

Metro North Health CULTURE & ENGAGEMENT



Shark tank challenge

Time: Approximately 60 – 90 minutes.

Materials needed: None.

Participants: Team.

Values in Action: High Performance, Teamwork, Integrity.

Outcomes: Enhanced creativity, strategic thinking, persuasive communication, and collaboration.

Purpose

This dynamic team challenge encourages participants to think like innovators and entrepreneurs. It provides a fun, engaging way to generate ideas that improve workplace processes, culture, or services - while building confidence and communication skills.

How to run the activity

Step 1: Introduce the challenge and form teams

- Introduce the challenge by explaining:

“Your challenge is to create and pitch a bold, creative idea that improves our workplace in some way—big or small.”

- Form small teams of 3–5 participants.
- Give each group a workplace challenge or invite them to identify their own. Examples include:
 - How can we improve employee wellbeing?
 - How might we reduce meeting overload?
 - What new tool or process could boost team performance?
 - Feedback surveys show opportunities to improve engagement during onboarding, how might we redesign the experience?

Tip: Keep it open-ended for more creativity, or choose a theme aligned to a current focus (e.g., innovation, inclusion etc.).

Step 2: Develop the idea (20 – 30 mins)

Each group works together to:

- Identify a specific problem or opportunity.
 - Encourage teams to define the problem using data or evidence where possible (e.g., survey feedback, experience trends, workload data). This helps ensure ideas are grounded in real needs rather than assumptions.
- Develop an innovative solution or idea.
- Decide how they'll "sell" the idea to the panel.

Encourage teams to consider:

- What's the benefit or impact of your idea?
- Who does it help? How?
- What would it take to implement it?
- Why should we invest in it?

Optional: Provide each team a copy of the Pitch Guide.

Step 3: Pitch to the panel (20-30 mins)

Each group delivers a short 3-minute pitch to a panel of leaders or peers.

- Encourage teams to be creative: role-play, storytelling, mock-ups, or visuals are welcome!
- After each pitch, allow 2–3 minutes for panel questions and feedback.

Tip: Choose panellists who will be constructive and encouraging. You can use managers, peers, or even a cross-functional panel.

Step 4: Shark Tank judging and investment (10-15 mins)

Panellists "invest" in the ideas they believe have the most impact or potential. You can provide each panellist with:

- 3 votes (or pretend "\$100" to distribute).
- A set of criteria for judging each idea (e.g., creativity, feasibility, alignment to values).

Optional: Award a small prize or recognition to the winning team(s), such as implementation support, a spotlight in the team newsletter, or a lunch with leadership.

Step 5: Reflect and wrap up (10-15 mins)

Gather everyone for a debrief. Suggested questions:

- What did you enjoy most about this challenge?
- What surprised you about your teammates' creativity?
- How did it feel to pitch your idea?
- Which skills did you use or strengthen today?
- Which of these ideas should we actually try?

Optional: Capture key ideas on a board and follow up with a shortlist for possible implementation.

Key takeaways

- Innovation thrives when everyone's voice is heard.
- Bold ideas can come from any level, at any time.
- Pitching encourages clear communication, team synergy, and confidence.
- The best workplace improvements often come from those doing the work.