FACILITATION

Away day planning template

Plan the day around the decision it has to reach. Start with the people affected, leave time to make sense of what you hear, and finish with actions that have an owner and a date.

What the day has to decide, in one sentence

Who will be there, and why

Whose voice needs to be heard who will not be there, and how

What people need to read or answer before the day

A full day, as a starting point

Time	Session	Who leads
9.30	Welcome, and the question the day has to answer	
9.45	What people have told us, on the day and before it	
11.00	Break	
11.15	What we heard, and what is really going on	
12.30	Lunch	
13.15	The options, and what a good outcome looks like	
14.45	Break	
15.00	Decisions, owners and dates	
15.45	Close. What we have agreed, and the date to look again	
16.00	Finish	

After the day

A written record of the decisions goes out within a week. Every action has an owner and a date, and the date to look again is in the diary.

What an away day is for

A team away day takes people out of the everyday so they can look at their work together. The days that work have one clear purpose, decided before the venue is booked, and end with actions that have an owner and a date. Write the purpose down in one sentence and test every session against it.

If the team needs to	It usually sounds like	Best length
Plan the year ahead	We need to agree what matters most next year.	Full day
Settle after a change	We have a new manager, a new structure or several new people.	Full day
Work better together	Things are not working between us and nobody is saying why.	Half or full day
Solve one problem	We keep coming back to the same issue.	Half day
Recognise what the team has done	It has been a hard year and nobody has stopped to notice what we achieved.	Half day

Who should be there

Everyone in the team, including part time staff and anyone who works mostly on their own or out in the community. Choose a date they can all make before choosing anything else. If the team is larger than about twenty, plan for smaller groups through most of the day.

What a good away day leaves you with

1. A shared picture of the year, including what the team achieved
2. Three priorities everyone can say back
3. An owner and a first action for each priority
4. At least one change to how the team works together
5. A date to look again, already in the diary

Three questions before the day

Send these to everyone in the team. Answers can be anonymous.

1. What do you most want us to talk about on the day?

2. What is going well in the team that we should keep?

3. What would make the day worth your time?

Action log

One row for each action. Every action needs an owner and a date before people leave.

Priority	Action	Owner	By when	How we will know

Resolution Ready

TOOL · AT THE CLOSE

Feedback on the day

Ask everyone to fill this in before they leave.

	1	2	3	4	5
The purpose of the day was clear	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I had the chance to say what I wanted to say	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The sessions helped us get to the actions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I know what happens next	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The venue worked for me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

1 means not at all, 5 means completely.

What was most useful about the day

What would you change next time