and Taste covers all aspects.

SNAKE RIVER WINE TOURS

Snake River Wine Tours owner Samantha Maxey says corporate events are her favorite type of group to host. "I really believe it's a great yet professional experience for co-workers to get together outside of the workplace and have fun," says Maxey. "Sitting back and watching the comradery throughout the day is so rewarding." The number of people in your group will determine your experience; groups of 10–14 people are taken in a Mercedes Sprinter to four wineries on the Sunnyslope Wine Trail while large groups of 20–53 visit three wineries and are given individual charcuterie boxes. The tours usually last 6.5 hours from pickup to drop off. Having just won Best Wine Tour 2023 by USA Today for the second year in a row, Snake River Wine Tours is truly the best way to explore Idaho's wine country with your company.

WINE AND DESIGN PAINT & SIP

Wine and Design's team-building events are a great way to build comradery in a social, relaxed setting, whether that's at their site or yours! The base of each event is painting and wine sipping, all of which can be customized to your schedule, budget, class length, and number of participants. Wine and Design provides an inspiring space for co-workers to focus on their artistic endeavor, whether that's individual paintings led by an instructor of each person working on part of a large-scale mural. Events can also include an "Art Breaker" and other team-building exercises.

ESCAPE ROOM

The skills needed to solve an escape room—good communication, thinking outside the box, trust between team members—are much the same as those needed for excelling in business, making escape rooms the perfect outing for your next corporate event. Try Escape the Room for a curated team-building escape room experience or simply book one of their standard four experiences: Doctor Fear, Gem Mine, Mad Hatter, and Journey to Oz. Clockwise Escape Room also specializes in corporate events, tasking players with communicating with one another and solving puzzles as a team as you race against the clock. Clockwise can accommodate large and small groups of 8–40 players and can assist with catering food and beverage to make it a complete experience. Other escape rooms in the Treasure Valley include Amazing Escapes Boise, Puzzle Effect Boise, and Escape This.

KARAOKE

In the Japanese business world, many important relationships are cemented in the karaoke bar, and why should your next business outing be any different? Singing in front of each other lets down some of the walls between co-workers and allows you to build relationships outside the confines of the office. Boise is home to a few karaoke establishments but the most consistent is 44 Club, which offers karaoke seven days a week from 6 p.m. until close and was voted the best karaoke bar in town by Best Things Idaho. The entire space can be rented out for private events and for those who really just don't want to sing, there's pool tables and shot specials!