

# DestinationImagiNation



## CreativityNews

Training Issue

Visit our Website at: <http://nydi.org>

October 2001

### Team Manager Training Schedule

#### EASTERN REGION –

**Team Managers Training Workshop** is scheduled for 10/20/01. Please contact Chris Lucas (Day phone: (212)543-5358 Eve phone: (914)962-8598) for specific information.

#### CENTRAL REGION –

##### **Team Managers Instant Challenge Training:**

11/3/01 9:30am -12:30pm

Moses DeWitt Elementary School

##### **Team Managers Training:**

11/17/01 9:30am -12:30pm

Moses DeWitt Elementary School

Contact: Gail Hunt (315-637-5182).

#### WESTERN REGION –

##### **General Team Managers Training Workshop**

11/8/01 7pm - 10pm

##### **Instant Challenge & Improv Workshop for Team Managers**

11/15/01 7pm - 10pm

Both workshops will be held at the Orchard Park Central Baker Road Conference Ctr.

Contact: Dee Urban (716-675-7566)

### Suggested Goals for First 5 Meetings

#### **FIRST MEETING** - with parents and students

- Meet with parents and students to fully explain the program & types of problems, EMPHASIZE that being on an DI team means a commitment from both parents and team members!
- Review general rules and DI Philosophy

- Discuss Interference rules and ask team members to police this themselves. Usually team members will want the Challenge solution to be THEIRS and theirs alone! They are the best ones to reprimand parents, Team Managers, friends etc. from assisting.
- Discuss students and parents goals and expectations. Why do you want to be an DI'er? is a good discussion starter. This is a good time to discuss the difference between 'winning' and 'succeeding'...you may find yourself repeating this at every meeting!
- Have team members and parents read & sign a contract
- Point out parental responsibilities and restrictions
- Ask for parent volunteers to help with transportation, refreshments, or as resource people.

#### **SECOND MEETING** - (team members only from now on)

- Discuss the pros & cons of working as a group
- Explain how all ideas must be considered and not judged
- Explain Instant Challenges and brainstorming, practice a few!
- Have team read and discuss the various Team Challenges. Remind team members that all DI Challenges offer opportunities for construction, performance, music, special effects, improv etc.
- Make a list of special skills and strengths of the team. Decide what skills must be learned to solve the various Challenges. Do an "interest inventory" with team members, have them make a list of "things I'm good at, Things I don't like to do, and Things another team member is good at"
- Try to narrow down problem choices for the next meeting

**THIRD MEETING** - *Note...new DI'ers might need more meetings to reach this point...or less!*

- Have team decide on a Team Challenge & brainstorm solution and theme ideas
- Encourage kids to visualize their solutions & to compromise their ideas with others
- Have the team narrow their ideas down to their 3 favorite ideas
- Elaborate on each of the 3 favorite ideas
- Select ONE idea from the 3 to be their final solution theme
- Practice Instant Challenge solving

#### FOURTH MEETING -

- Brainstorm a list of tasks necessary to complete solution
- Team Manager and team should devise a timeline for task completion
- Make a list of necessary materials
- Make a list of skills needed to complete the solution and how to learn them
- Set up a schedule of field trips, shopping trips and necessary research to be done
- Practice Instant Challenges
- Make a master calendar of your timeline, tasks, and field trips, assign a team member(s) to each task

#### FIFTH MEETING -

- Begin accomplishing tasks
- Practice Instant Challenges

### **Brainstorming gives YOUR team an unfair advantage!**

*Excerpted from a post by Bill Allen on the DINI listserv*

Understanding (and using) a solid "brainstorming process" is something that kids who participate in Destination ImagiNation will be able to apply to "challenges" they face for the rest of their lives which will give them an "unfair advantage" of people who do not understand that approach.

Here is how I approach the "brainstorming process":

A clear, focused "objective statement" is KEY. If the team makes their "objective statement" too broad (i.e. how do we solve this Challenge?), try to encourage the team to break it into bite-sized chunks (i.e. have them look at each scored element -- and even how that element might be broken down into smaller parts, etc.)

Spend some time to identify key measures -- and key constraints -- for the item getting brainstormed. For example, instead of having the objective of "how do we build a strong structure", it would be more appropriate to have an objective of "how do we build an efficient structure" (since efficiency, not max weight is what is scored in that Challenge).

Write the issue to be brainstormed in big, bold print somewhere that everyone can see. Make it clear that the purpose of the next phase is to generate as MANY ideas as possible -- without judging whether those ideas are "good", "bad" or even "feasible".

When the pace of ideas starts to slow, ask the group to look for alternative ways to state the objective statement (either more general or more specific). For example, instead of saying "How can we build this costume?", the group might try to rephrase individual words in the objective statement "What do we mean by the word costume? -- can we interpret that word in different a different way that might generate new options?"

Again, when things start to slow, ask the group to generate ideas on "How will we evaluate which of these alternatives are the best?". The process of generating measures will often result in new ideas. Don't be shy about flip-flopping between idea generation and measurement generation at this point.

Have the group "rank order" the measures -- so they know which are the most important.

Be sure to keep the following measures in the mix:

- "When do we need to have this element finished?" (especially if it is a component of a larger total solution).
- "Will this solution be 'cool' and give us a feeling of accomplishment?"
- "Will the process of creating this solution be fun?"
- "What is the risk that this approach won't work?"

Have the group generate some simple experiments they can conduct to test the viability of alternative approaches (i.e. build a "scale model" out of clay or cardboard -- or draw out an idea on paper). If a team can't create a "scale model" out of "easy to work", inexpensive materials, they almost certainly will be unable to build the "real thing" out of expensive materials that take a great deal of time to work into the desired shape.

Are there more "in depth" experiments we can conduct for the "best few" ideas. One key here is that if a team considers the things they are building for these "experiments" to be "disposable", they are MUCH more likely to be able to build them quickly (rather than "stressing" that they "aren't perfect"). They are also MUCH more likely to be willing to fold various ideas together and throw out a "work in process" in favor of a better "combined idea". In contrast, if a team begins to build something they perceive to be part of their "final solution", it is VERY rare they will be willing to discard it.

What "checkpoints" do we want to create along the way to make sure this project is progressing along the directions we'd hoped. This is actually a variation on the "evaluation methods", but it contains a time component.

ALWAYS keep ALL ideas that are generated. If a team hits a "dead end", it is VERY likely they will have forgotten all their previous ideas. In addition, it is a good idea to revisit the brainstorming process from time to time -- because team members will have "good ideas" pop into their head hours (or days) after the formal brainstorming process is complete.

## HELP WANTED

### POSITION: TEAM MANAGER

#### JOB DESCRIPTION:

Long term team players needed for challenging permanent work in an often chaotic environment. Candidates must possess excellent communication and organizational skills and be willing to work various hours, which will include evenings and weekends and frequent 24 hour shifts on call. Some overnight travel required, including trips to exotic locales (like Jamesville, New York and Knoxville, Tennessee) on rainy weekends and tournaments in faraway cities. Travel expenses not reimbursed. Extensive courier duties also required.

#### RESPONSIBILITIES:

Must be willing to be hated at least temporarily. Must be willing to bite tongue, and sit on hands repeatedly. Also, must possess the physical stamina of a pack mule and be able to go from zero to 60 mph in three seconds flat in case, this time, the screams from the backyard are not someone just crying wolf. Must be willing to face stimulating technical challenges, such as small gadget repair, mysteriously sluggish toilets and stuck zippers. Must screen phone calls, maintain calendars and coordinate production of multiple projects. Must have ability to plan and organize social gatherings for clients of all ages and mental outlooks. Must be willing to be indispensable one minute, an embarrassment the next. Must facilitate assembly and product safety testing of a half million cheap, apparatus and battery operated devices. Must always hope for the best but be prepared for the worst. Responsibilities also include floor maintenance and janitorial work throughout the facility.

#### POSSIBILITY FOR ADVANCEMENT AND PROMOTION:

Virtually none. Your job is to remain in the same position for years, without complaining, constantly retraining and updating your skills, so that those in your charge can ultimately surpass you.

#### PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE:

None required, unfortunately. On-the-job training offered on a continually exhausting basis.

#### BENEFITS:

While no health or dental insurance, no pension, no tuition reimbursement, no paid holidays and no stock options are offered, job supplies limitless opportunities for personal growth and free hugs for life if you play your cards right.

#### IF INTERESTED:

You must find five to seven students in need of a Team Manager and volunteer. If you are having difficulty in finding students interested in participation in Destination ImagiNation contact your local school, YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, Library, Boy Scout or Girl Scout Troop, PTO/PTA, or you may put a team together from kids in your neighborhood!

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Contact your Regional or State Affiliate Director for more information about this position. Your RD and AD may also

be contacted for a shoulder to cry on, encouragement, training, brainstorming and adult fellowship.

## SEPTEMBER REMINDERS

1. If you are interested in getting Destination ImagiNation posters for your school/organization please let your Regional Director know – we can send you posters! Each Regional Director also now has a stock of wonderful brochures about our fantastic program! If you are interested in getting some of these to help introduce the program at your school/organization please just let us know.

2. The Regional Directors are just now getting copies of a 3-in-1 Video which contains:

Part 1 - Great video to show kids, TMs, Groups to get them interested in forming teams! It's fast paced and fun!

Part 2 - TM Awareness - the very first initial answers to the question "What is a Team Manager" and "What have I gotten myself into" --- very up beat - fun - fast paced - NOT a substitute for General TM Training!!!! Would be very useful for Coordinators to borrow and use to recruit TMs!!!

Part 3 - The D2k.1 Video If you are interested in borrowing one of these videos please contact your Regional Director to arrange a loan!

3. You can find information about how to contact your Regional Director on our website (<http://nydi.org>) on the Regional Contacts & Information page.

4. Don't forget to download and complete your National and State Membership applications! You can find those on our website at <http://nydi.org/hgmemb.htm> both of these applications are also available in our September Newsletter.

5. Once you complete your membership applications you will get your CD-ROM containing all the program materials. If you are interested in getting the materials in a spiral bound notebook in addition to the CD-ROM contact the National Headquarters to purchase 'hard copy' of the materials for \$20 for each copy. I have a copy of this notebook and I would have given ANYTHING to have one of these when I was a Team Manager! It has EVERYTHING all in one place and is well worth the time and paper saved to purchase one now!

6. You should begin watching our website (<http://nydi.org>) frequently at this time of year, information will be posted regularly regarding regional training dates and other important information you will not want to miss!

7. Many of the documents on our website (including our Newsletters) are in PDF format. If you do not have the Acrobat reader you will need to download that from the home page of our website. It is free and easy to

download. Just click on the yellow "GET ACROBAT READER" button on our website homepage!

Please contact me or your Regional Director if you are interested in a presentation about our program, or a kick-off assembly for your students! We are available to help you make this DI Season an unqualified success for you and your students!

8. Remember that your team can begin asking for Clarifications at any time they have a question about the Team Challenge. Please read the "Rules of the Road" page 18.

## Practice Instant Challenge

### Create-It-Yourself Improv

Print up a sheet with these fill-in-the-blank questions (some of them are duplicated):

1. Write down a word or phrase that describes something a person does for work or for fun. For example: A bagpiper, A writer
2. Write down a word or phrase that describes something a person does for work or for fun. For example: A bagpiper, A writer
3. Write down a word or phrase that identifies a location. For example: On an airplane, At the zoo
4. Write down a word or phrase that could be used to describe someone's personality. For example: Shy, Hard to please
5. Write down a word or phrase that could be used to describe someone's personality. For example: Shy, Hard to please
6. Write down a problem someone might have to deal with or a situation they might be in. For example: You have an itch in the middle of your back which you can't reach
7. Write down an event or an occasion. For example: A birthday party, A movie premier

Hand one slip and a pencil to each team member. If there are less than seven team-members, give one or two of them two slips each.

Allow them about 30 seconds or so to fill in their slips. They may not discuss their responses.

Collect the slips and put the responses together to get a scene for an improv instant challenge. Using the examples:

"A shy bagpiper and a hard-to-please writer meet at the zoo for a movie premier. Someone has an itch in the middle of their back which they can't reach."

Give the team these instructions:

You have 2 minutes to plan and 3 minutes to perform a skit based on the following scene. You may add additional characters and situations, but your skit must include all of the seven elements mentioned in the scene.

(Read the scene)

For each element, you will score from 1 to 10 points for how effectively and creatively it is worked into the skit.

You will also score:

- 1 to 10 points for teamwork
- 1 to 10 points for the humor of the skit
- 1 to 10 points for the overall quality of the skit

Overall quality means the skit has an introduction, a consistent plot line, and a good ending. All of the elements are "justified" in the plot

The nice thing about this is that you can have them generate a whole new scene next time you meet.

Variations for an experienced team could include:

- Shorten or remove the planning time so it's more truly improvisation.
- Give them an improv prop just as the performance time begins.

Give the whole team the setting, the event, and the challenge, but only give the character descriptions to the actors who will play those characters. No one else knows how those actors will behave so they have to improvise to respond to the characters.

## Important Dates

**2002 NY Eastern Regional Tournament -**  
3/9/02 - Putnam Valley High School

**2002 NY Western Regional Tournament -**  
3/16/02 - Erie Community College South Campus

**2002 NY Central Regional Tournament -**  
3/16/02 - Jamesville DeWitt Middle School

**2002 New York State Finals Tournament -**  
4/27/02 - Jamesville DeWitt High School

**2002 Global Finals**  
May 22, - May 25, 2002 - University of Tennessee,  
Knoxville

## Start Fundraising Early!

### If you advance to Global Finals...

**PLACE:** University of Tennessee,  
Knoxville, Tennessee

**DATE:** May 22, 2002 Opening  
Ceremonies

May 25, 2002 Award Ceremonies

**Room/Bd:** **1A Package:** Tuesday through  
Saturday evening - **\$445/person**  
**2A Package:** Wednesday through  
Saturday evening - **\$405/person**  
*(Both of the above prices are the  
same as they were last year)*

**Registration Fee** for teams **not purchasing one of  
the above room/board packages**  
**-\$2,500**

**PLUS YOUR TRAVEL COSTS!**