



CASE STUDY: Antarctic team building for Wax Communications

When event organisers Wax Communications recently helped MITIE, the strategic outsourcing and asset management business, run an Antarctic-themed conference, they called upon Obsidian Consulting to help with the team building events. Obsidian, in partnership with the British Antarctic Survey, treated 160 of the MITIE management team to an afternoon filled with Antarctic activities.

Key business themes

The Antarctic theme helped MITIE to showcase its “thinking, managing & delivering” initiative, while focusing on sustainability, reducing carbon footprint and environmental issues.

Once the business presentations had finished, the afternoon’s team building started with a bang...Or rather a blizzard, as employees dressed as Antarctic explorers emerged through the mists of ‘base camp’. These ‘explorers’ introduced an impressive film highlighting the realities of living, surviving and delivering in one of the most extreme places on the planet. A speaker from the British Antarctic Survey also joined them to explain what’s involved in carrying out excellent science in Antarctica, before the lead facilitator from Obsidian introduced the afternoon’s activities.

Antarctic activities

The participants were divided into teams and spent the afternoon taking part in a series of exercises:

Antarctic Tent - an exercise which tests the delivery of quality results while working under pressure. After a quick briefing the teams were tasked with putting up a tent and correctly assembling the interior, while working against the clock.



White Out – an exercise that simulates locating a lost colleague in a blizzard and focuses on thinking, planning and communication. The teams not only had to rank the importance of their survival items, but plan how best to locate their colleague and return safely to base camp.



Ski Race – involves the teams racing against each other on an over-sized pair of skis. This task is all about preparation, co-ordination, leadership and, of course, getting to the finishing line first.



Husky racing - one member of each team was given the opportunity to race with the huskies... and earn points in the process.

Competition

Energy and excitement remained high throughout the whole afternoon with all the teams fired up to win! For further motivation, a leader board was located in the centre of the field allowing participants to see how they were progressing at any time.

David Downing, the lead Obsidian consultant, commented: *“The teams were really enthusiastic and actively participated in all of the exercises. They were a competitive group! But it was great to see them working together to try and win.”*

The day ended with a gala dinner, and prizes were awarded to the overall winning team, otherwise known as ‘The Survivors.’ Individuals were also recognised for various acts of bravery and brilliance.

Working together and having fun!

The event was a fantastic way of getting employees to work together on memorable and challenging tasks. Strong, supportive relationships were built in a matter of minutes – something that can often takes months in a more formal business environment.

“A fantastic event – the ski race was hilarious!”

“We had a great time. It was good to get to know colleagues in a non-work setting.” MITIE management team

“Obsidian provided us with a series of memorable exercises that ensured the day was a great success.” Wax Comms.

