

# Stand up & Deliver

# Microsoft®

**Microsoft®** needed to create a team building event that would help its executives **'be the difference'** by taking a few more risks. They took a 'risk' themselves and engaged Jack Milner's comedy team-building event, which produced some great comedy and seriously impressive results.

Taking a group of people from within a big company and putting them into an unfamiliar situation does not always produce the best results. That is unless there is a powerful catalyst to make something special happen. **Jack Milner's** company, **Standup and Deliver** is just such a catalyst.

### Team Building

Getting to know the people in your company can be difficult. Nodding acquaintance is the norm outside the close circle of direct team members. Getting a real team spirit amongst 230 people is a challenge and one which was embraced by Microsoft EPG when it came to creating a team building workshop for their annual 3-day conference.

### It's serious yet fun!

**Standup and deliver** was personally recommended by another division of Microsoft which had successfully used **Jack Milner** for sales and presentation skills training.

New General Manager, **John Jester**, was looking for an event to build on the theme of the new business mantra **'Be the difference'**. The key objectives were to improve communications, reduce a natural aversion to risk taking and above all have some fun!

### Be the difference

Jack proposed a 3-hour comedy workshop which would culminate in a 15 minute comedy show. The stars, writers and creatives behind the show being Microsoft's own team.



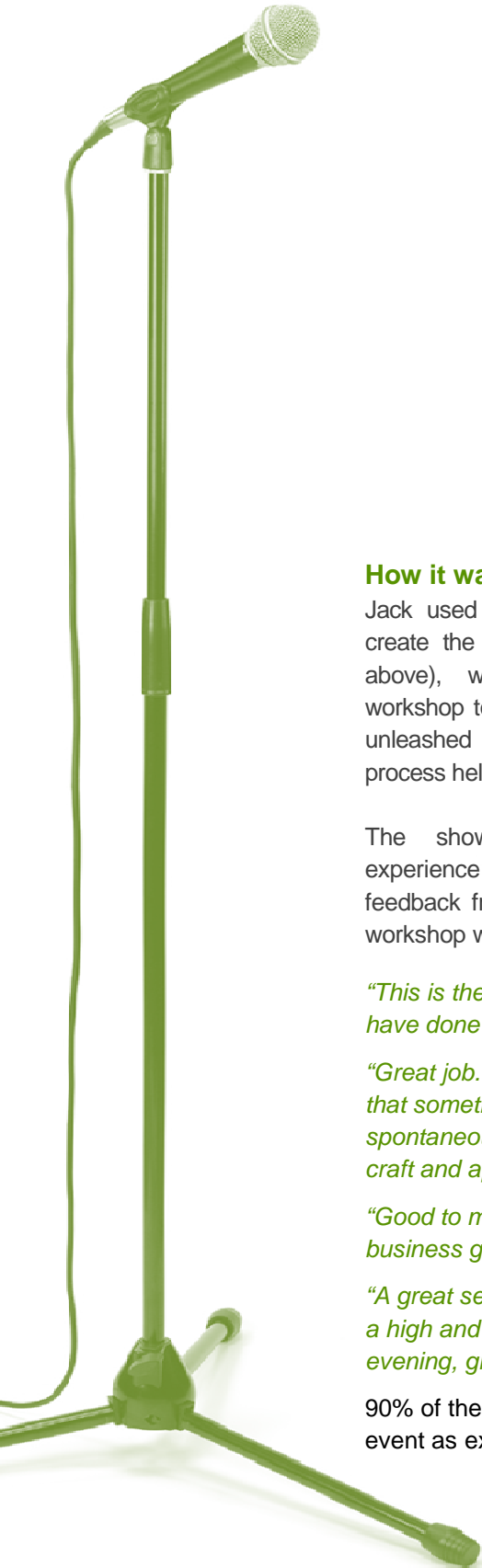
Brain storming break out sessions brought out the very best in people

### Be very funny!

The workshop had to be completed in just 2½ hours followed by a final evening performance to an audience of 230 peers that would last 15 minutes. Naturally, being a comedy workshop, the final show had to be totally original and, of course, hilariously funny!



The final show was seriously funny



1. Comedy exercises. Then divide 230 people into 30 groups of seven.  
Each group creates Comedy sketch.

2. The best of these comedy sketches are chosen, so we now have 15 good sketches.

3. The best of these 15 sketches are chosen, so we are left with 5 great sketches.

SHOW

### How it was done

Jack used a simple pyramid structure to create the 15-minute original sketch (see above), while employing the comedy workshop to build the team. The workshop unleashed huge hidden talent and the process helped build the team spirit.

The show proved to be inspiring experience for the whole team and the feedback from the 230 participants to the workshop was hugely complimentary:

*"This is the best team building activity I have done in a long time."*

*"Great job. Good fun, interesting to learn that something we think of as spontaneous innovation actually has a craft and approach to it."*

*"Good to meet others in EPG (our business group)"*

*"A great session which ended day one on a high and set the scene for a great evening, great idea!"*

90% of the attendees described the event as excellent or good.



Taking a few personal risks breaks down the barriers and builds the team.

### Real triumph

Comments from Microsoft's Enterprise Partner Group Director, **Terry Smith** summarised the success of the day.

"I thought the team building workshop was brilliant. A real triumph! We achieved all of our team building objectives and your session exceeded our (high) expectations. It was genuinely fulfilling and inspirational to see a room of 230 people creating, sharing, connecting and having SO much fun.

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Terry went on to say, "I thought all of the 5 finalists were really very funny and the only downside I can see is that it went so well I hope we don't start losing some of our people to the world of comedy!"

Terry summarised, "Thank you to you, and the great team you had working with you on the day. I look forward to us working together in the future."



Group workshops break down barriers

### Comedy requires commitment

**Jack Milner** revealed, "Comedy requires commitment, which is why it works so well as a group training exercise. One cynic would kill the event and smother creativity, a bit like in business, so the theme 'Be the difference' was so relevant to the success of the whole event. Everybody joined in."

### Laughter breaks down barriers

Laughter is a great way to break down barriers. It allows people to take some risks without being shown up or humiliated in any way. The workshops

are designed to promote risk taking, but also engender confidence in the participants to get things wrong and still feel safe.

### And now the final curtain

Finally, new GM, **John Jester** added a concluding comment, "I am delighted with the success of our kick-off. Comedy added such a buzz to the event. Jack Milner's approach and dedication to making it work, ensured this was a successful event. I recommend Jack and Standup & Deliver as a brilliant team to bring something completely different to a company conference."



Comedy gets the prize

If you would like to talk to Jack about your next team event then please call **01494 772908** for a friendly chat or visit **[www.standupanddeliver.co.uk](http://www.standupanddeliver.co.uk)**