

# Managing a Team and Managing to Keep Your Sanity –Not Mutually Exclusive!

Managing a team can and should be an exciting and rewarding experience. You don't need specialized skills. You do need a genuine enjoyment of young people. The kids need you to enjoy, encourage, inspire, motivate, push, laugh with and manage them. Learn to keep a sense of humor very close at hand. Relax, have fun and laugh a lot. This is not rocket science.

1. Control the urge to become emotionally involved. Of course, you will be proud of your team, but you are asking for ulcers if you equate the team's success (or lack thereof) with your ability to manage. This is *their* Challenge, *their* solution and not every team is the "dream team" every year. Destination ImagiNation® is not college football or major league baseball—you won't be fired if the team doesn't win.
2. If you are doing Destination ImagiNation (DI) only to win, you are in the wrong place. You should be doing DI in order to teach the team skills ranging from how to work together as a team, to how to use tools, to how to analyze what the words of the Challenge mean. You are teaching the team the skills they need to create *their* best solution, considering who they are right now. No matter how they do at the tournament, they will have accomplished a lot that they and you can be proud of and celebrate. No other team's performance will be exactly like theirs.
3. Before starting to work on the Challenge, do team-building activities:
  - Play games—Scattergories, Charades, etc.
  - Do some Instant Challenges that get them working together
  - Discuss and have kids talk about how they contribute to the Challenge in different ways. E.g. Artist, builder, hard worker, dancer, writer, thinker, etc.
  - "Knots," "Group Juggling," "Trust Walk," etc.
4. When the team is not around, READ the *Challenge*, READ *The Rules of the Road*, READ the *Challenge*, READ the *Roadmap*, READ the *Challenge*, READ *Travel Guide for Teams* (January), and READ the *Challenge*.
5. Have the students study and analyze the Challenge:
  - Look at, read and examine its parts. Ask, "What does this mean? Could it have any other meaning?"
  - Discuss the "Points of Interest." Keep this summary in mind at all times as the team works on *their* solution.
  - Analyze the sections of the Challenge to determine what the Challenge requires. "What kinds of things must be included? What things are prohibited?"
  - What is the "Presentation Site" like? The last few weeks especially, practice in an area exactly as specified. Perhaps consider a trip to the Challenge Presentation Site after you receive the tournament info.
  - Have the team look at "Reward Points." "How will the Challenge be scored? Where are the points?" As Team Manager (TM) these need to be two of your most used questions. Kids tend to focus on items that may not even be scored (Team Identification Sign, a minor prop, etc.) These questions may (or may not) bring them back.

- Check Challenge Clarifications regularly. A Clarification is a statement that explains the boundaries of a stated rule or Team Challenge requirement.
  - Published Clarifications are posted online at [www.idodi.org](http://www.idodi.org) and affect all teams in that Challenge.
  - Team Clarifications may be requested at the same site. The team may request up to 10 Clarifications before February 15.
6. Have the team think about *Team Choice Elements* from the beginning. *Team Choice Elements* enhance the team's Central Challenge presentation and may be anything the team wishes as long as each may be evaluated as a stand-alone item and may not be an item required in the Central Challenge. Common examples include: dance, humor, costuming, props, songs, music.  
Read *Rules of the Road 2017-18*, pp. 11-12.
7. Resist the urge to Interfere. Interference is help from non-team members—whether it's in the form of ideas or actual work on the solution. Read *Rules of the Road 2017-18*, pp. 13-16 for specifics.
- You should ask questions to help the team members think, not to guide them to a specific solution. Answer their question with a question.
  - You (or someone else) may teach team members how to do something but may not do the sewing, drilling, gluing, etc. on the team's items.
  - You must not suggest ideas for solutions, themes, script, characters, etc. You may teach them how to brainstorm and evaluate ideas for solutions, themes, characters, etc.
  - If the team can not make the solution because it is too dangerous or difficult, the team must find a different solution. A non-team member may not do it for them.
  - All teams must fill out and sign the Declaration of Independence form. It is your team's sworn statement regarding Interference and your Team Challenge and Instant Challenge solutions. Please maintain the team's integrity of their solution.
8. Explain Interference to the team and parents at the beginning of the DI season. Explain that the TEAM MEMBERS must make all the decisions, do all the work, and assume the responsibility for making this a successful DI season.
9. Organize and keep track of all required paperwork—whether it's yours or the team's. Have the team come up with a system of organizing the paperwork they need for the Challenge.
- Centerville City Schools contract requirements
  - Centerville DI forms
  - Regional Tournament Registration
  - Required Challenge paperwork (Competitive Teams)—see the Tournament Data Form on the last three pages of your Challenge.
  - Published Clarifications (Competitive Teams), the reply to Clarifications your team submits
  - Expense Report and receipts (Competitive Teams)

They may want to include the most recent copy of the script, ideas and sketches for costumes, set, props, etc. It helps to keep things in a central location.