



## **Corporate sailing or team development day – our top tips for planning your next event.**

With the New Year in full swing it is about now that companies start to turn their attention to planning and booking their corporate entertainment or team development days. There are a variety of activities that are now available, with sailing being an increasingly popular proposition for many companies looking for something interactive, fun and memorable.

So how do you ensure that your event does what it says on the box? How do you get best 'value' from this time away from the office and what preparations should your team make (if any) before the event to fully gain from the experience?

Here at Ocean Experience, we have been running successful yacht based corporate and team development events since 2000, with a large amount of our clients coming back year after year. Our emphasis is on creating a memorable experience in a safe environment – you only have to look at the faces on these people to see that they have enjoyed it!

So what makes a good event great? Here are some do's and don'ts that we think will help you construct the day you want.

## Corporate Sail Day

- **Define your objectives** - Ascertain and be very clear about what it is your company wants to achieve from the day – should it be purely fun, a forum for networking or perhaps a thank you to clients/customers.
- **Encourage participation and involvement** - People get off the boats with big grins on their faces when they have been actively involved. Although Brian and Sue from accounts say they can't possibly be too physically involved due to that new set of nails and that old shrapnel injury (not necessarily in that order) they will enjoy and remember the day (and who invited them!) SO much more if they can really get stuck in!
- **Get the day you have paid for** - It is not meant to be a ferry trip! Nor is it pleasurable to have the boat skippered by an 18 year old who wants to beat your clients in an all out attempt to go as fast as they possibly can whilst betting on which crew member looks the greenest! You have paid for it, so make sure you get what you want.
- **Devil is in the detail** – sometimes it is the critical non essentials that can make all the difference. All the participants should know the locality of the nearest car park (and have change for the meter!) ensuring, as much as you can, that they arrive unflustered and on time. First impressions are important – the boat must be immaculate, preferably displaying your

corporate flags or branded spray dodgers. It can be a powerful sight when your clients/employees first see the yacht fully branded with your corporate colours and logo. Whatever style of catering you opt for, it should be of the highest quality – everyone will work up quite an appetite and lack lustre food can be a huge disappointment!

- **Plan B** – what is plan B? Worst case scenario is that you embark on a sailing day and there is no wind. It is no one's fault BUT you need to ensure your organiser has an arsenal of other ideas to keep everyone suitably amused.

## **Team Development Day**

- **Define your objectives** - I see a theme developing here!  
When you are planning a team development day you need to ensure that there is a purpose or learning process involved. It may be that you want a pure team bonding experience or perhaps you want to use the day as a chance to carry out some additional training. Either way – a clear and achievable goal must be communicated to your organiser.
- **VAT – Value Added Training** - Participants should feel that they come away with something of value and there are a whole host of personal development tools and models that can be used to the benefit of both the individual and the company as a whole.
- **Transferable training** – The combination of the two contrasting environments, (classroom & aboard the yacht)

cements the theory behind best practice in a familiar environment and the experiential learning at 'play', as well as providing an enjoyable and memorable balance between instruction and practice. A high priority should be placed on making all development directly transferable to the workplace.

- **Work on the real issues** – use this opportunity to work on the real challenges within your company/team. We have found that it is an effective platform for resolving issues and opening up lines of communication. Above all else – seize the opportunity to effect change.

For more details on sailing events or team development programmes, feel free to pick our brains! Contact [jo@oceanexperience.co.uk](mailto:jo@oceanexperience.co.uk) or go to [www.oceanexperience.co.uk](http://www.oceanexperience.co.uk)