

80 for 50

By Justin Knecht

All right, you want your money's worth? Motivating your internal team doesn't have to be expensive. Here are 80 ideas you can do with your team for around or less than \$50. Consider doing some of these out of your own pocket, the loyalty you'll build is invaluable. Also, you have the perfect comeback for any bean counters. "I paid for this myself."

1. Buy a game of Cranium and play it, or just play a board game. Do this with another department, like Marketing.
2. Hold a life drawing class, with or without a model.
3. Take a \$5 shopping trip to find great design at any retailer. Have a show & tell when you return.
4. Have a staff meeting outside
5. Someone brings in breakfast on Fridays
6. Order pizza when comping, or try having everyone bring in a small pizza from their favorite pizza joint and have a pizza party, sampling from every pizzeria in town.
7. Toy Fair has free admission
8. And when you are in New York, visit any Museum, preferably the Met, because it is donation only!
9. Build a snowman in the winter
10. Carve pumpkins at Halloween. Vote on them if you like.
11. Create a haunted open house and be sure to wear costumes.
12. Paint your studio, or at least one wall with a department mural
13. Create an irreverent version of a classic product (Barbie, etc.), or a take off on one of your own.
14. Do tag team design, where you need to pass a design to at least three people in your department to complete it.
15. Get a whiteboard and post inspirational quotes, write them on walls, hang them from the ceiling
16. Place a poem or saying on your front door to welcome people in. We have Shel Silverstein's "Invitation" on our door:
17. Have book reports each month, and when you find an interesting article in a magazine, don't keep it to yourself
18. Get a bulletin board and fill it with cool stuff
19. Hang a clothesline for design in progress in a busy intersection where people can write down their comments in passing
20. Sponsor peer training within the group, it doesn't cost a thing and everyone has a talent to share



Justin Knecht
Sr. Manager, Creative Services
Binney & Smith Inc.
1100 Church Lane
Easton, PA 18044
p. 610.253.6272 x 4807
f. 610.258.3744
<http://www.crayola.com>

21. Hang up your work in the department
22. Have a potluck dinner, families invited
23. Have a Happy Hour on a Friday
24. Chew On This ... Show a movie in the department on the LCD projector or bring in other inspiring snippets from interviews, biographies, CBS Sunday Morning segments
25. Challenge another department to a sporting event (Bowling, Softball, Quoits, etc.)
26. If you do, be sure to create t-shirts for your team
27. Create Fire Team projects where a team is pulled together to attack an internal task that focuses on the department. Make time to focus on your department.
28. Set aside a whole or half day a month to cleaning up and cleaning out
29. Get plants
30. Play music, or set-up an iTunes machine that everyone ingests their favorite CDs
31. Have a feedback circle to share each others work, like an old school crit from college
32. Create a holiday card from the department
33. Create an e-mail newsletter and feature your work, or an artist of the month
34. Create a destination in your space that people would like to visit. Agencies look the way they do for a reason.
35. Celebrate birthdays, especially with public singing
36. Create a work of art where you divide up line art into quadrants and everyone takes a piece and you come back and put the whole thing together
37. Buy every new employee a copy of Orbiting the Giant Hairball by Gordon MacKenzie
38. Get window markers from Crayola and have at it
39. Allow someone to work remotely
40. Put bowls of Silly Putty eggs in your conference rooms
41. Do icebreakers at staff meetings:
 - a. What was your first job?
 - b. If you could go anywhere in the world, where would it be?
 - c. If you could see anyone dead or alive in concert this evening, who would it be?
 - d. Take off your shoes and arrange yourselves in a line without talking, and arrange yourselves by foot size
 - e. Zip! Zap! Zop! (Like tag, but you clap your hands together, pointing to them and saying "Zip!" That person then needs to immediately react and "Zap!" someone, and the next person needs to react and

#14 – Do tag team design, where you need to pass a design to at least three people in your department to complete it.

*#53 – Superman/
Superwoman of the
month, in which a
red cape is handed
out to the “hero” on
the team*

- “Zop!” someone. The game continues furiously until someone messes up either the word sequence, or doesn't react.)
- f. What is the last beautiful thing you saw?
- g. What was your first design project?
42. Create a simple system to celebrate success, we have three:
 - a. Whoop Ass (hand out cans of Jones Soda as a little trophy)
 - b. Keep Fighting Award (your name is placed on a boxing glove that hangs at your desk)
 - c. One dollar vending machine coupons (our vending machines accept coupons)
 43. When someone does go to a conference, make sure they download a Top 5 report to the team
 44. Create a mentoring system within your group, especially with new hires
 45. Bring in baby pictures, post them to a wall, and do a matching game
 46. Show and Tell of a great designed product, project or object
 47. Go get water ice or ice cream in the summer
 48. Issues and Opportunities meeting, where you create a list of prioritized issues that you assign to individuals or the team to overcome. Very powerful to look back on the issues you dealt with. We hold this annually.
 49. Change your floor layout, or knock down cube walls, encourage collaboration in your seating arrangement
 50. Smile a lot, laugh even more
 51. Lottery ticket or scratch off lottery ticket for reward
 52. Create on-line/e-mail based trivia contests/quizzes to incorporate remote employees
 53. Superman/Superwoman of the month, in which a red cape is handed out to the “hero” on the team
 54. Oscar Party with ballots & a movie gift basket
 55. Scavenger hunt
 56. Conduct an in-house tag sale
 57. Use the marble system where everyone gives each other praise by shifting a marble from their jar to another designer and the person with the most marbles gets some “prize” at the end of the month (ie., two hours off, etc.)
 58. Have a design Oscars where awards are given out for design categories, peer nominated
 59. Crazy shirt, hat, tie day
 60. Comp days off to recognize exceptional work
 61. Hold group critiques
 62. Do cartoons or caricatures of each other

63. Create a cartoon around an internal situation
64. Have a “goodie bag” of little trinkets to recognize small successes
65. Plan a “happy hour” after work
66. Submit your work for industry competitions
67. Show & tell, at the end of a staff meeting, each designer shares an idea, design, or tip with the group
68. During a team meeting, applaud after every comment
69. Go bowling
70. Highlight your work on the walls
71. Give team members a paid day to take on a creative project (not associated with work) to recharge
72. Create groovy 70's t-shirts – What's Your Sign
73. Create a reference library and continue to buy design related books and subscribe to industry magazines
74. Giftcards to art related retailers
75. Decorate your personal space
76. Have an internal trade show to market your departments services
77. Have toys in the studio; LEGO, dart boards, etc.
78. Keep a “glory file” of positive feedback
79. Assign a periodical to a team member
80. Have a monthly communication to highlight work to key customers

#57 – Use the marble system where everyone gives each other praise by shifting a marble from their jar to another designer and the person with the most marbles gets some “prize” at the end of the month (ie., two hours off, etc.)