

## CAREERS



## GETTING GOOD CAREER KARMA

Karma Coaching Cards are a deck of cards containing ideas and activities based on the notion of "you are what you do." The workplace deck offers good karma suggestions such as returning all your "borrowed" office supplies. Go to [www.karmacoachingcards.com](http://www.karmacoachingcards.com) for more information. The deck costs \$20.

METRO

## NUMBER

**26** Number of female firefighters in New York City's 11,500-member force. Nationally, 2.4 percent of career firefighters are women. AP

EDITED BY CATHERINE NEW  
[catherine.new@metro.us](mailto:catherine.new@metro.us)

# Hunting and gathering for urban workers

## New York City used as the backdrop for workplace team-building

**INSTITUTIONALIZED** corporate bonding is big business these days. Managers and executives are paying thousands of dollars to outside consultants and corporate retreats to get their staff to work well as a team.

A novel version of this is City Hunt, a scavenger-hunt-themed events company that creates specialized activity events for corporations, using Polaroid cameras and the city. New York University grads Ben Hoffman and Jaymes Dec teamed up three years ago to start City Hunt, after an informal game planned for a friend's birthday party became an elaborate scavenger hunt.

### Finding rewards

The two spent a year studying the philosophy of team building after they gradu-

**"It's like a mix of 'Survivor,' 'The Amazing Race' and 'The Apprentice.'"**

Ben Hoffman  
co-founder of City Hunt

ated from NYU and came up with a system by which they could organize elaborate and instructive events and teams competed to solve riddles, accomplish tasks and find rewards.

"It's like a mix of 'Survivor,' 'The Amazing Race' and 'The Apprentice,'" says Hoffman. "It's all with pictures, though. Teams get Polaroid cameras and we put them in a random part of the city and they try to take pictures of specific things. It's simple, fun and super-social. We have clues that use our own types of crypt texts, which lead to challenges, and it all serves

to bring people together as a team."

While one company might want to work on math skills, another may want to emphasize trust games or build corporate culture. To accomplish that, City Hunt customizes every event to a particular company's needs, says Hoffman.

### Customizing fun

"They tell us what they want to work on, be it leadership, time-management, teamwork, whatever, and we craft it around that," says Hoffman. "We've done games of charades over the skating rink at Rockefeller Center

and we've sent people searching through the East Village for random items."

He says that having such a multicultural and multifaceted backdrop as New York provides a lot of the uniqueness for the events. Many companies use City Hunt as a kind of orientation for employees who are new to the city.

But the city can also provide headaches for City Hunt's staff while the events are being planned.

"It's so easy in New York to get something messed up," he says. "One day a three-ton statue can be there and the next it is gone."

The company doesn't just do events in New York, however. The City Hunt crew recently traveled to Shanghai, China, to create an

event. While neither Hoffman nor Dec knew Chinese, they were able to pull off a successful event, arriving only three days in advance.

"We had a plan and understood how we could do it," says Hoffman. "We had been to Shanghai before and we had a bunch of guidebooks. We wanted to find a few real underground places and



**TEAM-BUILDING** scavenger hunts make use of Polaroid cameras to take pictures of specific things in the city.

mix it up with high-end museums."

For more information go to [www.cityhunt.org](http://www.cityhunt.org).

DAVID S. HIRSCHMAN  
[david.hirschman@metro.us](mailto:david.hirschman@metro.us)