

15 Virtual Team Building Games for Remote Teams in 2021

Author: Neeraj Madzivanyika . November 2021

With just a click of a button, you can have productive discussions with over ten different people, all in different time zones. Companies like Facebook, Salesforce, Uber, Alibaba, and Airbnb have thousands of employees worldwide, most of whom will most likely never meet!

COVID-19 has accelerated the trend away from traditional office work in general, to the point where even companies that do not maintain full-time remote work policies after the pandemic ends are unlikely to revert to their pre-COVID-19 work arrangements. It is not a far-fetched idea that some companies have resorted to full remote working arrangements for the foreseeable future.

Some scholars predict that, in the long run, workers, especially in the tech industry, continue working from home at least [20%](#) of the time.

Whether your company has resorted to a full or part remote working arrangement, chances are contact has reduced significantly. So what effect does this have on your team?

Mental Health

Aetna International [surveyed](#) employees on corporate wellness in 2020. According to the findings of this poll, 74 per cent of all workers said their mental health was harming their productivity.

84 per cent said their mental health was more important to them at the time of the survey than it was the year before. The drastic shift to remote working has negatively affected mental health- an assertion many of us can relate with.

Communication

Yang et al. (2021) carried out a study on over 61 000 Microsoft Employees. In this study, they aimed to figure out the effects of remote work on the collaboration of workers. They found that employees tended to drift more to people they had stronger personal connections with and further away from those with weaker personal relationships. Moreover, employees' collaborative networks were more rigid and isolated as a result of company-wide remote work. These effects make it harder for employees to acquire

and share new information across different departments.

Informal workplace meetings may boost morale, and many businesses discover that informal, one-on-one encounters are critical to information flow.

Isolation

Although technology has brought the entire world closer by allowing remote working (a necessary convenience with the global Covid-19 pandemic), it's easy for people to feel alienated. The [Eurofound](#) report found this to be the one of (if not the) biggest problems of remote working. Lack of informal Communication and isolation.

In a survey of 5000 participants by Glassdoor, over half (56%) reported that, [when it comes to job satisfaction, good company culture is more important than salary](#).

Organisations that care about the wellbeing of their human capital have been trying to find ways to maintain a good work culture and cultivate stronger bonds across teams. In this article, we will share with you 15 virtual team-building games to boost employee engagement and help keep your team marching to the beat of one drum!

1. Werewolf

One of the best and most engaging games for teams is a werewolf. For this game, you will need your best poker face and perhaps amazing people skills. The game is mostly based on spoken word, making it ideal for playing online.

To play this game remotely, choose one person to be the storyteller, and then assign the following roles to participants at random:

1. **The Werewolf** - A werewolf has two jobs: devour villagers and survive so that he can eat more villages.
2. **Villagers**: they are the ordinary people in the game who have no unique abilities but are desperately hoping to make it through the night.
3. **Medic**: Each round, the medic can save up to one villager.
4. **A Seer**: This character can look into the depths of another player's soul to see if they are a werewolf or not.
5. **The Hunter**: When a hunter dies, they can point a finger at any other player and kill them.

To play, send the roles to the participants in advance by private message or email. There should be one werewolf, one medic, and three villagers in a group of five. Add one werewolf, one special role, and three villagers for every extra five individuals. Because the ratios are adaptable, you may change them to fit your needs.

The narrator proclaims “night has fallen” at the start of the game, and all participants must close their eyes and tap their knees or keyboards to make a pitter-patter sound. The narrator announces “werewolves wake up” after a few seconds, and any players who have the werewolf role must wake up and pick a single victim through private messaging.

The narrator then wakes up the medic and seer in order, putting the werewolves back to slumber. During the medic’s turn to be awake, they can point to a player and save them from the werewolf’s jaws. Nobody dies over the night if the medic chooses the same player as the werewolf. The narrator can respond yes or no to whether a player is a werewolf when the seer points to them.

The narrator states, “the sun is coming up”, and either the name of the player who was devoured by the werewolves or that no one was eaten if the medic picked properly after all special roles are performed. Everyone in the game can open their eyes and discuss who the werewolf is. To conclude the round, all participants vote on who should be eliminated from the game or pass and wait for the next round. Any player who is removed by the werewolves or by a vote becomes a friendly ghost who cannot talk for the rest of the game but can watch it in silent frustration.

Repeat until werewolves or villagers are the only players left.

2. Can you hear me now?

This game may be played entirely online and in a virtual conference call.

To begin, choose one player as the Describer and the others as Artists. The Describer must teach the Artists how to sketch a sunflower, a kite, or a calculator entirely in geometric terms.

For example, you could say “Draw an upside-down triangle” and then “add circles to the base flat side of the triangle” but not “Draw an Ice-cream.”

You have as much time as you like to play each round, although three minutes is generally plenty. The Describer receives one point for each Artist who correctly guesses the object after each round, and each Artist receives one point for each accurate guess.

3. Virtual Pictionary

Pictionary is a fun game in which players sketch while others guess what they are drawing. Improvise, think creatively, compete, and more are all part of the game.

How to play

1. Make separate breakout areas for your team.

2. Assign three hints to each participant in each room.
3. Each drawing that a member of the team correctly guesses earns them one point. Any hints that players miss or guess incorrectly get no points for their team.

Bring everyone back to the main area after 15 minutes to share scores.

4. Mister Rogers Calls

This game gets its name from a 70's American reality TV Show where Mr Rogers would "get o know his neighbours"

How to play

Get an app to randomly pair two members of your remote staff at random each week. The members of the team then set up a conference call for later in the week. The only rules are that the call should last roughly 30 minutes and that you should **not** discuss work throughout it.

5. The Questions game

The Question Game is an easy online team-building activity that doesn't require any preparation or special equipment. To begin, ask someone a question, and they must react by asking you or another player a question. You're out if you wait five seconds. You're out as well if you talk without first constructing a question.

Here's an example

John: "Isn't it a great day to go for a braai?"

Keresenzia: "What makes you say that, John?"

John: "Because summers are for braais and good vibes."

In this example, John would be out! A great question instead would have been, "Sorry, what was that?"

6. Zoom Charades

Prepare a list of Google Image sites or a random image generator to play Virtual Charades. Each player's turn requires them to act out what they see in the image, and their teammates can predict each one for points. Rep till you've exhausted your amusement.

7. "It's gotta be__"

In this game, participants send weird/ interesting facts about themselves to the facilitator. The facilitator then reads out the facts while the rest of the group tries to match the fact to the colleague.

Rule: *Keep the game clean because the goal of team-building activities for remote workers is to foster camaraderie among your employees.*

8. Two Truths and a lie

On a video conference call, get each participant to tell two truths and a lie about themselves. The rest of the group takes turns to guess the lie.

This is a fun way to get rid of any awkwardness. It's such a fun way to know interesting facts about your workmates.

9. Virtual Scavenger Hunt

This game may be a lot of fun, and the best thing is that you can give one clue every day or all of the clues at once.

Members of your team will look for the objects you've specified in their homes or offices. They may be rather amusing, for example, you can have them look for a t-shirt with fruit on it. Everyone will be able to see what they've found on the screen and say what they think about other people's finds. It can turn out to be hours of fun. The more random, the better!.

10. Scribble

For this game, you can use a website, [Skribbl.io](https://skribbl.io). Each user signs in and joins the team room that has been assigned to them. Following then, each player will have a turn as the artist. When it's their time, they'll have to select a word from a list of three alternatives and draw it in 80 seconds.

After then, the other players have 80 seconds to guess what the person is drawing. The person who guesses the drawing the fastest receives the most points, and the one who has the most posts after the game wins!

11. Guess the sentence

This game requires a few minutes of preparation. Each player must come up with a sentence made entirely of emojis. Everyone takes turns to be a "Speaker" (a playful misnomer). The "Speaker" types out the emojis while the rest of the team tries to make out a meaningful sentence from it.

12. Virtual impromptu debates

This may take other back down memory lane to their high school days. For this activity, you can split people into groups. Affirmative vs. Negative. The facilitator would need to prepare the topics beforehand. However, the participants will only get the topic as soon as they are placed into teams.

Here are some examples of debate topics:

1. Pineapple belongs on pizza
2. Sock-shoe, sock –shoe vs. Sock-Sock; Shoe shoe
3. Kim Kardashian is better than Oprah

The sillier the topic the better!

13. I'm Shazam

How well do you know your music? This game will test just that! You can divide your group into teams. Each team comes up with 10 to 15 songs. One Group plays the first 15 seconds of the song while the opposing groups try to guess the name of the artist and the song first.

14. Virtual Ted-Talk

In this activity, each of the members gets to lead the rest of the team down a rabbit hole of their favourite quirky topic.

In true *Ted-esque* fashion, each speaker gets to pick a non-work-related topic they are deeply passionate about. It can be anything from “*How to bake the perfect chocolate mousse*”, “All you need to know about oranges.” to “*Why I think Koalas are not great animals!*”

Teammates get to learn more about topics that their workmates care about as well as enjoy a good laugh here and there!

15. Office NCIS

There have been robberies around everyone's neighbourhood last night. The thieves, unfortunately, managed to escape. Luckily we have witnesses and professional sketch artists!

How to play

1. Divide everyone into teams
2. Use an online random face generator to create a face.
3. Show the "robber's" face to one team member at a time. *WhatsApp or Snapchat's one-time view feature would be great for this.*
4. Allow the person who saw the face to describe it to the rest of the group.

Based on the description, the other members must draw the face.

1. Collect your photographs after 10 minutes.
2. The portrait that is the most accurate representation of the actual face is the winner!

There are many ways to foster better communication, camaraderie, and engagement in your organisations. Team building activities are always a great place to start. With a good bit of preparation and little creativity, the possibilities are endless!

Neeraj Madzivanyika is a Talent Acquisition Consultant at Industrial Psychology Consultants (Pvt) Ltd. a management and human resources consulting firm.

Phone +263 (242) 481946-48/4

Email: neeraj@ipcconsultants.com

Website: www.ipcconsultants.com

170 Arcturus Road, Greendale, Harare

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