



The Walk-In

Participants arrive at a conference room transformed into a Himalayan Basecamp. A film with music and sounds from that landscape has been specially created for the walk-in to evoke the atmosphere of the mountains and the people that live there. Tibetan musicians are playing flutes and horns as Lamas are chanting the traditional blessing that is held before climbers attempt to climb the mountain.

Hundreds of feet of colorful prayer flags are strung across the ceiling, climbing scenes cover the walls, expedition lanterns with Tibetan lampshades light up each table and Tibetan door hangings over the tables and stage. Expedition tents, climbing gear, cultural artifacts and many other elements complete the scene.

Participants can even clip onto rope teams and be led by their leadership team (dressed as Sherpa guides) to their tables.



"From the moment you walked in the door you got a sense of the journey you were about to go on, right through until you left, you really felt like you were making a journey. Walking into the room and hearing the sound of wind flapping against the tent, seeing a real base camp set up, the giant screen images, the lanterns on the table and the Pringles. It was a complete experience and it didn't end when the lights went up and the doors opened at the end of the event. It brought our relationships to a different level afterwards".

Michelle Alosinac, Ontario Heritage Foundation, Past President Ontario Chapter of MPI

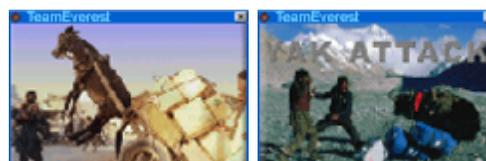


Trek-In to Base Camp

The purpose of the trek-in is to travel to the foot of Mt. Everest while acclimatizing to ever-increasing elevation and to gain familiarity with your teammates, laying the foundations for trust and a sense of mutual responsibility.

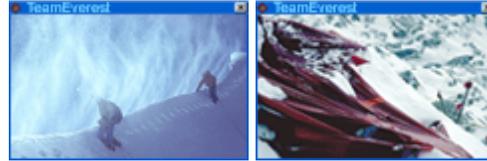
Using sound, narrative, images and video we take participants from Katmandu through Nepal, over the storm-prone high passes into Tibet and onto the roof of the world.

During the Trek-In participants learn how to deal with an overloaded donkey and a disgruntled Yak discovering that what you leave behind is as important as what you take with you.





One night, while the expedition is encamped, a storm descends from the Himalayas and the team experiences their first setback. The camp is hammered with such ferocity that the mess tents and any tent that is not properly erected is blown down; equipment is lost and tents shredded by the hurricane-force winds. High-powered fans and special goggles are used to simulate whiteout conditions while teams work together to re-erect camp and avert a disaster.



Vision, Values & Strategy

Participants must share a common purpose before they begin climbing the mountain. Hidden agendas, competing goals and objectives, and personal egos must be surrendered to a common vision and higher purpose. How can we arrive at unity of purpose and common vision while honoring and validating the diverse perspectives of the group? This is the challenge.

Participants align themselves to one of four different objectives.

1. Bring Everyone Back Alive
2. Reach the Summit
3. Take a New Route – Be innovative
4. Use Fewer Resources – Conserve the environment

Four large banners illustrating these objectives are placed on platforms around the conference room. Each platform has a microphone. Participants leave their table groups and gather around the banner that best expresses their objective. A spirited large group discussion and debate follows. Participants may cross the floor if they are swayed by another point of view. After 15 to 20 minutes participants begin to discover that the four objectives are not mutually exclusive and that perhaps their differences can bring greater strength to the team. Perhaps there is a higher purpose that accommodates multiple perspectives? At this point there is a felt shift in the room and sense of common ground opens up. With some guidance from the facilitator the group designs a single new statement that accommodates these multiple objectives.



A discussion follows regarding the tools the group will need to achieve this kind of unity. Tolerance, respect, open communication and mutual responsibility are often values mentioned by the group. Participants are now ready to move forward and begin the climbing phase of the expedition.



Roles & Responsibilities

How will individual roles and responsibilities align and contribute to the achievement of the overall objectives of the expedition?



It cannot be known in advance who will work well together or how people are going to acclimatize and perform at high altitude. Yet there are many tools that can help us maximize our personal contribution and aid us in the smooth functioning of the team.



The challenge at this point in the expedition is to choose the summit team that has the best chance of success.

Participants begin with a short self assessment based on the DISC, Smart Skills, Myers Briggs or similar profiling tools. Each participant receives a handout that includes six climber profiles along with their climbing experience.



Next, six participants are chosen to represent the climbers and their names are input into the computer. Each table group is challenged to choose the two climbers best suited for the task of reaching the summit. The results are input into the computer, which then provides feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of each summit team combination.

Finally, with the summit team chosen the group discusses ways of celebrating personal excellence rather than simply focusing attention on the high profile roles. How do we keep the limelight moving?

To illustrate this, the story of Jane Fearing, the expedition cook is told. It is a story of creativity and commitment and how her contribution changed the outcome of the expedition.



Now the summit team has been chosen participants are ready to make their bid for the summit.

Overcoming Adversity



We only really come to know one another through facing difficult situations together. Now, the summit team is on its way to the summit with the support team following them when another storm batters the mountain. The team is told by walkie talkie that a neighboring expedition has lost contact with two of its members, one of whom was injured when they were last in contact.

Team Three discusses whether to jeopardize the summit bid in order to look for the lost climbers; Does bringing everyone back alive extend to supporting other teams on the mountain?

Team Four engages in the plight of the lost and injured climbers who are faced with the toughest decision any climber can make: To cut or not to cut the rope attached to your climbing partner in order to save yourself? (based on a true story).





Your support team members are the closest climbers on the mountain to where the lost climbers were last reported to be. At this same moment your summit team has run out of propane one camp above and one member votes to call the summit bid off and return down the mountain.

Participants self-select into one of four teams and are introduced to the first of five tools as a fast-track method of decision-making.

Team One listens over their walkie-talkies to six different opinions on how to resolve the summit team's situation.

Team Two works on an experiential activity to recover some propane cylinders that were found down a crevasse.

Each team sends members to monitor the decisions of the other groups and report back any relevant discussions.

The storm lifts, the propane cylinders are recovered and the summit team's confidence is restored. The lost climbers have been found and the injured climber rescued. Working together, the four teams have overcome adversity. Now, both the summit and support teams are on their way up the mountain, climbing towards the summit.



Bringing It All Together

The final stretch to the completion of any endeavor requires both fortitude and endurance. But simply soldiering on or blind ambition can lead to fatal consequences.



The summit team has set out from the final camp for the summit. The support team waits at Camp Five. They all know that if anything goes sideways during the final summit push a rescue is out of the question. The support team has done all they can for the time being, now they must wait and rely on the chosen summit team.

Seven hours into summit day the two climbers are 500 feet from the summit of the world. But it is getting late in the day and they must decide whether to continue on to the summit, stay where they are for the night and bivouac, or go back down to high camp. Participants are given all the data that the summit team would have available

All data, including real video footage, walkie-talkie transmissions, weather reports, historical precedents and bio-data are made available to help participants make this decision.



Each conference participant in a table team has a piece of the puzzle. They must communicate this information succinctly so the table team can arrive at the best choice within the time constraints. The data is based on actual circumstances faced by the 1986 Everest Light Expedition as related by Jim Elzinga, the expedition's leader. A careful reading of the data with a balanced assessment of risk convinces the majority of table groups that the summit team should continue on to the summit.

Next, beautiful images combined with stirring music take our climbers to the top of the world where participants share a

to them in order to make this crucial decision.



stunning 360° panoramic view from Mt. Everest's summit.



Celebrating Success

Upon reaching the summit of Mt. Everest the entire team feels like they are with them on top of the world. Still, no one will start celebrating until the summit and support teams are safely down the mountain. In the dark, during the nighttime descent, the summit team climbers become separated.



One member, Sharon Wood, unsure who is in front or behind, fears that if she stops to sit down exhaustion will take over and she would never get back up. She continues on, finally arriving, alone, at the relative safety of High Camp at 1 am, after 21 hours of climbing. Utterly exhausted Sharon looks back up towards the summit and knows that she has left her climbing partner Dwayne Congdon alone in a life-and-death struggle on the mountain.



Sharon is filled with anguish. Then, two long hours later, she hears the sound of Dwayne's crampons coming across the snow towards the tent. The relief and joy she felt is impossible to express. Sharon talks about how this was the greatest sound she had ever heard. What an experience to teach us how connected we all are.

They wake exhausted and dehydrated next day and in 60 to 80 mph winds they begin their long descent towards Camp Five. In spite of the high winds, one support team member manages to climb up to them and bringing hot tea: A monumental effort for such a small gift, which will never be forgotten. That moment has been recorded on videotape, as a result participants can share in the power of that meeting.



As Earnest Shackelton the great Polar explorer said upon returning from his epic journey:
 "We had suffered, starved and triumphed, groveled down yet grasped at glory, grown bigger in the bigness of the whole. We had seen God in his splendors, heard the text nature renders. We had reached the naked soul of man."

The team has reached the summit and returned safely! They have accomplished what no one has done before or since and stayed true to their values.



Participant Comments



**Bell Helicopter Textron Canada
 At Chateau Mont Tremblant.**



**Bank of Montreal
 Visa and Electronic Banking Division
 Annual Sales Conference
 Rimrock Resort - Banff, Alberta**

Participants rated TeamEverest at 4.65 out of a possible 5.0

88 Participants

The following are all the comments relating to TeamEverest that were submitted by participants.

1. Fantastic!
2. Very good - how you moved people around was very effective.
3. Positive steps toward breaking down some of our barriers.
4. Asking/listening to probing questions; consistent theme.
5. Excellent choice.
6. The subject was great, we could gain from some of the exercises being taken further.
7. Very good approach, well organized.
8. Changing teams for every decision allowed us to work with all team members.
9. Absolutely excellent.
10. Participation by all members. A "Real Team."
11. Excellent!
12. Jim Elzinga's address - draws together actual team results.
13. Hard to improve upon.
14. Outstanding.
15. I appreciated the variations of work/listen/work/listen. Really helped keeping attention.
16. Good balance (in Org. Link questions).
17. Fantastic setup.
18. Professional team.
19. Excellent, professional.
20. Numerous [highlights], flowed very well. Impact was helpful. At a higher level throughout.
21. Excellent and fascinating stories.
22. [Highlights were]: TeamEverest concept; group (team) work
23. The concept applied 100% to our company.
24. Clear message.
25. Excellent concept.
26. TeamEverest links to management roles and expectations.
27. Bring them back [for the next conference]!
28. Well thought out and executed.
29. The preparation was outstanding.
30. More, more, more!
31. Outstanding!
32. Hard to do better.
33. 5++++
34. Everest - great theme, great process.

Conference Evaluation Results

Speaker Rating:

58 people responded:

Excellent Exceptional presentation with significant impact. You'd look forward to attending a future session like this.

16 people responded:

Very Good Very competent presentation which would encourage you to recommend this presentation to others.

1 person responded:

Good Held your attention and interest in the presentation.

0 Responses:

Needs Improvement Not particularly interesting or compelling

0 Responses:

Unsatisfactory, Difficult to listen to and follow

The following are general comments or comments to the question:

"What did you find most beneficial in this session?"

(There were no comments except for no and nothing to "what did you find least useful in this session".)

1. The demonstration of Team Building
2. Teamwork
3. Group Discussions
4. Everything
5. Thank-you
6. Everything
7. Exceptional achievements possible with team effort
8. It motivated me
9. Extremely relevant and useful to work and personal life
10. Teamwork / Goal focus without losing values
11. You don't have to get to the top to be a winner

35. The best ever and I have been to every one so far.
36. A perfect match!
37. It was great. It really got everyone involved and it was the right approach at the right time. This is the message we needed to hear.
38. It has exceeded my expectations. I thought this was going to be a traditional conference. It was anything but. It was a very teamwork conducive environment.
39. Highly motivational, really puts the team concept at an elevated level.
40. The Everest theme as a backdrop for teamwork is good.
41. Great people and participants, excellent operation.
42. Very well placed and paralleled our business efforts very well.
43. Changing teams was really good.
44. Hard to beat, but maybe a return trip down from Everest.
45. No dull moments, participation going on all the time.
46. Keep the same format.
47. Best conference ever!
48. Very well prepared; overt and underlying themes extremely relevant to BHTC today.
49. Great design and fits in well with our objectives and vision.
50. Emphasis on communication and respect.
51. Very well prepared; overt and underlying themes very relevant to BHTC today.
12. Very Profound, it just emphasized the need for teamwork and support
13. Everything
14. It was great!
15. Great
16. Great Video and Q&A
17. Not only applies to work but I can try to apply the lessons learnt here to my personal life
18. Teamwork is essential, the discussion with participants was essential.
19. More than one person is at the helm
20. Incredible!
21. Teambuilding and motivational
22. Teamwork, support and challenge
23. Very interesting stories now I have some idea what it takes to climb a mountain
24. Relevant to business and personal life
25. We have to be challenged
26. Realized that sometimes we have to step back and reexamine the situation
27. Teamwork is very important
28. Thanks for a fantastic event
29. It makes you realize how effective day to day decision-making and teamwork can be.
30. New Ideas and Teambuilding skills
31. Excellent!
32. Best seminar ever attended!
33. Exceptional!!! Thanks again
34. Exceptional content and delivery
35. Personable approach with some excellent items to take home and think about
36. The Best
37. Nicely rounded presentation
38. Extremely motivating
39. Living examples, the emphasis on teams
40. AWESOME!
41. Very Interesting - However too long
42. I loved everything!
43. Loved stories of people who did humanitarian things
44. Discussions working as a team and making difficult decisions in both our professional and personal lives
45. Enjoyed the different challenges that were brought up, also support in all different ways that I never ever imagined
46. Great! Enjoyed all the different decisions
47. Video images and photography

"The folks came in from TeamEverest and made about a one-hour presentation and, less than ten minutes into the presentation, I was sold. It was so consistent with our objectives. The feedback I've got from our whole team, which just finished the Everest event, is outstanding. People loved it and the interactions were outstanding. People had a good time doing it. The interaction was very passionate. It was really well done. It really integrated with what we wanted in terms of our business objectives. We've used consultants in the past, but they've never really met our objectives as well as TeamEverest has. In my opinion, this is the best conference we've ever had and it's largely because of our internal preparation and working with TeamEverest -- it was a good combination."

Dave McDonald, President of Bell Helicopter:



The conference was delivered in both French and English with bilingual participant materials and with bilingual facilitators as well as simultaneous translation.



48. Absolutely excellent presentation!
Very Exciting!!
49. The metaphor is very powerful and applicable to both professional and personal life
50. It related to the workplace
51. Great teamwork and decision-making
52. What a great way to relate real life survival to business and personal challenges
53. Excellent storytelling
54. Enjoyed the group discussions and decision making
55. Mark's stories
56. Some great lessons on team dynamics, support and teamwork
57. Overall good
58. I WAS LEFT SPEECHLESS!
59. I learned about teamwork and how we all need to work together to attain our common goal(s)
60. Outstanding!
61. This is the first conference where I really felt that the workshop was relevant to our lives and our daily jobs.
62. Actually got something out of this one - the bank's money was wisely spent.
63. Loved all of it!
64. Such an inspiration to move forward with in the New Year
65. Recognizing the unselfishness required to succeed
66. Hero vs. Celebrity
67. Absolutely Tremendous!
68. Words cannot express the impact this has had on me
69. Excellent decision-making and storytelling
I would have preferred the team to make the decision to get to the summit and then hear the story of how they reached their goal
70. I found the participation and discussions helpful
71. Good to experience goal being achieved
72. A real energy booster. Feeling very positive about teamwork
73. Very enjoyable – great decision on bringing in this group as presenters

100% of the respondents answered yes to the following question:

"Would you recommend a session like this for future sales conferences?"

"Right from the beginning everyone saw the analogy of the Everest experience in his or her business and personal life. I was transfixed watching 100 people becoming so unusually attentive and introspective and at the same time so engaged. I never imagined that the TeamEverest experience would be this powerful.

Our survey of the TeamEverest session got very high satisfaction ratings. This is a product that continues to make a difference to our organization. I unreservedly recommend it to you."

Glenna Kaczmarczyk, Director of National Sales, Electronic Banking – Bank of Montreal,