# Play: Building a high-performing team: Hangouts

## What is it:

We don’t think we need to tell you the benefits of having fun, but what about playing at work? [Recent studies](https://www.psychologicalscience.org/news/minds-business/playing-up-the-benefits-of-play-at-work.html) have begun to establish that there are numerous benefits including less fatigue, boredom, stress and engagement. It can ultimately also lead to better trust among a team. In this play, we give a few examples of ways to hangout and create more play in your work, and driving employment engagement and team happiness.

Pro tip: One of the key differences in Product Teams versus Project teams is that long-lived Product teams learn as they grow over a long period of time….

This play refers to the guardrails:

* [Scrum Team](https://wiki.wdf.sap.corp/wiki/display/agiletrans/Scrum+Team)
* [Team Collaboration, Culture and Mindset](https://wiki.wdf.sap.corp/wiki/display/agiletrans/Team+collaboration%2C+culture+and+mindset)
* [Managing in an Agile environment](https://wiki.wdf.sap.corp/wiki/display/agiletrans/Managing+in+an+Agile+environment)
* [Working Agreement](https://wiki.wdf.sap.corp/wiki/display/agiletrans/Working+Agreement)
* [Agile Metrics](https://wiki.wdf.sap.corp/wiki/display/agiletrans/Agile+Metrics)

## When to use it:

* Newly formed team (Storming/Forming stages). Consistently hanging out creates a level of team trust.
* Any team in need of improvement with clear dysfunctions. Building team trust is a step that can be missed.
* Team that has a lot of “I’s.” Hanging out helps provide open, transparent, and builds trust, which are key for aligning towards the team’s goal.

## Expected outcomes:

A team that is using open dialog and supportive confrontation effectively will exhibit the following characteristics:

* Members of the team approach all of their interactions with each other with **kindness, consideration, empathy and respect**.
* Members of the team will exhibit a high degree of collaboration.
* Members of the team will collaborate more closely and shower higher engagement.
* The team will be aligned towards their goals and achieve higher productivity and happiness.

Pro tip: We really don’t know how to have fun better than you and your team. Be creative here!

## How to execute it:

* [Parallel Play: Team Health Check](https://github.wdf.sap.corp/IT-Agile-DevOps-CC/Playbooks/blob/master/AgilePlaybook/Building_a_team/The%20Team/TeamHealthCheck.md)
* Recommend Initial Time: Depends on activity.
* Recommended Update: Once a quarter minimum.
* Difficult level 1/5 to do consistently as a team.

### Hangouts play

Our brains are wired to seek out pleasure in various ways, such as by playing. Dopamine, also known as the “pleasure chemical” is released though the act of playing, such as this [recent study](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-compass-pleasure/201110/video-games-can-activate-the-brains-pleasure-circuits-0) of video game playing and the release of dopamine. To create situations like these, teams need to create opportunities to have fun, laugh together, and create their own social interactions to increase the team’s trust and bonding levels.

While there isn’t one specific way of doing this, as every team will share various interests, here are some ideas.

It is recommended that you schedule an activity on a recurring basis, as it’s quite easy to get caught up and ignore this activity. That said, unexpected rewards and surprises trigger a higher dopamine release than expected rewards, so unplanned activities are also recommended.

Please feel free to add the fun things your team does together to the ideas below:

Some ideas:

1. Team events at an Escape Room
2. Team lunches
3. Team dinners
4. Team pot-lucks or team cooking contents
5. Monthly celebrations
6. Go-live parties and events
7. Volunteering together
8. Happy Hours
9. Family picnics
10. Trivia games
11. Team created Inside jokes
12. Classic video game high-scores