

Building a Strong Staff Team

Essential Elements

It's not just about cooperation, its about making every team member feel valued and important. You won't be able to get everything done without a great, solid team helping you along the way. For your afterschool program to be successful and offering quality programming, it is important to be purposeful in creating a strong team.

ALLOW FOR ALL TYPES: Communicate that all personality types are valued. Personality tests are always a great way for the group to bond.

PLACE THEM IN THEIR ELEMENT: Nothing motivates people like success, and putting people in position to do that builds confidence and momentum.

GIVE AWAY TRUST: Empowering others is indicative of a secure leader. Showing a team that you trust someone else gives them an opportunity to step up and keeps leadership from becoming insular.

DO STUFF TOGETHER: There's no substitute for spending time together. Get your team comfortable by playing games, finding opportunities to praise one another, or just organizing social events. The team that plays together, grows together.

USE THE PRAISE SYSTEM: Know incentives for staff. If they love credit, praise them publicly. If they value family time, tell them to leave early on a Friday. Knowing what motivates staff helps morale.

BE OPEN TO NEWNESS: Having a "yes" attitude to suggestions and improvements creates an open and free environment to share. Not every idea is a winner but creating the right environment will bring the good ones to light.

BE PAIRED UP: Don't be afraid to match experienced staff with new staff, introverted with extroverted, etc. Once you know your team well enough to see traits, pair up areas of strengths and weaknesses to get a better result.

CREATE ACCOUNTABILITY: Knowing that staff is responsible to the team, as well as the leader is a motivating factor. Great teams know their actions not only affect themselves but reflect the entire program as well.

DON'T LET OTHERS SINK: If you see a staff member struggling, have a plan for improvement. Do they need a mentor, additional training, or a pep talk? If you see someone having a hard time don't just wave to them as they are going down.