



DI & Virtual DI

Advice, Tips & Tricks



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. With the new, virtual DI season everyone is a beginner this year and we're all learning how to adapt together. It's going to be an exciting adventure! Some bits of advice to help along the way:

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 learning new virtual technology, 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:
 - Virtual Escape Rooms, virtual puzzles, virtual get-to-know-you games (emoji check-in, two truths and a lie, share an embarrassing photo, etc.)
 - Play games—Scattergories, Charades, etc.
 - Do some Instant Challenges that get the team working together. There are virtual Instant Challenges in the 2020-21 Roadmap or search online for virtual activities.
 - 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.
 - Discuss and have kids talk about how each team member can contribute virtually and how the team can find a way to work together via Zoom.
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?”
 - 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 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 January 31.
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.
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.
 - 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, video editing, 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.
 - Emergency Medical Form
 - Required Challenge paperwork – Tournament Data forms or Starry Showcase (Rising Stars)
 - Declaration of Independence and Expense Report
 - Published and Private Clarifications (Competitive Teams)
10. See above... Relax, have fun, and laugh a lot!