

## CASE STUDY

# How Gamification and Experiential Learning helped a geographically-dispersed team know each other better.



## 1. Project Overview:

The client is a one-stop shop in Mauritius for trendy home décor, furniture and appliances from around the world. They operate through six outlets and an online service.

The client wanted to enhance team cohesion and foster a collective mindset among its diverse team members. They wanted to instill a sense of unity, respect, and collaboration amongst their team members.

Different managers worked in different outlets across the island making it hard for them to meet often and be in complete alignment with each other. Due to their limited interactions, team members did not really see each other beyond their roles and designations.

The goal was to bring down these walls and see each other through the contribution and impact they have made at the organisation, so far. This would help send out the message to every member that they are truly valued!

## 2. Solution: A mobile application for pre-engagement, followed by an in-person Village Race

The General Manager was not keen on doing a typical team building activity, within the confines of a conference room. He wanted his team to learn that they can bond outside of the office too, as he believed that true camaraderie would only foster if they saw each other as “people” first, rather than “colleagues” first.

Besides, being confined to their (work) outlets, did not allow them time to really appreciate their country.

The learning journey was thus designed as a village race, with team building activities spanning across the island. Further, it was interspersed with typically Mauritian activities like: going inside a fisherman's pirogue, stepping into a river to wash clothes, doing a dodo challenge.

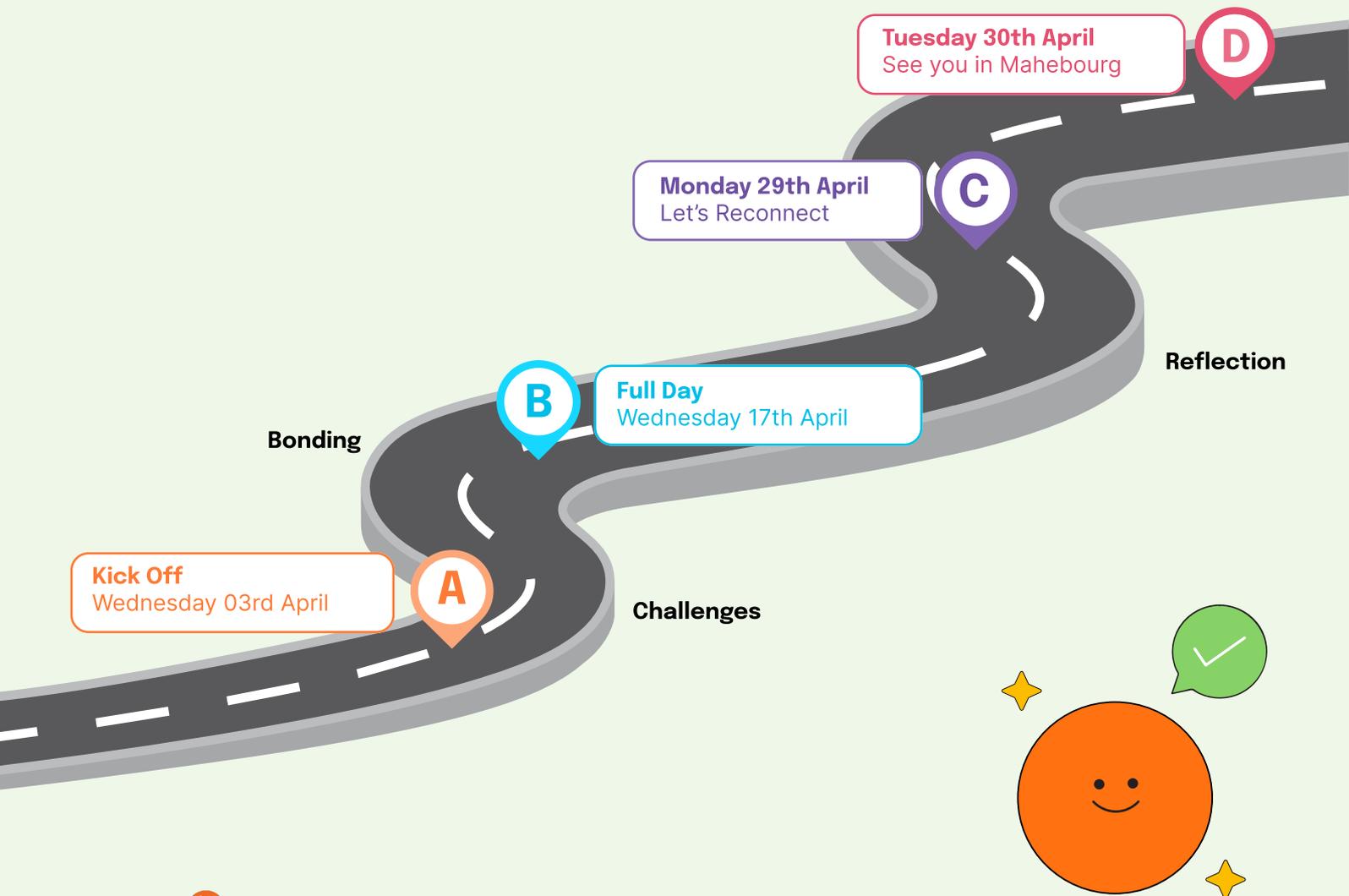
By adding some culture, history, folklore and geography, the teams also got to experience the side of Mauritius they don't get to on a daily basis.

The village race ended with a visit to Sirk Social, an NGO in the south of Mauritius, facilitating CSR impact from this experience as well.

The entire journey was designed to encourage team members to step out of their comfort zones, engage with one another, and even learn about their own potential for being agile.

### 3. Methodology: Gamification and Experiential Learning

#### What's the plan ?





## Part 1: Pre-Engagement through a mobile application (Gamification) to encourage team bonding before the team meets in person (Spread over 2 weeks)

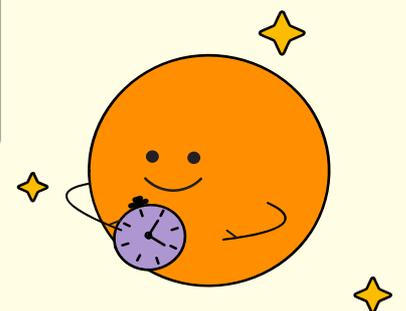
An online session was conducted to run the entire journey past participants, starting it off with pre-engagement via a mobile application. On the mobile application, team members had to do virtual challenges both individually and within respective teams. The challenges were designed to encourage team bonding through sharing of personal and professional experiences, enabling participants to discover different aspects of one another. They were also designed around exploring different places/regions of the country.

For example, Port Louis (the capital of Mauritius) is known for its street food and participants had to share their favourite food joints. Grand Bassin is a spiritual place and participants had to do zen challenges and learn about the area. Bois Cheri is known for its tea plantations and participants had to describe the life of a tea leaf in an interesting manner.

By sharing small historical facts with them, they also got to learn about these different regions and some of their specificities.

The whole design was a build up to meeting in-person (by first visiting these places virtually); and enabled some team bonding and sharing to happen virtually, helping break the ice, before they met for the first time.

The purpose was to understand (at the end of the two weeks) how ready they would be to continue engaging during the village race and how they would communicate with one another.





## Part 2: Full-day in-person workshop

A full-day workshop was held on the topic: Critical Thinking and how to approach work with a different mindset.

This workshop was designed to align with the theme of fostering a collective mindset among diverse team members. The first step to achieving this goal is to cultivate an environment where every voice is heard and respected. Through activities and open discussions, participants explored different perspectives and learned to appreciate the unique contributions each team member brings. This also allowed them to see how a situation can be tackled through the perspective of analysis first before action.

The workshop took place at the client's head office and enabled participants to actively express their own thinking process and uncover similarities as well as differences. This also allowed them to understand that common grounds can be found even when ideas differ.

An intervention from Sirk Social's spokesperson to close the session added another dimension to the workshop and helped keep the momentum for the upcoming village race.



## Role and Responsibilities



**Captain**  
Keep your focus



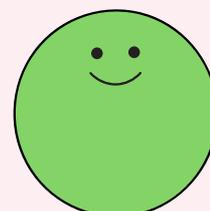
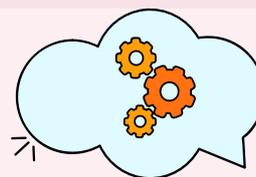
**Navigator**  
Show the way



**Sailor**  
Contribute to  
the action



**Doctor On Borad**  
Check Security





### Part 3: Full-day in-person discovery session

The objectives were:

- Check how the last two weeks of engagement on the app have been. Did the interactions truly help the team bond?
- Participants to share experiences from interactions in the app
- To ensure energy levels were appropriate for the last phase of the journey
- Share guidelines with participants for the last phase of the journey
- Brief participants about safety and their roles and responsibilities

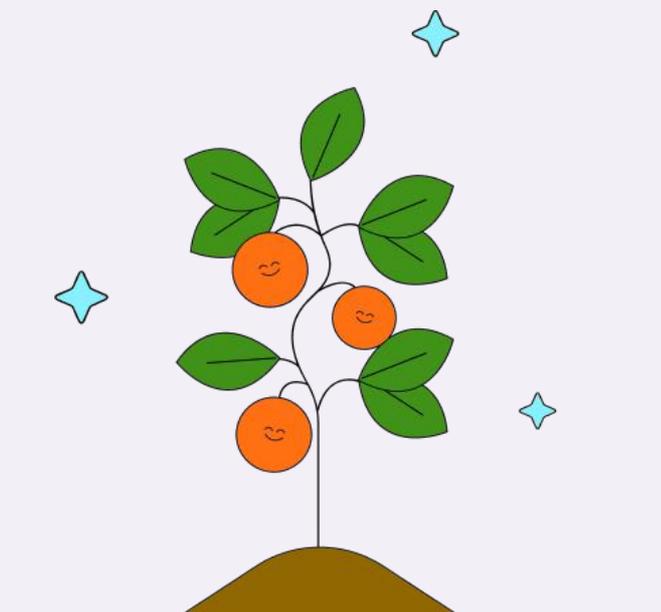


### Phase 4: The Village Race

A highly immersive experience, it provided participants with a very unique opportunity to bond and connect in a very different setting - a very authentic and unspoiled part of the island, where the locals live. Through deliberate play and structured activities, the team engaged in experiential learning aimed at promoting camaraderie, communication, and mutual respect.

The race was designed in a manner, such that different participants had different roles (navigator, security officer, planner etc.) within their own teams. Clear communication was key in completing the race with maximum number of points.

Moreover, a lot of opportunities for self-realization were enabled through interaction with the NGO staff.



## 4. How the design of the learning journey was successful



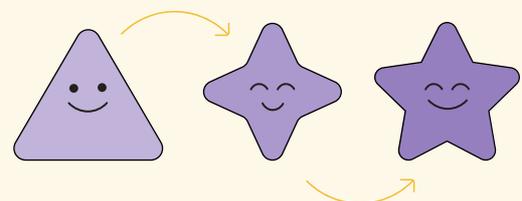
### Part 1: Pre-Engagement through Gamification (mobile application)

Most team members were active and participatory on the mobile app. The FocusU team did send regular words of encouragement and nudges to encourage participation and keep team members motivated. This helped.

Showing participants the leaderboard also encouraged healthy competition amongst different teams.



The screenshot shows the FocusU app interface with the 'espace maison' logo. It features a leaderboard on the left with five teams: Team 1 - Montagne Signaux (1700), Team 2 - Les Experts (1500), Team 3 - Place Eldorado (1400), Team 4 - The Mavericks (1300), and Team 5 - Les Experts (1200). The main content area displays a message from 'espace maison' to 'Espace Maison Mavericks', thanking them for their participation and providing a hint for a challenge. The message includes a photo of a glass of beer and a photo of a garden. The text reads: 'Hello Espace Maison Mavericks! Thank you for all your sharing yesterday. It was awesome! Ready to shift to another gear? If we say, Ville Lumière, does that give you a hint? Yes, today's challenges await you in the highlands, a place of cultural richness. A little bird tells us that there have been some changes on the leaderboard. Kudos to Team Montagne Signaux which has made a remarkable leapfrog to steal the top spot. Let's see what other twists and turns await... See you on the app!'.





## Phase 4: The Village Race

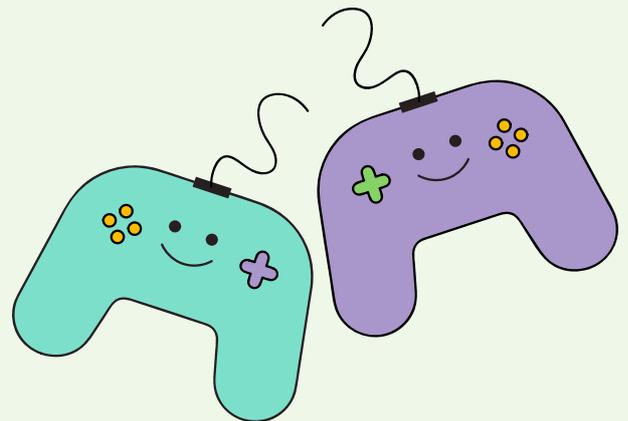
- The village race encouraged team members to interact with locals. As this is not something participants were accustomed to doing, they were forced to step out of their comfort zones - but in a nice, feel-good and safe setting. It presented a very unconventional way to enable self-growth.
- During some of the activities in the race, participants were encouraged to 'take one for their teams,' thus enhancing a sense of ownership.
- Facilitators from Sirk Social shared insights and techniques on incorporating values such as respect, sharing, and trust in children, inspiring the team to apply similar principles in their professional interactions.

## 5. Feedforward and Impact:

The workshop proved to be a meaningful experience for the team, with the General Manager promptly sending a mail the day following the village race to state that they wish to support the NGO as they understood the impact that the latter is bringing to children's lives. Feedback from participants highlighted the effectiveness of experiential learning in promoting teamwork, communication, and mutual respect.

Moving forward, the organization plans to integrate the lessons learned into its daily operations, emphasizing the importance of deliberate play and human connection in driving growth and success.

The HR department came back to state that they wish to have another meeting with FocusU Mauritius to discuss about other projects they have in the pipeline

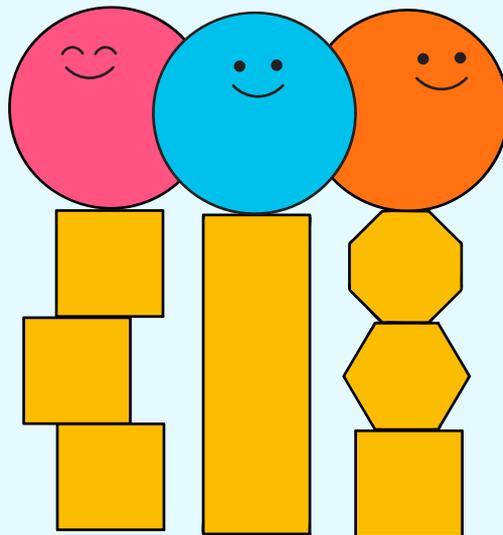


Name	On the scale of 1 to 10, 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest, how did you like the various challenges on the app?	What are some of the things you would like us to improve on?	What are some of the things you really liked?	Please don't restrict yourself to sharing just a number since we'd love to hear your comments and thoughts too.
Participant 1	10	It was perfect, nothing to improve	What we do to destress , sharing of hugs	It was really nice to have this prelude before having the team building. It's the first time we have a termine building like this. Bravo to FocusU team for the organisation
Participant 2	10	Ensure all participants have participate. For me it was very interesting and memorable	The traditions and culture of Mauritius. We are in a paradise island	It was a memorable experience with our colleagues as we don't have sufficient time at work. We have participate together and share our ideas and thoughts. Team spirit, together we can
Participant 3	8	More funny request to do	Cry for dodo, team cry	Nice ice breaker from our everyday routine
Participant 4	10	Nothing all good	The video challenge	This type of team building is great to create memories and know more about our colleagues
Participant 5	9	Have more interaction with teams	The day with Uma	All of it was great experience
Participant 6	10	Nothing	The dodo sound very funny	It was a great experience

# Conclusion

In conclusion, this case study exemplifies the power of experiential learning in creating a cohesive and collaborative team culture. The General Manager connected the dots about the values shared at Sirk Social to those of his organization (as they were very similar). He elaborated on each value, to reinforce the same amongst team members present; who in turn, could cascade the message to other employees.

By embracing deliberate play and inner and outer connections, the organization has laid the foundation for continued growth, learning, and success in the future.





---

To know more about us, drop in at  
[www.focusu.com](http://www.focusu.com)