



tips for youth workers

APRIL 2009

BUILDING TEAM SPIRIT

Our workers are working for God – their prime motivation. Yet when we know that we are not out there all alone working for God, we feel affirmed and work harder. Make it a point to talk to all your workers personally every week. Try a couple of these ideas to build up your team members:

BE FAIR

Don't set people up for ministry burnout. It's true that when you want to get a job done you should ask a busy person. It's also true that busy people can reach their limits—and when they do; they often drop all their responsibilities, rather than cut back to a reasonable amount.

Make a list of all the things each ministry worker is responsible for. If someone has too much, get him/her to train someone for their least favourite responsibility, or redefine what is expected in a job. Careful! You don't want to walk in and take jobs away from people. They might feel you were saying they weren't good enough.

TEACHER APPRECIATION DAY

Have a teacher appreciation day when each class can honour its teacher in a special way. Use an apple as the theme for the day. Ask each class member to bring the teacher an apple. Arrange to have each teacher invited out to Sunday dinner, or have a potluck (be sure teachers do not bring anything) in honour of the occasion. Include a fun time with some creative ways of expressing sincere appreciation. Prepare a special plaque or certificate, and present it at the worship service or in the Sunday school class.

TEACHER BRAINSTORM

The next time you have your ministry workers gathered together; spend some time brainstorming on the subject of teaching techniques. Have them name as many different ones as they can within a set time. List these on large sheets of paper and tape them around the room. After the list is made (shoot for 50 or more techniques), spend some time exploring different techniques. This exchange of ideas will spark creativity in your staff and give them the itch to try some new things.

A DAY OFF

If a teacher seems especially discouraged or lethargic, provide him or her with a day off. This may mean arranging for a substitute teacher. Encourage the "relieved" teacher to attend an adult class, another class, or even his or her own class—as a participant not a teacher. If your whole staff seems lethargic, schedule a mid year rally day. Give them all a day off!

WE MET OUR GOAL!

Set goals that can be measured and celebrated when goals are reached. Number goals are easy. "We want 5 more kids in our junior department". But set spiritual goals as well—that all teachers will spend a half hour on time a week in prayer for their classes; that each ministry worker will spend an hour or longer each week preparing for their lesson; that each worker will personally rate their teaching at a B level or above. These are sample goals. You can check with teachers to see if they have been met. When they are, affirm your workers and set new areas on which to work.

Sometimes we set goals that we know we can meet in our own strength. It's a test of our faith to set at least one goal that we won't meet if the Holy Spirit doesn't step in in an unusually way. His power will make the difference. For example: That the parents of the five Johnson kids will come to know Christ; That God will call at least one man to serve in each age level in our Sunday school.