

GET OFF THE BENCH

BUILDING GREAT LAB TEAMS

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Who Am I?



I am employed by CirrusDx

We are a commercial Clinical Microbiology Laboratory



I am in love with microbiology

There is nothing more beautiful as yeast under the microscope!



I have had a lot of interesting titles, including...

- Chief Happiness Officer (For building teams remotely during the "dark times" at my former employer)
- Queen of Engaging Training (perpetual title)



I have "free time"??

I love my pet bunnies, have an amazing fudge recipe, and love to hike and dodge cacti with my hubby in the Arizona desert

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The Challenge



Meet the Staff at EternaLab



Jen is a pro. She juggles working in the lab part-time, while taking care of her grandkids the rest of the time.



Jasmine, a brilliant rock star on the bench but not a fan of “cringy team stuff.”



Justin, the third shift guy. He's studying to be a PA during the day and working nights in the lab.



Kim, the lab manager. Doing her best to keep everyone happy and productive.



Naveen, the team's workaholic. Need someone to cover your shift? Ask Naveen...



Eva, new to the lab and learning fast. She could really benefit from more time spent learning from her colleagues.



Steve works hard for EternaLab and at two other part-time jobs to pad his 401k. Someday he'll retire (but probably not).

What Potential Team-Building Challenges Do You See In EternaLab? Or in Your Lab?

Word Cloud Instructions



Scan the QR Code
to the right.



Enter some of the unique
challenges that your lab
faces when it comes to
team building.





Debrief

Which of these challenges resonate with you?



Team Building Matters

Why Does Team Building Matter?

Team building can:

- Build trust
- Mitigate Conflict
- Encourage Communication
- Increase Collaboration
- Improve Engagement




Why Does Team Building Matter?

By the numbers:

- Companies that engage in team-building activities have a **36% increased retention rate**
- Team building initiatives **can boost engagement by up to 30**
- **75%** of employees participating in team building report **improved communication**
- Employees who participate in collaborative activities are **64% more focused** than those who work alone





The Power of Humor in the Lab

Why is humor especially powerful in a lab setting?

- Serious, stressful work
- Boosts morale
- Creates trust in leaders
- What else?

When should you NOT use humor or dial it back a little?

- In life-or-death diagnostic work
- Around new employees

Recipe for High-Performing Teams

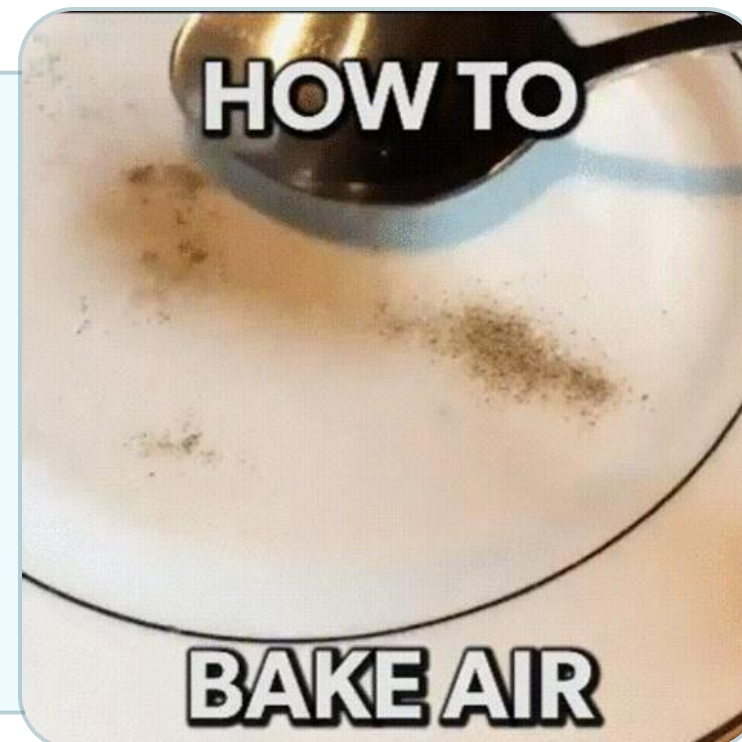
Ingredients:

- 1 Cup **Psychological Safety**
- 1 Cup **Shared Purpose and Goals**
- 3 Tbsp **Complementary Skills**
- A pinch of **Mutual Accountability**
- **Effective Communication** (to taste)

Mix ingredients

Bake at 375 for 30 minutes

Enjoy being awesome!



Activity Ideas



Four Types of Team Building



Personality-Based: Using personality/workstyle tests



Activity-Based: Using fun group activities (indoor and outdoor), games, to get people out of their comfort zones and work together

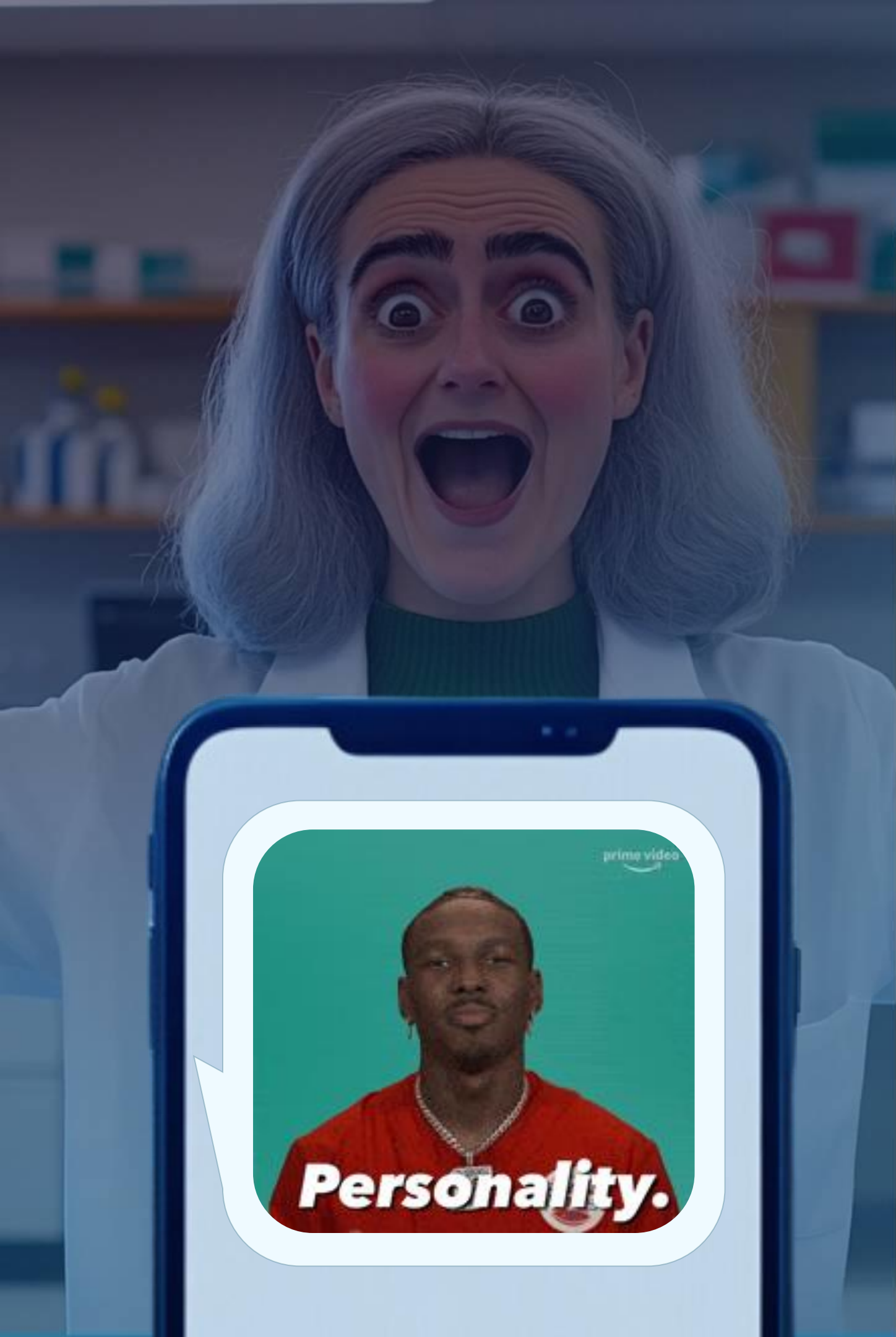


Skills-Based: Using workshops to allow team members to work together while building job-related skills



Problem-Solving-Based: Using team workshops/retreats to solve organizational problems together





Personality-Based

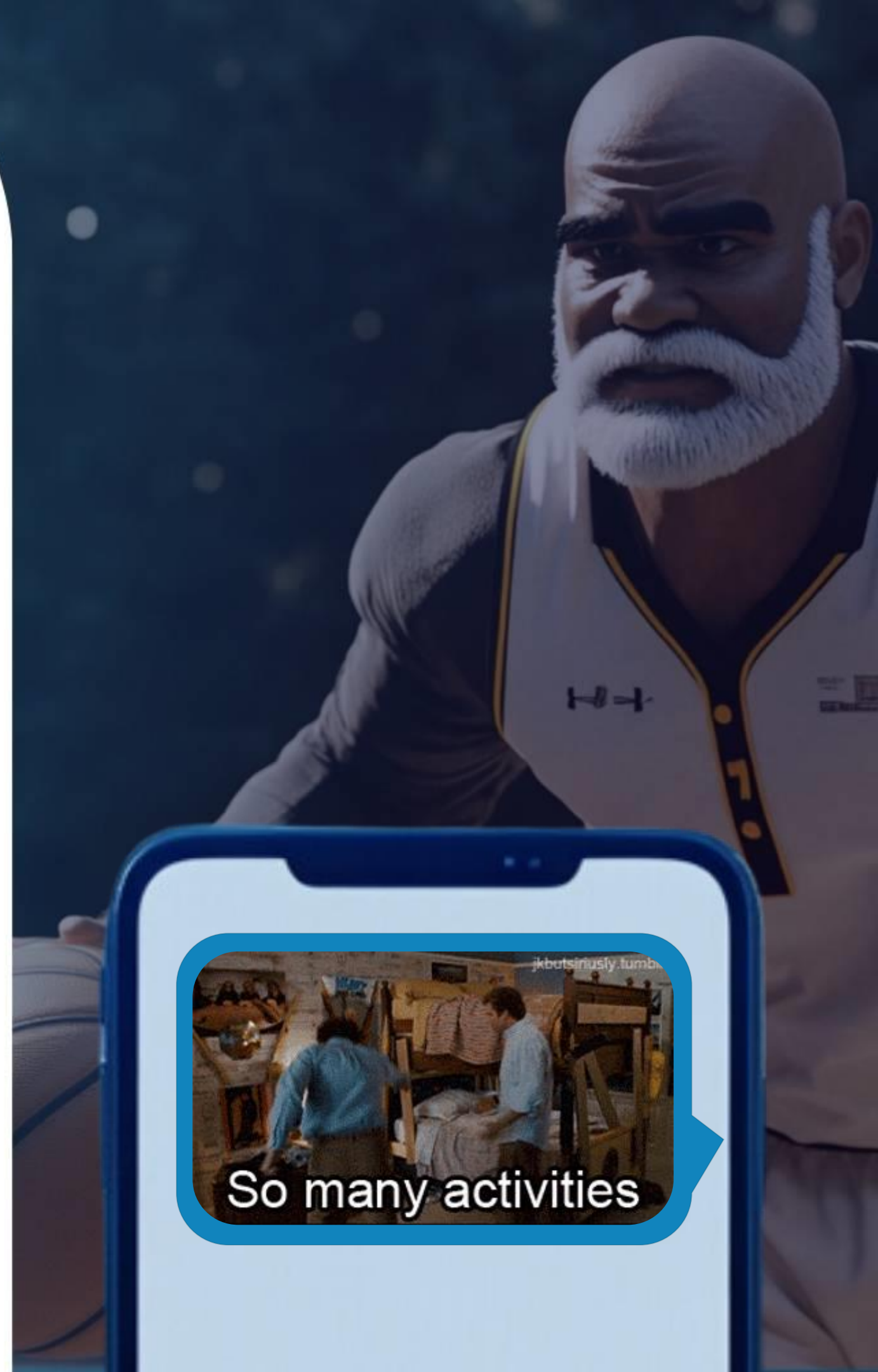
Check out these generally well-regarded personality tests:

- Big Five
- MMPI
- NEO PI-R
- Hexaco
- Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI)
- Others may have limited scientific usefulness (Could still be fun. Just don't take them too seriously!)



Activity-Based

- **Outdoor Activities:**
 - Boot camps, retreats, hiking, rock climbing, survival games
- **Indoor games:**
 - Jenga
 - Collaborative board games
 - Murder mystery
 - Escape rooms (there are board game and mobile escape rooms now too!)
 - Scavenger hunts
 - Legos/Insights bricks (see link in resources)
- **Contests:**
 - T-shirt design
 - Recipes
 - Photo and photo caption
 - AI song creation/meme creation
 - Theme days (beach days, socks, decorate a part of the lab)
- **Improv:**
 - Yes, and...
 - Questions only
 - Three-headed expert



So many activities



Skills-Based

- Plating challenges
- Pipetting challenges
- Guess the image (plates, gram stains)
- Skills/knowledge-based contests on a standalone laptop

Whatever you do, get creative and have fun!





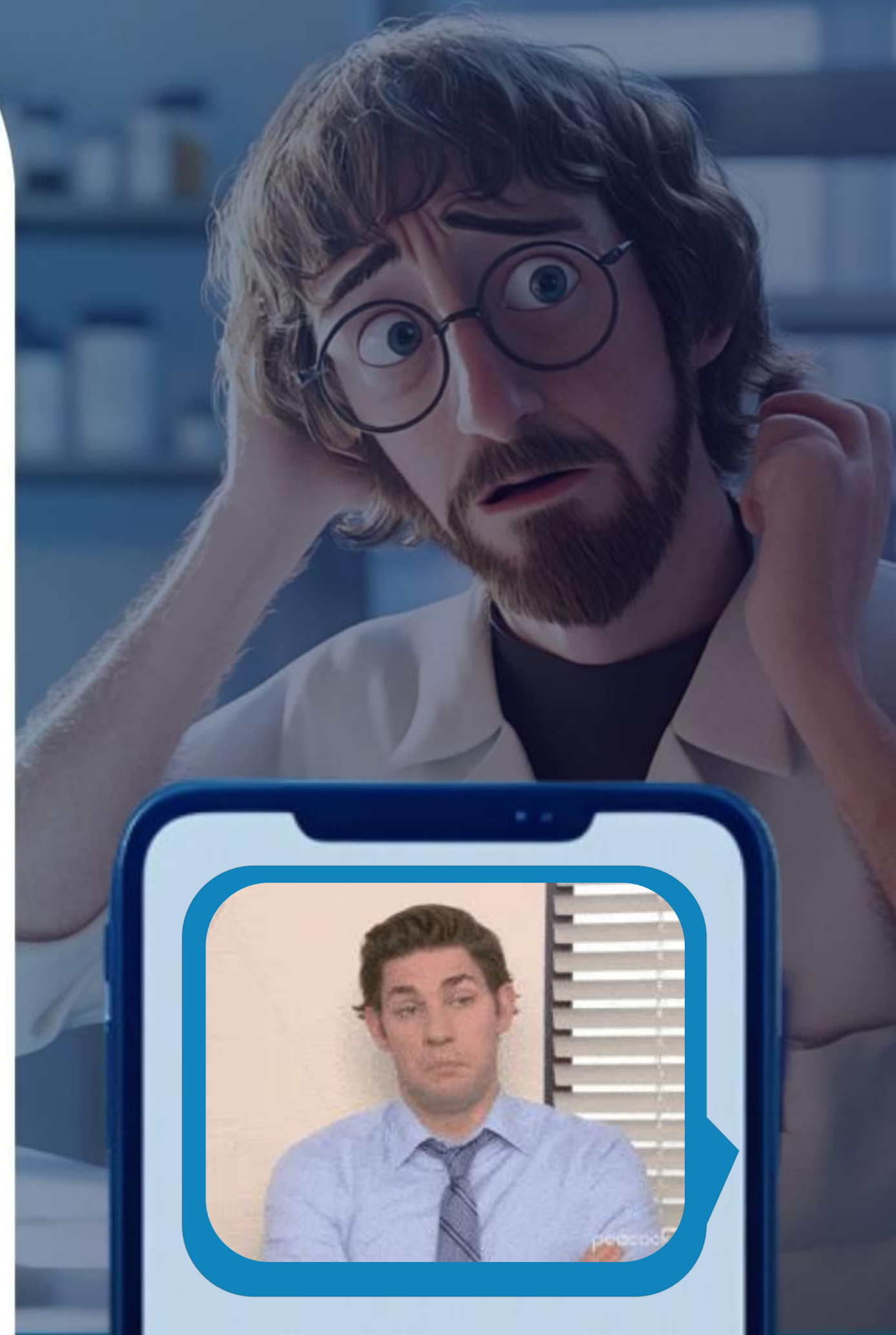
Problem Solving

Think about challenges your lab is facing:

- Clinician education (proper sample types)
- Equipment issues/troubleshooting
- Interpreting complex results
- Staffing
- Communicating the value of the lab

Can you get people together to solve the issues?

- Use fun/engaging brainstorming techniques:
 - Snowball Fight to brainstorm solutions to problems
 - Mind-mapping
 - SWOT Analysis
 - Five Whys
 - And many more...



What About Multiple Shifts?

- "Offline" contests using chat tools like Teams
- Photo contests/challenges (baby pics, memes, guess the image, pets)
- "Tech of the Month" bulletin board
- "Question of the Week" board for techs to answer questions
- Virtual book club with discussion boards
- Lab coat/desk design contest
- Laptop quiz game (standalone laptop everyone can use)
- "Funniest Lab Moment" submission box with weekly highlights
- "Lab Hack of the Week" to share efficiency tips
- Progressive story board
- "Kudos Corner" for recognizing each other
- Shift swaps/offers to cover for each other (especially around holidays)
- "Around the World in Labs" showing interesting global labs
- "Wellness Wall" for health tips
- Recipe swaps
- "Lab Goals" vision board to contribute aspirations





Snowball Fight!

Snowball Fight Instructions

1. Write your best team-building activity idea on a piece of paper.
2. Wad up the paper into a "snowball."
3. When instructed, toss your snowball up in the air/across the room without blinding anyone.
4. Pick up someone else's snowball.
5. When called on, read the idea on the paper out loud, then make it better by using the "Yes, and..." technique.





Debrief

What ideas did you like the best?





Let's Wrap Up



A New Era at EternalLab



Questions?

What's on your
mind?



Thank You!



Get in touch!

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Insights Bricks Website

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