

8 Values of TEAMWORK That Can Keep A Lay Organization Healthy

The success of your lay ministry depends largely on developing a strong team with a deep sense of team spirit. A unified team can create growth in your Lay Organizations, many lay organizations are not growing because their team members work as individuals and not as a team.

A team spirit is never accidental; it is always *intentional*. Teamwork is built on three factors:

- a compelling purpose,
- crystal clear communication,
- and a code of commonly held values.

The eight values of teamwork in a simple acrostic, T.E.A.M.W.O.R.K.:

T – Trust

Trust among your team is the emotional glue that binds them together; it's essential to producing true confidence in each other. There are three factors that create trust within a team:

- **Consistency** – People will trust you if, *time after time*, they see you responding in a consistent and reasonable manner. You also need to be readable, in the sense that they need to know where you are coming from in your decisions and responses.
- **Loyalty** – Defend members of your team when they're criticized and then check the facts later in private, always assuming the best until there is concrete evidence to the contrary.
- **Delegation** – When you delegate to your team the power to make decisions, you're essentially telling them: "I trust you!" People trust leaders who trust them.

E – Economy of Energy

The quickest way to burn-out a team is to never let them relax. The book of Proverbs teaches: "*A relaxed attitude lengthens a man's life.*" (Proverbs 14:30, LB) If you want the people on your team to last, *they must have some down time*.

Here are some ways you can promote an **economy of energy** within your team:

- Anticipate and compensate for personal and family energy drains, such as illnesses and new babies. Your team has a life outside of their area of ministry.
- Allow people to work at different energy levels on different days. Some days, everyone must work fast and energetic. Other days, it is important to slow the pace a bit. In the long term, slow and steady always outlasts the fast and furious.
- Plan your year in energy cycles.
- Allow flexibility in schedules when possible.
- Make the work fun!

A – Affirmation

Everybody is hungry for affirmation. When they don't get it, they get cranky. It's amazing how a smile and a simple word of encouragement can change a team member's entire day. Four practical ways you can affirm your team would be:

- valuing their ideas
- appreciating their uniqueness
- commending their efforts
- praising their loyalty

M – Management of Mistakes

The Bible teaches: *“Even though a righteous man falls seven times, he rises again.” (Proverbs 24:16, NIV)* Even *righteous* people make mistakes and stumble occasionally. Mistakes are not failures, because you’re never a failure until you give up. Mistakes teach us what doesn’t work. If you’re not making any mistakes, it means you’re playing it safe and not trying anything new. Let’s try something new this year! Mistakes are how we learn and get better.

W – Willing Workers

You must have members who are willing workers for the organization. Here are the four things you want to know as a leader:

- “I’ve made progress in _____”
- “I’m having difficulty with _____”
- “I need a decision from you on _____”
- “I’m thankful for _____”

O – Open Communication

Open communication is the cornerstone of great teamwork. Proverbs 13:17 (LB) says “Reliable communication permits progress.” There are three common barriers to great communication:

- Presumption – How many problems have been caused by the phrase “But I assumed...”? Here are some fatal assumptions: assuming that there’s only one way to see a problem; assuming that everyone else feels just like you; assuming that someone will never change (they do); assuming that you can know someone else’s motives (you can’t).
- Impatience ruins open communication because we are more interested in what we are going to say than listening to what others say. Impatience causes you to jump to conclusions.
- Pride – When you think you know it all, you are resistant to feedback, and you become defensive instead of really listening to others and learning.

R – Recognition and Reward

The more credit you give to others, the more you develop team spirit. It’s that simple. The Bible says, “Give honor and respect to all those to whom it is due.” (Romans 13:7, LB)

K – Keep on Learning

All leaders are learners. The moment you stop learning, you stop being a leader. Another proverb says “The intelligent man is always open to new ideas. In fact, he looks for them.” (Proverbs 18:15, LB) Do you do that? Do you encourage your team members to keep on growing, developing, and learning?

If you practice these eight **T.E.A.M.W.O.R.K.** values with your team, you’ll experience a new level of teamwork in your lay organization/church that will take your ministry to new heights.

Adopted from Pastor Rick Warren but revised to make it more applicable for the Lay Organization.