



# Outback

## Team Building & Training

Everything You Need  
to Know About  
Planning the Ultimate  
Company Retreat

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# PART ONE:

## Introduction to Company Retreats

*The Practical Reasons Why More  
Businesses Are Planning Trips  
Away From the Office*

# What is a Company Retreat?

A company retreat can motivate employees, engage staff, address organizational problems, and help you set goals for the year ahead.



A company retreat is a work event where employees leave the office and meet up somewhere new to regroup, recharge, and discuss their business. There are many different types of retreats, including...

- **Team Building Retreats** – Getting out of the office can be a great opportunity for building stronger employee relationships.
- **Corporate and Business Retreats** – A business retreat is similar to a team building retreat, but usually with more of a focus on sharing the corporate vision, practicing new skills, and making sure teams are aligned.
- **Executive, Leadership, and Management Retreats** – While most retreats include everyone on the team, executive retreats are reserved for just the company leaders.

# Why Plan a Company Retreat?

A company retreat can motivate employees, engage staff, address organizational problems, and help you set goals for the year ahead.



Around the office, it can be so easy to get caught up in your day-to-day tasks and responsibilities that you lose sight of your colleagues, collective purpose, and vision for the future.

But a company retreat can be a breath of fresh air for you and your colleagues. It can give everyone the opportunity to get away from their usual work spaces, come together as a group, and strategize about big-picture challenges and opportunities.

**In fact, a properly-planned company retreat can be transformative for both your team and your business.**

If you'd like to learn more about what Outback can do to help make your company retreat more successful, give our team a call at 1-800-565-8735, or [visit our website to get your free consultation.](#)

# The Benefits of a Retreat

Company retreats can have practical work benefits for both large and small businesses in North America.



While some people think retreats are a sign of corporate excess, the truth is that a well-organized retreat can be beneficial for your long-term business goals. Nowadays, more large and small businesses are taking their employees on retreats as a way to:

- 1. Attract and Retain Talent** – Depending on where you travel to for your company retreat, employees may consider it a perk or the type of experience they can't get somewhere else. This can be a great selling point for new recruits considering working for your company!
- 2. Initiate Team Building, Training, and Consulting** – During regular business hours, it can be challenging to find the time for things like team building, training sessions, or consulting. But all of these things can boost employee engagement and help you build a more positive workplace culture.

# The Benefits of a Retreat

You can use your company retreat as an opportunity to both look back on the previous year, and ahead at future goals.



- 3. Set New Company-Wide Goals** – Retreats are useful because your entire team will be in the same place at the same time. You can use this as an opportunity to announce upcoming goals or other important changes happening in your business.
- 4. Reflect and Celebrate the Year Prior** – Did you know that over 79% of people quit their jobs because they don't feel appreciated at work? A company retreat can be a great way to show employees how much you value them by celebrating their accomplishments.
- 5. Strategize and Plan for the Year Ahead** – Stepping away from your regular work roles can also enable your colleagues to think about the “big picture” and start planning for the year ahead.

# The Benefits of a Retreat

A company retreat can also help to break down barriers between departments and coworkers so your team feels more like a team.



- 6. Open Dialogues Between Departments** – In large organizations, it can be easy for departments to operate independently. But when everyone comes together for a company retreat, you can ensure that the channels of communication between departments are open.
- 7. Have Fun as a Group** – Don't underestimate the fact that this is a rare opportunity for everyone in your organization to be together at the same time. You'll be able to let loose and build better working relationship with your coworkers, which can enhance your collaboration and communication back in the workplace.





# PART TWO:

## Planning Your Company Retreat

*Seven Things You Should Do  
When Preparing for Your Retreat*

# Set Goals for Your Retreat

Before you start planning your company retreat, you need to do one very important thing: write down why you're doing it.



A company retreat can mean many different things to many different people. To make sure everyone is on the same page, the first thing you should do is define the reasons why you're doing it.

## **Some common goals for company retreats include:**

- Celebrating last year's achievements
- Creating trust between colleagues
- Building your workplace culture
- Strategizing for the year ahead

You may have one big goal for your retreat, or several smaller goals you want to achieve. Decide as a group what's most important to you, write it down, and share it with your leadership team to get their buy-in.

# Share Responsibilities

Planning a company retreat is more work than most people realize, so you'll want to share responsibilities with other members of your team.



Not every company has a full-time meeting planner who can take on the task of planning an entire retreat by themselves. Here at Outback, the leadership team shares the responsibilities of planning and preparing for our annual "Summit" retreat.

You'll find that once you divide up some of the tasks, organizing for your retreat will become a lot more manageable.

## For example, you could...

- Place someone in charge of transportation and venue logistics.
- Place another person in charge of meals and snacks.
- Place different people in charge of each day's agenda, etc.

# Poll Your Colleagues

Get a sense of what your colleagues would like to do at your company retreat by sending out an advance poll to the office.



Now that you've started the planning process, you'll want to take the pulse of the rest of the office. This can help you get a sense of what employees would enjoy and what they expect to accomplish at the retreat.

## Use this poll to get opinions on...

- The venues and locations they're interested in
- The time of the year they would prefer for a retreat
- The types of team building they enjoy (E.g. indoor, outdoor, charitable, social icebreakers)
- The training topics they would like covered
- Any other open-ended ideas they might have

By giving your colleagues a say, you'll be able to make the experience is more inclusive and enjoyable for everyone.

# Create a Budget

Company retreats can vary in price, depending on the number of people attending, the location, and your agenda.



Talk to your boss to determine the amount of money available for the company retreat. Try to keep your budget realistic, but leave a little wiggle room for unexpected expenses.

## Items you may want to budget for include:

- Transportation and parking
- Venue bookings
- Activity providers
- Food and beverage
- Insurance

Your budget will help you determine what is possible for your retreat, and which ideas you may need to scale back on.

# Find the Right Venue

One of the most important decisions you need to make is the type of venue you would like to host your company retreat.



## Remote vs. Urban Settings

Remote settings are great for changing up the pace of the office, bringing everyone together so they're all in one place, and exploring wilderness with your team.

Urban settings, on the other hand, often have more local activities and attractions available in the area, and are more accessible.

## Nearby vs. Far Locations

Nearby locations are great logistically-speaking, but can run the risk of feeling "too close to home." Far locations can give you a better sense of a "retreat," but add extra travel time for employees.

You'll need to find the right balance for your group, goals, and budget.

# Choose the Right Time

It's almost impossible to find a time of the year that works for everyone. But here are some tips for choosing the dates of your retreat.



Scheduling may be a challenge for coworkers who have busy calendars or important roles within your company.

If you have key stakeholders who need to be at the retreat, ensure that those individuals are free before you commit to a day and time.

Here at Outback, we time our annual "Summit" retreat during our slowest season for sales. We also give employees plenty of work breaks throughout the each day, so they can maintain our customer service levels during the retreat.

Note: The venue you choose may be more affordable depending on the time of the year. This is something to consider when choosing the date for your retreat.

# Fine Tune Logistics

Use this checklist to help you plan the logistics of your company retreat, and prevent any details from falling through the cracks.

<b>LOGISTICS CHECKLIST</b>	
✓	<p><b>TRANSPORT</b></p> <p>How will everyone get to the venue? What transportation needs to be arranged?</p>
	<p><b>FOOD &amp; DRINKS</b></p> <p>Will everyone eat together for meals? Or will you provide per diem? What types of snacks and drinks will be available?</p>
	<p><b>LIABILITY WAIVERS</b></p> <p>Will participants need to sign any waivers?</p>
	<p><b>ACCOMODATIONS</b></p> <p>Will participants be staying at an off-site location overnight?</p>
	<p><b>WHAT TO BRING</b></p> <p>What do participants need to know in advance? For example, should they bring clothing for wet weather?</p>
	<p><b>SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES</b></p> <p>What arrangements are needed for employees with disabilities or injuries?</p>





# PART THREE:

## Creating Your Retreat Agenda

*How to Balance Your Retreat  
Agenda with the Right Sessions  
to Ensure Success*

# What Makes a Great Agenda?

The best company retreats have a varied agenda, with lots of different types of business sessions and activities planned for employees.



## So what should you actually do at your company retreat?

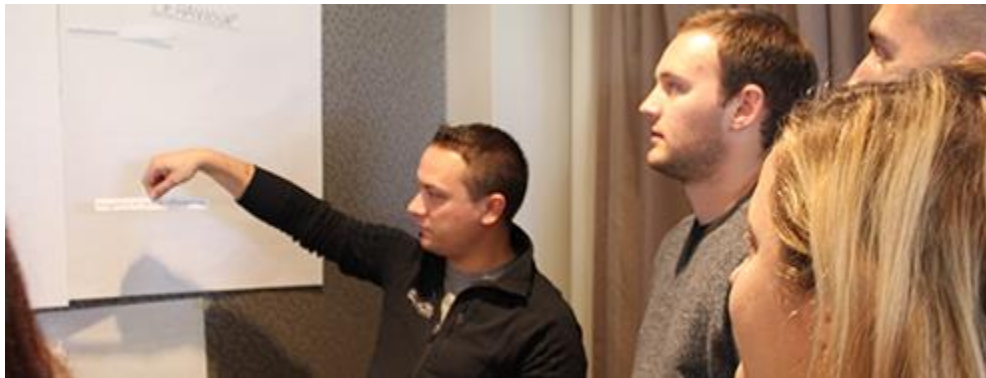
To answer this question, you'll want to refer back to your original goals for the retreat, and come up with a schedule that best helps your group meet them.

After years of experimentation, our team has discovered that the best retreat agendas usually combine:

- [Business sessions](#)
- [Team building](#)
- [Training and development](#)
- [Coaching and consulting](#)
- [Free time](#)

# Business Sessions

Just because you're away from the office doesn't mean you can't get some serious work done at your company retreat.



Some popular business sessions can include:

- **State of the Nation Address** – Kick things off by having a company leader give a general update on the status of the business, and discuss the vision for the future.
- **Product Launches** – Get employees excited about new and upcoming customer products by unveiling and demoing them for the first time.
- **Interdepartmental Meetings** – Encourage communication by having sessions where different departments get to meet and talk through some of their challenges with each other.
- **New Company Initiatives** – This is a great opportunity to launch new employee engagement and workplace culture programs.

# Team Building Activities

You can also use your company retreat as an opportunity to bond and build closer relationships with your team.



Some popular team building ideas include:

- **Indoor Team Building** – You can stay in your meeting space and have fun with a high-energy team building activity, such as Minute To Win It.
- **Outdoor Team Building** – Get some fresh air with an exciting activity that takes your team outdoors, such as Cardboard Boat Building Challenge.
- **Charitable Team Building** – Give back to the community with a charitable activity, such as Bookworm Builders.
- **Local Attractions** – Try something that's unique to your area! Check out TripAdvisor or other websites with local listings to find out what's popular for corporate groups.

# Training & Development

With everyone together, your company retreat is the perfect time to learn new skills and practice them with your colleagues.



Some popular training and development topics for company retreats include:

- **Emotional Intelligence** – Develop the self-awareness of your group with a skill development session, that doubles as a team bonding exercise.
- **Time Management** – Help your coworkers make better use of their time with an interactive training workshop.
- **Communication** – Practice better communication skills with a hands-on experiential learning program.
- **Leadership** – Everyone in your organization has the opportunity to think and act like a leader. Uncover your team's hidden leadership skills with a half-day training session.

# Coaching & Consulting

With the help of a professional business coach and consultant, your team can grow leadership mindsets and start thinking differently.



Some of the best sessions we've had at Outback's "Summit" retreats have been facilitated by professional coaches and consultants.

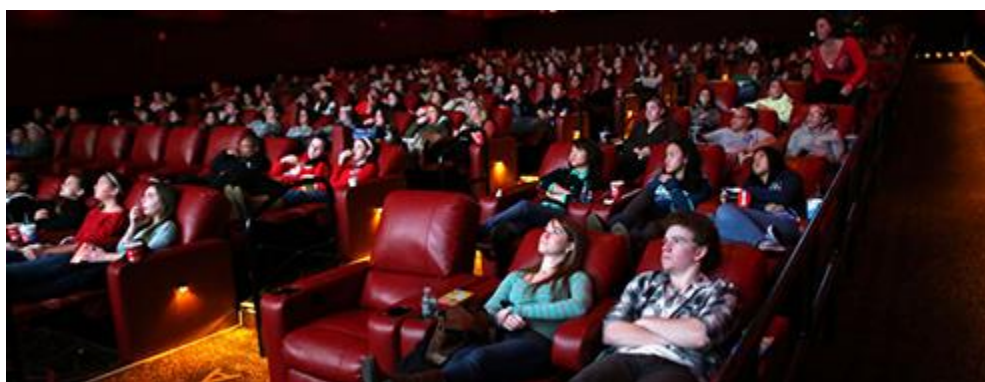
We call these "growth mindset" sessions because they can help employees think differently about business challenges and opportunities.

Some popular programs include:

- **Strategy Planning Consulting** - Help your team create a plan that is both revolutionary and inspirational.
- **Building Team Collaboration Consulting** – Collaborate more effectively with colleagues and leverage each other's strengths.
- **Custom Team Coaching** – Address the unique challenges of your team with a custom program.

# Free Time

One of the biggest mistakes you can make when planning your company retreat is not giving employees enough free time between sessions.



If this is your first year planning a company retreat, it can be tempting to pack the schedule full with different types of sessions.

But one thing we've learned at Outback after planning so many retreats is that sometimes, **less is more**.

Not only is free time a great opportunity for employees to catch up on some work, it can also encourage more socializing, and help people avoid feeling "burned out."

**A good rule of thumb**: for every hour of business sessions at your company retreat, you should have at least a half an hour of free time.

So, if you have a three-hour business session in the afternoon, you might want to offer 45-minute breaks at least, before and afterwards.



**I would score you a 10.  
All-around excellent  
customer service – your  
team was extremely  
helpful. Our staff got so  
much out of this. They  
said it was the best  
retreat we have ever  
done!**



The team from **Integrated Medical Solutions** participated in [Domino Effect Challenge](#) as part of their company retreat.





# PART FOUR:

## The Story Behind Our Yearly Retreat

*Tips and Tricks We've Learned  
from Over a Decade of Planning*

# Our History with Retreats

Outback Team Building & Training has hosted an annual “Summit” retreat with its employees for over a decade.



Not only have our Employee Engagement Consultants helped hundreds of other businesses plan successful company retreats, we also participate in our own “Summit” each and every year.

The first year, it started simple: we brought our small team to a ski cabin out in the middle of nowhere for some impromptu “team building.” Looking back, it was a bit spontaneous and unfocused...But everyone also knew that it was the beginning of something special.

**Over the years, we learned a lot about how to make our annual company retreat more useful and effective.**

Now, “Summit” has transformed into the cornerstone of our business calendar. Outback employees look forward to it all year long as a time to learn, share, bond, and strategize.

# Why Outback Plans a Retreat

There's no doubt that planning a company retreat can be a lot of work...But if you get it right, then you will see the benefits.



Here at Outback Team Building & Training, we have invested more and more resources into our annual "Summit" retreat over the last decade.

## The year-over-year results?

- Employee engagement levels have risen
- Productivity has gone up
- Employee skills have been enhanced
- Teams have become more aligned

# Tips from Our Team

You can help your coworkers form stronger relationships with each other by putting into practice some of these simple tips.



Here are some tried and true ways to encourage team bonding at your company retreat:

- **Set up a Common Room** – Whenever there’s a break or free time in the agenda, let everyone know they are welcome to gather in a common space. In the evenings, you may also want to designate a “social room,” if appropriate for your work culture.
- **Randomize Seating** – Make an announcement at the start of the retreat that employees should try to sit with new people and different coworkers each day.
- **Share Meals** – Whenever possible, try to eat together as a group. Having the chance to socialize as you eat can be one of the best ways to grow your relationships.

# More Tips from Our Team

There are lots of great resources out there to help you create memorable team bonding experiences. Here are some more suggestions.



- **Use the Talents of Your Team** – What hidden talents does your team have and how can you put them to work to make your retreat special? For example, when event organizers realized that one of our employees moonlights in a rock band, we had them bring in their guitar to perform during one of the sessions. These types of moments are what make your retreat memorable and help everyone get to know each other better.
- **Go Green** – You can use a service like [Lineupr](#) to make your retreat schedule easily accessible for everyone using their smartphones. What's great about Lineupr is that it's not an app, it's simply a URL that employees can access anywhere they have Internet access.

# Striking the Right Balance

Remember to strike the right balance between “business” and “fun” at your company retreat. Here are a few more tips.



- **Encourage Partying, But Be Responsible** – This may depend on the work culture you have, and the employees who will be attending your retreat. But a bit of light social drinking can be a great team bonding experience for employees who want to stay out a bit later in the evenings. Just make sure you warn them that there will be consequences if they miss a session or act unprofessional!
- **Keep Some Surprises** – Don't give away exactly what will be happening during every session at your retreat. Keep employees on their toes by leaving some spots purposely ambiguous. This can be a great way to get teams talking, and excited about what's to come!

# Sample Agenda

Check out the actual agenda we used at Outback Team Building & Training for one of our previous “Summit” retreats.

<b><u>DAY TWO</u></b>	
7:00am – 8:30am	Breakfast
8:30am – 9:30am	Work Break
9:30am – 11:30am	<a href="#">Cardboard Boat Building Challenge</a>
11:30am – 2:30pm	Work Break / Free Time
2:30pm – 3:30pm	Boat Building Continued
3:30pm – 3:45pm	Work Break / Free Time
3:45pm – 4:45pm	Benefits Plan Update
4:45pm – 6:00pm	<a href="#">Team Coaching</a> Session #1
6:00pm – 7:00pm	Free Time
7:00pm – 10:30pm	Dinner / Awards Night

**Please Note:** You can view a full, annotated sample agenda by [visiting our website](#).



## PART FIVE:

# Colleague Connections

*A Free Team Building Icebreaker  
for Company Retreats*



# Colleague Connections

This team building icebreaker can help employees get to know each other better at your next company retreat.



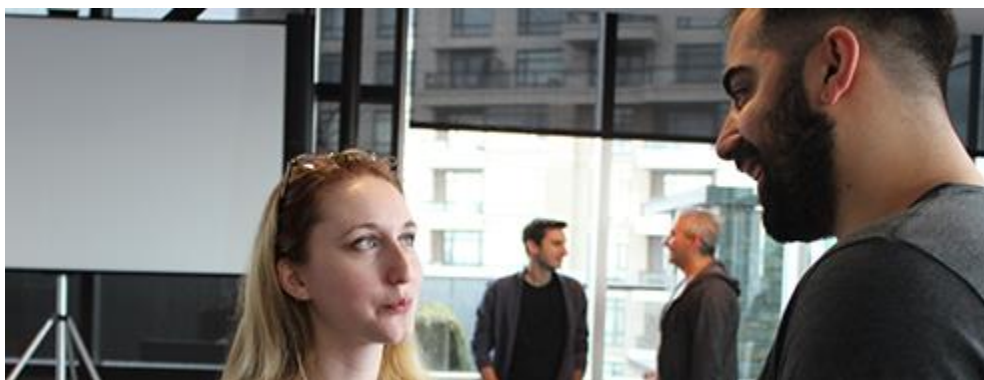
The icebreaker itself is actually quite simple: employees spend five-minute intervals one-on-one with their colleagues asking questions designed to help them learn more about each other. After every five minutes, employees switch to meet with a different colleague. By the end of the activity, every employee should have met with everyone else in the room at least once.

## **Colleague Connections is ideal for business retreats because...**

- It's very easy to explain and requires no set-up
- You can try it anywhere with any sized group
- It is a sure-fire way to help employees build stronger relationships
- It's free! Just follow the instructions below

# Getting Started

You can think of it like “speed dating” for building relationships on your team. It’s perfect for exploring common areas of interest.



Here’s how to set it up:

- 1. Figure out the conversation order** – The goal is for everyone to speak with everyone else in the room at least once. For the Outback Team Building & Training company retreat, we set up a simple [Conversation Matrix](#) and shared it with everyone so they knew who was talking to who, and who they would be talking to next.
- 2. Figure Out How Much Time You Need** – Colleague Connections works best at company retreats if you split it up over multiple sessions, ideally over multiple days. Try to plan it out so that employees go through no more than seven or eight conversations in a single session, otherwise they might get burned out on all of the chit-chatting.

# How It Works

Keep reading to learn about the last three steps for getting started with the icebreaker: Colleague Connections.



- 3. Send Out 50 Questions** – You can print out the 50 questions below or email them to your colleagues. Explain that employees shouldn't feel limited by the questions on the sheet – these are just meant to be the starting off points for their conversations.
- 4. Explain the Rules** – Here's the thing: there aren't really that many rules! The goal of the icebreaker is just to give everyone a chance to get to know each other better. As long as employees are talking to the right people when they're supposed to be, you shouldn't need to worry very much.
- 5. Keep Things Moving** – Once it's time to start, make sure you assign someone the duty of keeping time. Around every five minutes, have this person shout out that it's time to switch to a new conversation partner. People should catch on fast!

# 50 Sample Questions

For the full list of questions, visit the [article on our website](#). You can use these questions to get conversations started at your retreat.



1. What is your spirit animal?
2. What was your dream profession growing up?
3. What is something you have always wanted to do?
4. Do you have any family traditions?
5. Do you have a favorite song to listen to when you need your spirits lifted?
6. What was your favorite movie as a kid and why?
7. Would you like to be famous? In what way?
8. What's your dream car?
9. What is something you think is totally overrated?
10. If I handed you a plane ticket right now to anywhere in the world, where would you go?



## PART SIX:

# Top 20 Destinations for Company Retreats

*The Most Memorable Places to  
Visit with Your Team*

# #1. San Francisco, CA



San Francisco is a hub for technology companies in California, but it's also a great place to visit for a business retreat. The city is a marvel of innovation and can serve as an inspiring backdrop for your meetings, activities, and team building.

**Best Time of The Year to Visit:** September – November

**Recommended Venues:** [Corporate Event Venues](#)

**Recommended Team Building Activities:**

- [Tour Alcatraz](#) – The famous abandoned prison is one of the top sights to see in the city. Spend the afternoon with your group taking the ferry over to the island and learning more about the notorious prisoners who were kept there.
- [Play Retro Arcade Games](#) – Located at Fisherman's Wharf, the Musee Mecanique is an antique penny arcade collection that will transport your group back to a simpler time. The games inside cost between 1 cent and 50 cents to play, so it won't break your budget either!
- [Wild Goose Chase](#) – Explore the city with an interactive scavenger hunt. Teams can split up and compete in photo and video challenges that get them running around and learning more about areas like North Beach, the Financial District, or The Presidio.

## #2. Scottsdale, AZ



Scottsdale, Arizona is a great location if you're planning a more luxurious company retreat for your team. This city has warm weather, boutique shopping, and plenty of upscale resorts that will be able to accommodate your group.

**Best Time of The Year to Visit:** February - April

**Recommended Venues:** [Corporate Event Venues in Scottsdale](#)

**Recommended Team Building Activities:**

- [Golfing](#) – There are several incredible golf courses in Scottsdale, including the Legend Trail Golf Club, Meridian CondoResorts, and the Longbow Golf Club. You could plan to have some lessons for newcomers, while the more experienced golfers hit the links.
- [Clue Murder Mystery](#) – Beat the heat with an indoor team building activity like Clue Murder Mystery. Challenge your group to put their heads together and see if they can figure out the means, motive, and method for a deadly murder.
- [Cowboy Adventures](#) – Since you're in the desert, why not go for an authentic cowboy experience? Take a visit to the Cave Creek Outfitters to try a guided horseback ride, an old west cookout, or some authentic cowboy games!

## #3. Whistler, BC



With over 20 conference hotels, Whistler, British Columbia is a great spot on the west coast for your next meeting or retreat. Breathtaking mountains provide the perfect backdrop for corporate getaways.

**Best Time of The Year to Visit:** December - February

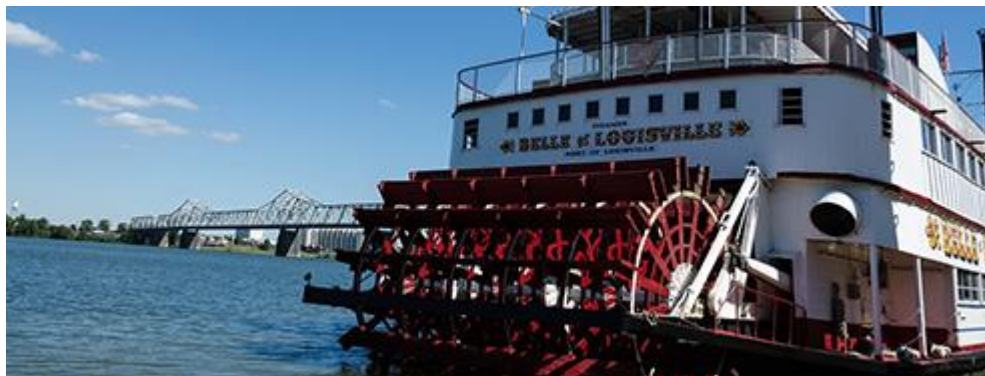
**Recommended Venues:** [Corporate Event Venues in Whistler](#)

**Recommended Team Building Activities:**

- [Eagle Glider Construction Challenge](#) - Experience the natural beauty of the mountains while building and flying your very own eagle gliders. This is a challenge that will test your engineering skills as much as your creativity.
- [Skiing & Snowboarding](#) – In the winter months, you can take your team to the top of the Whistler and Blackcomb mountains for some incredible downhill skiing and snowboarding. It's worth going up for the views alone!
- [Whistler Bobsleigh](#) – Jump into a four-person bobsled and travel more than 75 mph as you twist and turn down this world-famous Olympic track. This is the type of experience you won't be able to get anywhere else!



## #4. Louisville, KY



Louisville is one of the best cities in North America for company retreats because it combines southern charm with just the right amount of quirkiness. This is a world-class destination for food, culture, and, of course, bourbon.

**Best Time of The Year to Visit:** September - October

**Recommended Venues:** [Corporate Event Venues in St. Louis](#)

**Recommended Team Building Activities:**

- [The Urban Bourbon Experience](#) – There are over 44 bars and restaurants in Louisville that specialize in bourbon. Pick up a few Urban Bourbon Trail Passports at the Louisville Visitor Center and make an evening out of drinking and eating your way across the city.
- [Louisville Mega Cavern](#) – This former limestone mine is a huge underground facility that is sure to make an impression on your group. Once you're down under, you can try over six different indoor zip lines or test your balance on one of the rope courses in the cavern.
- [Getting To Know You](#) – Designed for large-scale company meetings and retreats, this networking activity can help everyone get to know each other better by challenging them to learn fun facts about the other participants.

## #5. New York City, NY



The largest city in the United States, New York City remains one of the top destinations for company retreats despite how expensive it can be. Here's the good news: there are options for teams with smaller budgets as long as you're willing to be flexible and stay a bit outside of Manhattan.

**Best Time of The Year to Visit:** September - November

**Recommended Venues:** [Corporate Event Venues](#)

**Recommended Team Building Activities:**

- [The Amazing Chase](#) – Take your group on an interactive race through the streets of New York City, inspired by the hit reality TV show. Teams will have to work together and complete all of the “Road Block” and “Detour” challenges.
- [Pizza School NYC](#) – As any New Yorker will tell you, NYC is one of the best places in the world to eat pizza. But did you know that you can actually learn some of the pizza-making secrets from the top chefs in the city? Check out Pizza School NYC for a fun, hands-on, and filling team building experience.
- [Tour Rockefeller Center](#) – The iconic building is in the heart of Midtown and features a stunning Observation Deck that can give your group an amazing view of the city, and a special NBC Studios tour that can show you backstage.

## #6. Boston, MA



Looking for an alternative, more affordable destination than New York City? Boston is growing in popularity for meeting planners, with newly upgraded convention centers. With history around every corner and a young local population, the city is perfect for attendees of any age.

**Best Time of The Year to Visit:** June - October

**Recommended Venues:** [Corporate Event Venues in Boston](#)

**Recommended Team Building Activities:**

- [The Action Kitchen](#) – Bring your team into a state-of-the-art kitchen to create a menu set by a world-class chef. The Action Kitchen is perfect if you're looking for a culinary team building experience in the city.
- [Paddle Boston River Tours](#) – One of the best ways to see Boston isn't on foot, but actually by kayak! These harbour tours begin and end at Kendall Square, and are designed for paddlers of any skill level.
- [Charity Bike Buildathon](#) – Build and donate bicycles to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston in this popular charitable team building activity. Your team will feel great after they give back with this heart-warming experience.

## #7. Puerto Vallarta, Mexico



If you're searching for somewhere tropical for your next company retreat, Puerto Vallarta is a beautiful resort city with sunshine and beaches to spare. Event planners agree with the city slogan of "the friendliest city in the world," and often pick the picturesque destination for conferences and meetings.

**Best Time of The Year to Visit:** December - February

**Recommended Venues:** [Corporate Event Venues in Mexico](#)

**Recommended Team Building Activities:**

- [Cardboard Boat Building Challenge](#) – Head out to one of Puerto Vallarta's sandy beaches and challenge your colleagues to build working boats out of nothing but cardboard and tape. This team building activity is sure to make a splash!
- [Zipline & Aerial Adventure Parks](#) – Plan a day of action by going on a canopy tour and zip-lining adventure.
- [Snorkelling Trips](#) – Dive beneath the water to see a different side of Mexico. Unlike scuba diving, anyone can learn how to use snorkelling equipment in just a few minutes and experience what life is like the under the water.

## #8. Calgary, AB



Calgary is a great destination for team building retreats – it has a nice mix of big-city energy and small-town hospitality. The youthful urban core of the city is surrounded by the natural beauty of Rocky Mountain foothills, making it perfect for meetings or events that need a variety of versatile settings.

**Best Time of The Year to Visit:** May - September

**Recommended Venues:** [Corporate Event Venues in Calgary](#)

**Recommended Team Building Activities:**

- [Calgary Stampede](#) – Every July, the city hosts the “greatest outdoor show on earth” celebrating western heritage and values.
- [Athlete Games](#) – If your team is looking for something physical, at WinSport you can try anything from ziplining to the skyline luge.
- [Corporate Castaways](#) – Compete in a Survivor-themed competition that is designed to see who can outwit, outplay, and outlast. This activity is available in any of Calgary’s beautiful parks.

## #9. Denver, CO



The fresh mountain air of “Mile-High City” might just be exactly what your team needs for your next company retreat. In Denver, you’ll find a variety of exciting indoor and outdoor activities that can make your agenda more well-rounded and fun for employees.

**Best Time of The Year to Visit:** May - September

**Recommended Venues:** [Corporate Event Venues in Denver](#)

**Recommended Team Building Activities:**

- [Drink at Grandma’s House](#) – No, this isn’t a joke! There’s a brewery in Denver called “Grandma’s House” that is available for private events and company retreats. It’s a 2,000 square foot room with 30-foot ceilings, homemade craft stations, homey couches, and lots of quilts.
- [End-Hunger Games](#) – With this team building activity, you can complete challenges to earn food donation items for a local Denver food bank. Let the games begin!
- [Axe Throwing](#) – Take a swing with this entertaining activity that can help you feel like a real lumberjack! At Bad Axe Throwing in Denver, you can work with a coach to learn the basics of throwing axes and team up for some team building competitions.

## #10. Orlando, FL



Orlando is well-known for its world-renowned theme parks, restaurants, and meeting facilities. And with tons of options available for business retreats, it's no wonder that this has always been a popular destination for event planners.

**Best Time of The Year to Visit:** January - April

**Recommended Venues:** [Corporate Event Venues in Orlando](#)

**Recommended Team Building Activities:**

- [Walt Disney World Resort](#)– Tap into your inner child with the Magic Kingdom, Hollywood Studios, and Animal Kingdom theme parks.
- [Universal Studios](#) – Step into the world of the movies with wild roller coasters and interactive experiences.
- [Play It Forward](#) – Bring your own bit of magic to “Downtown Disney” with a charitable activity challenging teams to complete as many good deeds as possible in a limited amount of time.

# #11. Austin, TX



There's such a wide variety of things to see and do in Austin, that it would be impossible to list them all out here. Just make sure that if you visit, you plan a few extra days so your group can take in as much as possible before you head back to the office.

**Best Time of The Year to Visit:** September – November

**Recommended Venues:** [Corporate Event Venues in Austin](#)

**Recommended Team Building Activities:**

- [Austin Bubble Soccer](#) – Get inside giant plastic bubbles with your team and play a game of soccer like you've never experienced before.
- [Sample the Local BBQ](#) – If your team has a taste for BBQ, then there's no better destination than Austin. Check out some of the popular food tours that are available in the city.
- [Mission Incredible](#) – Go on a custom adventure with your team – from learning to dance a two-step, to swimming across the Barton Springs. Mission Incredible is a great way to show your team exactly why Austin is the top destination for team building.



## #12. Nashville, TN



Nashville is home to some of America's friendliest people and would make an excellent destination choice for your next retreat. Not only is there great food, music, and entertainment – you'll also find that venue options here are much more affordable than other locations.

**Best Time of The Year to Visit:** April - October

**Recommended Venues:** [Corporate Event Venues in Nashville](#)

**Recommended Team Building Activities:**

- [Party Bike & Tavern Tours](#) – What could be more fun than cycling around downtown Nashville on a gigantic bicycle with drinks and food? Check out Sprocket Tours to learn more about this trendy new activity.
- [Military Support Mission](#) - Support the troops with a charity activity that directly benefits military personnel serving abroad.
- [AR Workshop Nashville](#) – Get crafty with an activity that will bring out your group's creative side. At the AR Workshop Nashville, you can participate in a private instructor-led workshop where you learn how to make some home décor out of raw materials.

## #13. Washington D.C.



A destination with some of the most recognizable buildings and monuments in the world, Washington D.C. is an excellent location for meetings, business retreats, and team building. The political capital of the United States isn't all statues and politics though – your team can try some new experiences to have a seriously good time during their visit as well.

**Best Time of The Year to Visit:** September - November

**Recommended Venues:** [Corporate Event Venues in Washington D.C.](#)

**Recommended Team Building Activities:**

- [Go Ape Ropes Course](#) – Unleash your inner Tarzan with a classic team building experience. Climb up ladders, swing on ropes, and challenge your group to complete the treetop course together.
- [Common Good City Farm](#)– Volunteer on an urban healthy food farm. Gets hands-on training on how to plant and harvest sustainable crops for the community.
- [Urban Fear Factor](#) – Split into teams and complete interactive challenges in areas like Old Town, Capitol Hill, Georgetown, and U Street.

## #14. Portland, OR



There's a reason why the city slogan is "Keep Portland Weird," and it's also what makes this such a great destination for corporate retreats. Bring your group to Portland if you want employees to think a little bit differently about your business challenges and step outside of their comfort zones.

**Best Time of The Year to Visit:** June - August

**Recommended Venues:** [Corporate Event Venues in Portland](#)

**Recommended Team Building Activities:**

- [Domino Effect Challenge](#) – See how well your team can think on their feet with Domino Effect Challenge. In this activity, employees use household items to assemble a gigantic "chain-reaction" device.
- [BrewBarge Portland](#) – Enjoy Portland from a different perspective by going on a 90-minute river cruise. The best part? You can bring your own drinks on board!
- [Go Roller Skating](#) – Oaks Park is the largest roller-skating rink in America, and an absolute blast for groups looking to team build. You can compete to see who can skate the fastest, skate in a disco, or just freestyle!

## #15. Los Angeles, CA



Your team can hit the streets of Tinseltown for your company retreat to check out where the stars go, attend a taping of your favorite TV show, or just relax in the Santa Monica bay. Los Angeles is the ideal mix of relaxed west coast vibes, and serious entertainment business.

**Best Time of The Year to Visit:** January - April

**Recommended Venues:** [Corporate Event Venues in Los Angeles](#)

**Recommended Team Building Activities:**

- [Hollywood Walk of Fame](#) – Stretching 15 blocks on Hollywood Boulevard, the Hollywood Walk of Fame is a great (and free) way to spend time with your group.
- [The Getty Center](#) – Your team can marvel at one of the largest collections of art in the world, covering everything from Claude Monet to Vincent Van Gogh.
- [Escape Room: Jewel Heist](#) – Someone has stolen a collection of precious Hollywood gemstones, and it's up to your team to find them before time runs out! Our team can set up this escape room experience wherever your team is located, right in any hotel or venue meeting space.

## #16. Seattle, WA



Yes, it does rain a lot in this city! But even on the wettest days, Seattle is a place that is fun to explore. From checking out the Museum of Pop Culture, to watching the fish fly at Pike Place Market, to going to the very top of the iconic Space Needle – this city has a lot to offer.

**Best Time of The Year to Visit:** July - August

**Recommended Venues:** [Corporate Event Venues in Seattle](#)

**Recommended Team Building Activities:**

- [Putt Putt Golf](#) – The Flatstick Pub is more than just an ordinary brewhouse – it's also home to an incredible indoor miniature golf course. Have a few drinks with your team and see if you can earn par on the surprisingly unique and challenging golf holes.
- [Supercar Derby Challenge](#) – Want to put your teamwork to the test? Supercar Derby Challenge is a fun and exciting activity that will have employees working together to build and race their very own derby cars.
- [Go on a Ghost Tour](#) – Looking to learn a bit more about the history of Seattle? The Spooked In Seattle Ghost Tours are a great way to explore the city while learning a bit more about some of its dark secrets.

## #17. Toronto, ON



The rapidly-developing business capital of Canada, Toronto is a great spot for meetings and retreats. While there are plenty of major attractions, such as the CN Tower and Exhibition Place, there are also lots of little hidden gems in this city just waiting for your team to discover.

**Best Time of The Year to Visit:** September - October

**Recommended Venues:** [Corporate Event Venues in Toronto](#)

**Recommended Team Building Activities:**

- [Spin Ping-Pong](#) – If your team likes ping-pong, then you need to check out Spin. The social club can accommodate up to 400 guests and offers customized ping-pong lessons and tournaments for corporate groups.
- [Archery Tag](#) – One of the biggest new trends in the city is archery tag. Don't worry – it's not as dangerous as it sounds! All of the arrows are made out of foam, which means this is just a fun and energetic way to burn off some steam with your group.
- [Minute To Win It](#) – Have you ever wondered what it would be like if your team was on a TV gameshow? Minute To Win It is a team building activity available in any indoor venue that has teams go head-to-head in a series of 60-second challenges.

# #18. Chicago, IL



Chicago is a huge city that is also extremely accessible and easy to get around. The elevated trains can take your group anywhere from Chinatown to Lakeview, which means you can take full advantage of this destination if you plan your next corporate retreat here.

**Best Time of The Year to Visit:** May - June

**Recommended Venues:** [Corporate Event Venues in Chicago](#)

**Recommended Team Building Activities:**

- [WhirlyBall](#) – What do you get when you combine lacrosse, hockey, basketball, and bumper cars? You get WhirlyBall of course! You can play this popular game in Chicago at a location with food, drinks, and other activities.
- [Indoor Skydiving](#) – If you're looking to try something a little bit different, the iFLY Indoor Skydiving Park is something that your team is sure to remember long after the retreat is over.
- [Random Acts Of Kindness](#) – Go spread some kindness in the city of Chicago! This charity scavenger hunt will have teams competing to see who can complete the most volunteer challenges before time runs out.

# #19. Greensboro, NC



Get away from it all by visiting Greensboro, North Carolina with your group! This city has plenty of exciting attractions to see, but is also just a short drive away from several wilderness locations that would be ideal for teams looking to unplug.

**Best Time of The Year to Visit:** May - August

**Recommended Venues:** [Corporate Event Venues](#)

**Recommended Team Building Activities:**

- [Hiking](#) – From Owl’s Roost Trail to the West House Trail, there is plenty of nature walks and hikes available in the area for teams looking to explore the outdoors. These orienteering adventures can be a great way to bond and connect with your colleagues.
- [Team Pursuit](#) – Available in any indoor hotel or meeting venue, Team Pursuit is an activity that has mental, physical, and skill-based challenges. It takes a well-rounded team to come out on top in this competition!
- [Mountain Biking Tours](#) – Just a few hours away from downtown Greensboro is Pisgah Mountain Bike Adventures. You can plan a daytrip with their professional guides to learn how to ride and see the beautiful sights.



## #20. Las Vegas, NV



The entertainment capital of the world, Las Vegas is home to some of the largest hotels and casinos on the planet and is also one of the top destinations for company retreats. With new and modern convention facilities and affordable travel prices, this tourist destination is now just as much a place for business as it is for pleasure.

**Best Time of The Year to Visit:** March - May

**Recommended Venues:** [Corporate Event Venues in Las Vegas](#)

**Recommended Team Building Activities:**

- [Wild Goose Chase](#) – A modern-day and budget-friendly scavenger hunt through the Las Vegas strip – complete photo challenges like splashing in the casino fountains and capturing the MGM lions in their natural habitat.
- [Dale Jarrett Racing Adventure](#) – Drive race cars at extreme speeds on the Las Vegas Motor Speedway.
- [Shine Alternative Fitness](#) – Learn acrobatics in a fitness class taught by real-life Cirque du Soleil performers.



# PART SEVEN:

## Final Thoughts

*Practical Ways to Follow-Up On  
Your Company Retreat*

# Soliciting Feedback

After your company retreat is over, you can poll employees about what they found most useful and exciting about the experience.



**Try sending out a poll with the following questions:**

- What was your favorite session?
- What was your least favorite session?
- Which session did you find the most useful?
- Which session did you find the most fun?
- How would you rate the venue?
- How would you rate the accommodations?
- How would you rate the meals?

Using this data, you'll be able to highlight the successes of the retreat, get a sense of what connected with employees, and refine your agenda to plan an even better retreat next time!

# 5 Other Ways to Follow Up

There are a few other key things you should do to follow up after your company retreat is over. Here is what our team recommends.



In the weeks that follow your company retreat, try to take action on the following items...

**#1. Track Engagement** - The month after your retreat is over, you'll want to pay particularly close attention to your employee engagement levels. Here at Outback Team Building & Training, we almost always notice a rise in engagement in the period following our company retreat.

**#2. Collect Notes from Sessions** – While employees should be taking their own notes during important business sessions, you can make sure nobody misses anything by compiling everything afterwards in one place. Try adding all of your notes to one folder that is accessible to everyone, including slide presentations and other relevant documents.

## 5 Other Ways to Follow Up

Once you check all of these items off your list, you should be able to pat yourself on the back for a job well done!



**#3. Share Photos & Videos of Staff** – One of the easiest ways to keep the positive feelings going is to share all of the photos and videos you took during the retreat. These can be great keepsakes for the team and can help to remind everyone about all of the amazing shared experiences they had with each other.

**#4. Write a Summary Report** – Once the dust settles, you'll want to create a report highlighting the results of your business retreat. In this report, you can share the data from the feedback poll you sent earlier, any actionable items that came out of the sessions during the retreat, and improvements you noticed in employee engagement.

**#5. Start Planning for Next Year** – Planning one company retreat is a great start, but for best results you should try to plan an experience like this at least once a year with your team.



“

Every year we organize a company retreat, and Outback has been a tremendous help. You made planning the activities and team building a seamless process. Thank you so much!

## PlentyOfFish

The team from **PlentyOfFish** participated in [The Amazing Chase](#) team building activity as part of their company retreat.



# Get In Touch

For help planning the team building, training, or consulting sessions at your retreat, get in touch:



**1-800-565-8735**



**info@outbackteambuilding.com**



**www.outbackteambuilding.com**

**BOOK YOUR FREE CONSULTATION**