

Case Study: Challenger Trophy Team Building

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Cap Gemini is one of the world's foremost providers of consulting, technology and outsourcing services, employing approximately 60,000 people worldwide in more than 30 countries and reported 2003 global revenue of 5.7 billion euros.

Challenger Trophy

Europe's premier inter-business outdoor training event...



Cap Gemini enters Challenger Trophy...

Cap Gemini entered a team for the first time ever into the Securicor Challenger Trophy, Europe's premier inter-business outdoor training event. 81 teams from many of Europe's blue-chip companies (including such names as Accenture, Lloyds TSB, Orange, BP, MOD, BAE Systems, and American Express) came head-to-head to compete in this unique event.

The race involved four days, eight stages and over 500 competitors from the business world combining to produce an exhilarating atmosphere. Companies were asked to send a team of up to six people and a senior executive who must compete in the last 24 hours.

Each team faced a number of high-energy, mind-stretching outdoor challenges. Using maps, compasses, and their wits they had to cover up to 70 kms of terrain either on foot or using a variety of means which included mountain bikes, rafts, canoes and other forms of transport: nor was it all level - scaling rock faces or abseiling down them while making critical decisions on the run.

The event received considerable pre- and post-event publicity in national press, radio and TV, not least because all teams were asked to take on the task of raising money for the selected charity - in 1998, the event raised £445,000 for the Cancer Research Campaign.

Leadership & team-building skills

On the basis of his track record in successful leadership, team-building and adventure racing, Chris Charlton from Namaste Management selected, trained and led the Cap Gemini team in the 1998 Securicor Challenger Trophy Race.

**"Congratulations to the whole team - a great performance, a great team...",
Peter Upton, Head of Consulting, Cap Gemini UK plc**

Team Selection

The aim of the selection day was to pick the 7-person mixed team to participate in the training programme leading up to the Challenger Trophy race which had the backing of the whole Consulting team. The team was selected on the basis of 8 criteria:

1. **Commitment**
2. **Enthusiasm and humour**
3. **Teamwork**
4. **Mental stamina & determination**
5. **Initiative**
6. **Problem-solving ability**
7. **Physical ability**
8. **Navigation**

The selection day consisted of 3 events and 2 commitments:

1. A rope maze where participants, blindfolded, had to discover that the ingredients contained in 5 buckets around the maze mixed together make 'fruit cake'. This meant they had to dip their hands into eggs, butter, treacle, margarine, etc whilst following the rope around trees, under logs, getting very muddy and messy. For spectators, it was a joy to watch!!
2. A navigation exercise in pairs across the North Downs covering some 11km finding checkpoints along the way. Between checkpoints, teams had to solve logic and mental agility problems whilst on the run, each correct answer knocking 10 minutes off the total time around the course.
3. Each team had to make a presentation for 5 minutes suggesting why they should be selected. The teams had to prepare this whilst on the navigation exercise, only to find out 2 minutes before the presentations that they had to deliver them blindfolded. Excellent presentations were made by all teams.
4. Commitment to the training programme which would include 3 weekends away to adventurous parts of the UK; and one evening per week for 8-10 weeks.
5. Commitment to the 4-day race.

**"Many thanks for a great day; I certainly learnt a great deal and enjoyed it",
Joss Wilbraham, Senior Consultant, Cap Gemini**

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Team Training Programme

The Cap Gemini team trained over 3 weekends and during one evening per week for 8-10 weeks, the aim of which was to fully prepare for the race whilst developing a strong and effective team. In the words of one of the team:

"Training was to be 3 weekends away, 2 on Dartmoor where the event was to take place and one in Snowdonia, plus Wednesday evenings in the office for logic problems, knot tying and planning! This was quite a commitment for the team but fantastic fun as we found out about our own strengths as well as our weaknesses and bonded as a team.

During training we ran (at 7am!) up hills and across flooding rivers (we knew it was deep when it got too deep for Ollie and someone shouted 'Swim for it!'), mountain biked down hills (having carried them up!), abseiled off 150ft cliffs in Anglesey into the sea, canoed around a lake, navigated around Dartmoor at night (after having been in a nice warm pub for dinner!) and finally did a race simulation day with orienteering, time estimation and plenty of command tasks. The River Dart Country Park on Dartmoor provided a great training ground where we did a high ropes course, simulated parachute jump 50ft out of a tree, mini assault course and river crossing to mention just a few of the challenges.

I'm sure the whole team will join me in thanking Chris - a fantastic captain. He put in a tremendous amount of effort in organising the team and the fantastic training weekends."
Freya Incedon, Consultant, Cap Gemini



The Race Results...

Technology Cup: 3rd Novice Class: 4th Mixed Class: 5th Overall Position: 17th

Day 1, Stage 1: Seeking the Light	Day 3, Stage 5: Assessing the Task
Stage (Overall Position): 14th (14th)	Stage (Overall Position): 33rd (19th)
Description: A 2.5 hour night navigation exercise completed at speed with orienteering map, including strategic decisions about collecting bonus checkpoints.	Description: A 12 km running/orienteering stage with a twist. The team had to state before they started which bonus points they would visit and estimate time to complete. Heavy penalties for under-estimating time.
Day 2, Stage 2: Wet and Wild	Day 3, Stage 6: Leading from the front
Stage (Overall Position): 29th (22nd)	Stage (Overall Position): 8th (20th)
Description: 4km Canadian canoe paddle down the Exeter Canal, including portage sections. With logic problems and a code to crack on route then paddle back.	Description: Orienteering, quad-biking, problem-solving, shooting, archery and other challenges for the Senior Executive member of the team.
Day 2, Stage 3: Full Circle	Day 4, Stage 7: K'NEX
Stage (Overall Position): 35th (22nd)	Stage (Overall Position): 57th (20th)
Description: Complete as many as possible of 24 puzzle and command tasks within the allowed 3 hours. Fail a task and get nothing, succeed and get the time bonus associated with the task plus any time left over.	Description: A sedentary stage where each team had to fulfil a contract to build a crane from the K'nex (like technical lego) provided. The crane had to lift a specified weight over a wall and swivel through 180 degrees.
Day 3, Stage 4: Chasing the Baskerville	Day 4, Stage 8: Last but not least
Stage (Overall Position): 7th (15th)	Stage (Overall Position): 16th (17th)
Description: 2.5 hour orienteering exercise over the Moors. Running to checkpoints as a team and strategic decisions to collect bonus points by splitting into pairs. No reward for finishing early but penalties for finishing late.	Description: 15 km run along the hilly Devon cliff path where hosts of supporters were waiting to cheer the teams across the finish line. On route, teams had to solve a range of logic problems in order to proceed to the next checkpoint