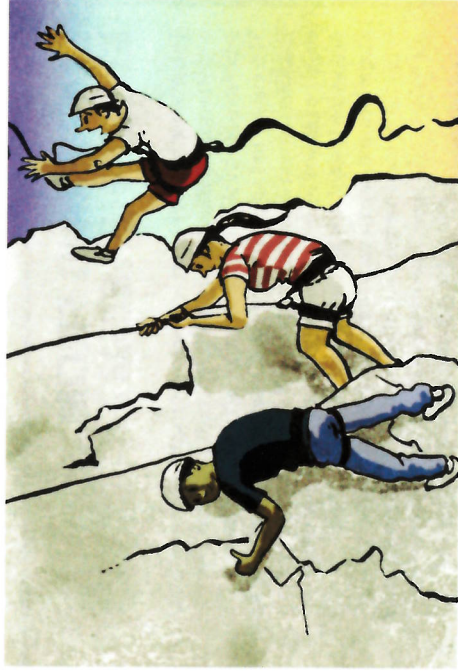


## WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA? TEAMBUILDING

David Brent ruined it for all of us when he said: 'There's no "I" in team, but there's a "me" if you look hard enough.' After this excruciating parody, it's impossible to take teambuilding seriously, dangling over a precipice to be told that we're learning about how to trust those folks from accounts who are holding the other end of the damned rope. There's a limit to how much you can psychobabble people into enduring discomfort, embarrassment and general foolishness with their colleagues. For a start, teambuilding requires a real team. Having shared goals with a bunch of other people is not a sufficient criterion – waiting for a bus with strangers meets that definition. Teams require something – a tool, an idea, a ball – to be passed between hands, minds or feet. In the case of a jazz combo it's their sound. The glorious noise of the band in full flood comes because people listen to each other and understand that their input is not so great alone as it is when blended with that of the others; and that by working together you can do tricky things, expand your own



contribution and extend the repertoire of the band. The top and bottom of teambuilding is people learning how to know, accommodate and complement each other. And, yes, you can have fun too.

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