

LEADER TIPS BUILDING A TEAM

WHAT IS A TEAM?

A team is defined as an energetic group of people who are committed to achieving common objectives, who work well together and enjoy doing so, and who produce high quality work. As a leader, you can encourage enthusiasm and a sense of belonging among group members by showing:

FRIENDLINESS: Others will be more willing to share ideas if you're interested in them as people, too.

UNDERSTANDING: Everyone makes mistakes. Try to be constructive, tolerant, and tactful when offering criticism.

FAIRNESS: Equal treatment and equal opportunity lead to an equally good effort from all group members.

GOOD WILL: Group members will take their tasks more seriously if you show that you are interested more in the group goals than your own personal gain. Remember, they'll know if you're faking.

SUCCESSFUL TEAMBUILDING

Teambuilding is defined as the process of forming diverse individuals into a group who share common goals, objectives, and expectations, as well as a commitment to one another.

Team building is appropriate:

- for a new group
- for an organization with a large number of new people
- when members seem bored or irritable
- when members appear to be going off in different directions
- when there is a lot of conflict or infighting
- when members have been apart for awhile
- when you want to break from the normal routine
- when you want to boost a group's team spirit

THE FIVE STEP PROCESS

To develop a team, design activities suitable to the group that address each of the five steps to team building. The activities can be accomplished during the period of a weekend retreat or an entire semester or year.

STEP 1: BOND BUILDING

The first step in team building is to break down the cliques and barriers that exist, and to establish a trusting relationship among the members. This is accomplished by giving the group members some problem-solving tasks which require them to work side by side with others in the group. Cooperation is the main goal.

STEP 2: OPENING UP

When an individual can share non-threatening areas of his or her life, an exciting step in group building takes place. If a person perceives that others are genuinely interested in him or her, then telling one's peers about oneself provides an opportunity for trust to develop in the group.

STEP 3: AFFIRMING

Crucial to the growing process of a group is the act of encouraging each other through affirmation. Members become active participants in the group when they realize that others care about them. They need positive feedback to be reassured that others think they are okay before they will consider sharing further.

STEP 4: STRETCHING

Everyone goes through trials; but when these tough times are experienced as a group, opportunities arise for people to truly become a team. When members are placed in new and unfamiliar territory and must overcome a tough situation, they experience personal growth and become a team.

STEP 5: SUPPORT

When a group member shares a problem, the rest of the group is empathetic and gives support and encouragement. The group exists to help the individual talk through possible solutions and set goals. The group holds the individual accountable while giving him/her the freedom to fail.

*** Leader Tips is courtesy of the Council of Student Organizations***

“A TEAM OF INDIVIDUALS WORKING TOGETHER CAN ACCOMPLISH MORE THAN A COLLECTION OF INDIVIDUALS WORKING ALONE.”