

# A New Lesson for Owen MBAs: Songwriting

By Stacy Blackman | April 9, 2010



If corporate team-building exercises make you think of rustic ropes courses and trust falls, the non-athletic among us might take heart to know of a new team-building activity that, according to the *Tennessean*, is gaining popularity: songwriting. And even **Vanderbilt's Owen School of Management** has gotten in on the act.

Given that Vanderbilt is located in Nashville, TN, Owen was a natural fit for the activity. The professors and students worked with Team Building Through Song, a Nashville-based organization that brings Grammy-winning songwriters to lead groups in writing a song about their companies or associations.

According to the group's web site, the activity promotes "innovation, creativity, humor, leadership and compromise," and participants will "enhance team communication, break down barriers and experience success."

So how did the Owen group fare? They came up with a song called "On the Owen Road" and as **Bill Dunbar**, Owen's director of development, told the *Tennessean*, "You had a group of finance types. We stepped outside our boundaries a bit, and we were forced to be more creative, certainly more than we're used to."

For those not located in Nashville who wish to push their organization's creative boundaries, there are probably plenty of local musicians who would help you write your song — or maybe you have a few musicians in your own ranks who would be willing to lead the activity. Either way, it sounds a lot less scary than a ropes course.

What's the best — or worse — corporate team-building activity you've participated in? Do you think team-building is useful or a time waster? Leave a comment and share your thoughts.