

How2: Build a Team

Effective teamwork is one of the essential elements when it comes to our Holiday ministry to children and young people, so it's worth taking a minute or two to think about the principles if you are planning to be part of a team during the holidays. You may be spending a week away at a residential event, or you may be helping to run a Holiday Club in your own church, or be joining a team in another church.

Such events can only work if a group of people come together as a team with a common vision and a willingness to share the tasks involved! Often the team building has to happen literally overnight and this can be both challenging and exciting.

The Bible is strong on Teamwork!

Jesus chose to work with a team of people, teaching, inspiring, motivating, sharing life together, praying, leading and sending them off to achieve particular tasks. There's much to learn from the way he took a group of 12 ordinary men and turned them into a team. But it doesn't mean that it's easy.

Co-operation Works

Getting on with people is hard! Really co-operating and working together successfully to achieve a common goal is even harder. With God's help, a good leader, willingness and co-operation, amazing things can be achieved. And you should find the experience personally rewarding too.

Who's the Boss?

Your team leader may have one of a number of styles. They may have a strong personality, a motivational style and a very clearly articulated approach. Alternatively, they may be a facilitator or co-ordinator who enables the other members of the team to fulfil their tasks effectively.

Either way, a good team leader will value and respect their team and so the team will value and respect them.

The Ideal Team?

A good team will have:

- A clear vision of what they are trying to achieve together
- Openness between members
- A sense of belonging
- Shared decision making
- Creativity
- Enthusiasm for the shared task

There should also be a good balance of different personality types and skills. Different spiritual gifts and different natural gifts are needed. Not one of us has them all, but each of us has something unique to give. Remember 1 Corinthians 12, where Paul uses the analogy of the body to explain how each of us has an important part to play. There's no point in us all wanting to be feet, or eyes or whatever!! The amazing thing about recruiting a team for an event, is that we often see God at work in

bringing together a diverse group of people. It's a privilege to watch as different roles are filled and the whole becomes greater than the sum of the individual contributions.

Practical Steps to Making the Team Work

Two important Rs: Role and Relationships

It's important to know what your **role** is on the team. This will help the event to function properly. If you're not clear about what's expected, it's always a good idea to ask.

Teams are about **relationships**. It's not just a lot of people getting on with particular tasks side by side, but about working on a common project together, helping each other out and being sensitive to others on the team. Together we can do more, but we also grow more, learn more and benefit more from one another.

"To act as though relationships are secondary (to getting God's work done) is to miss the whole point of the Christian faith." (quote from Teamwork, see below). Remember that Jesus commanded us to love one another. We can demonstrate this to each other as we work together.

Two important Cs: Commitment and Communication

There's a need to demonstrate **Commitment**. If a team has an agreed vision and tasks to carry out, everyone has to be committed to making it work.

Good **communication** is often the key to getting things off the ground in the first place as well as sorting out issues as they arise. If you are a team member you need to be able to chat to both the team leader and to other members about how things are going. We need to listen first, think carefully, pass on relevant information and respect each other's points of view.

The ideas in this article are taken mainly from "Teamwork: How to build relationships" by Gordon and Rosemary Jones, published by Scripture Union. It provides an approach to working in teams that can be applied in a wide range of settings – the workplace, family relationships, church and friends, as well as in the context of mission. Well worth a read.

"Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work. If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no-one to help him up!" Ecclesiastes 4:9

"The strongest team is built when its members are committed to the task, to each other and to the team unit."

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