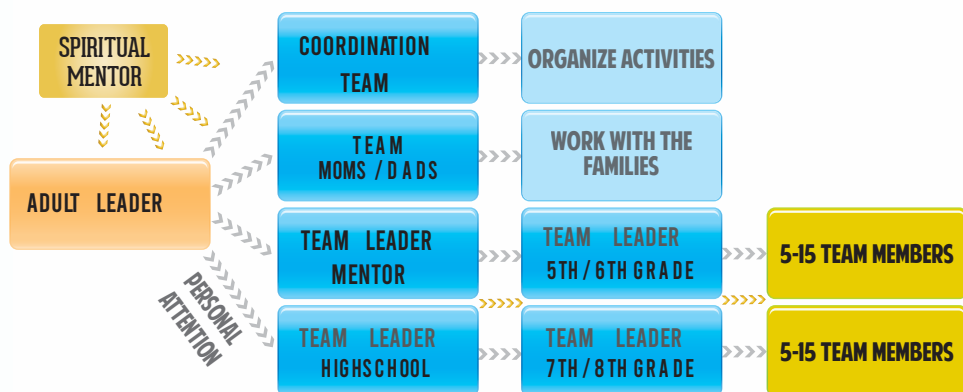


BUILDING AN ADULT & TEEN VOLUNTEER TEAM



ALL ABOUT THE PEOPLE

The reason we have this structure in Challenge and Conquest is not only for organizational purposes, but rather it is to ensure the personal attention to all of those people involved in the group. We can never get caught up in activities or organization in the group and lose sight of the most important priority: the people.

Nothing is more important than each person. You'll notice in the suggested structure that there is always a team to work with and people to turn to. The adult leader focuses on the volunteers and team leader trainer or coach. The team leader coach focuses on the team leaders. The team leaders focus on their team members. The volunteer team focuses on activities or on the member's families. If you are blessed to have a consecrated, priest or religious available as a spiritual mentor, they can make an amazing impact on the lives of the teens, families, team leaders and parish family. Building a team means to build people up with charity, respect and giving them the opportunity to bring others closer to Christ. Let them know from day one what the goals of the group are and that kindness and teamwork reign among the volunteer team. Each person plays an important role. Learning to value one another is crucial. As the group grows in number of members, your volunteer team needs to grow in number as well. Remember you can start off with three or four volunteers: an adult leader, a few team moms or dads and team leader, and build your team from there, inviting adult volunteers and more team leaders to get involved.

KEY PLAYERS & ROLE DESCRIPTIONS OF THE VOLUNTEER TEAM

Regarding the volunteer team and roles, below we suggest the top ten volunteer positions needed to help run Challenge or Conquest successfully. But do not feel limited to these roles - be creative and add more as needs arise. Do not get overwhelmed and think that you cannot run Challenge or Conquest because you do not have 10 volunteers. Remember, all you need are a few adult leaders and a team leader to get started. If you are running both Challenge & Conquest, you combine some [like promoter / marketing] to simplify and cross promote amongst the families and the parish.

CHALLENGE OR CONQUEST ADULT LEADER

Also known as the club leader. The mission of a Challenge or Conquest Adult Leader is lead others to form young apostles. They are to oversee and coordinate all of the Challenge or Conquest program, volunteers, team leaders and activities. The adult leader is not meant to be the person who does everything; they are meant to be person who leads others to get involved and be apostles. The adult leader is an adult, ideally a woman for Challenge and a man for Conquest. In many cases, this person is the youth minister or campus minister. If not, this person would definitely work with the youth or campus minister.

The priority tasks of an adult leader are:

- The people including the teens, team leaders and volunteers.
- Offering the essentials to the teens— formation, apostolate, personal attention and fun!
- Organizing and leading the volunteer team to make sure that the activities, calendar and administration is all taken care of.

TEAM LEADER MENTOR, TRAINER OR COACH

This role is usually filled by an adult volunteer who works specifically with the team leaders. This person's priority is to motivate, encourage and assist with preparing the weekly activities and leading their teams. They organize the team leader training and any other action to mentor the team leaders in their mission - both as a group and individually. If you only have 1-4 team leaders, the adult leader can take on this responsibility.

TEEN TEAM LEADER

Usually a teen about 14 years old or older. Ideally about 2-3 years older than the team members they lead. They are responsible for the organization, weekly meetings, formation and apostolic projects of their team and the 5-15 members on it. They are the most important person on the volunteer team because they directly work with the teens in Challenge & Conquest.

CHALLENGE TEAM MOMS OR CONQUEST TEAM DADS

The role of a team mom for Challenge or a team dad for Conquest is to help each team leader communicate and work with the families of the team members. They are a support in the practical aspects and communication if need be. They are also usually the adult chaperone attending the weekly meetings or they make sure that someone else is present. Many times they can also have another volunteer role in the group. Usually you have multiple people in this role and they change year to year. It is a great starting volunteer position.

COORDINATION TEAM

This team of adults and youth are focused on organizing the club and its activities. They don't usually work with the members in the weekly meetings, but they are a behind the scenes team to make sure the club functions properly. Some examples of club coordination team are the following:

APOSTOLIC PROJECT COORDINATOR

This adult volunteer helps set up the apostolic service projects for the teams. This role can be a shared position for both Challenge and Conquest. They should organize and be in charge of the logistics and all aspects for at least four projects a year. This person should be very conscious of supporting and leaving the project in the teens' hands.

TREASURER OR ADMINISTRATOR

This adult volunteer makes the budget for the year, including all activities expenses, projects. They could also be in charge of annual registration, collecting the membership fees, permission forms.

COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

This volunteer is focused on promoting and communicating to the families in Challenge and Conquest and externally to the parish or school. They can create flyers, the annual calendar, monthly newsletters or weekly emails to parents with the meeting guides.

LOGISTICS COORDINATOR

This volunteer helps plan out and make the annual calendar of activities. They can be the liaison with parish or school for facilities, etc. They could also help out with organizing snacks, drinks and other materials needed for the meetings.

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES COORDINATOR

This volunteer takes care of organizing the other activities the group may plan during the year. That could be fundraising activities to offset the costs, or for Conquest this could also be the sports coordinator. If you are offering retreats or camps, then this person would oversee those projects as well.

WEB GURU

This volunteer could be in charge of a local Facebook page, presence on social media, getting stories to the parish or national Challenge or Conquest website, local newspapers. They should also coordinate the photography and videos of the activities.

FACTS & FICTION ABOUT VOLUNTEERS

“Challenge and Conquest groups cannot work properly without a committed team of adult volunteers. Volunteers are usually parents of the teens in the group. Parents of teenagers are usually very busy people, so I will never find volunteers. I am the only person in the world with this problem.” Have you ever thought this way? It’s time to clear up what is fact and fiction about building a volunteer team.

FACT #1

YOU ARE NOT ALONE IN YOUR SEARCH FOR VOLUNTEERS.

Most nonprofit organizations, charities or ministries need volunteers because they cannot afford employees and rely on people to step forward, out of the goodness of their hearts and volunteer. In 2016, in the US there were over 1 million charities registered.

PEOPLE DO VOLUNTEER.

In 2017, 69 million people volunteered in some way. People volunteer based on their interests and you can be assured that the #1 place that a parent would volunteer, will be a place that could help their teenage daughters or sons.

FACT #2

FACT #3

YOU CAN HAVE AN AWESOME VOLUNTEER TEAM IN CHALLENGE AND CONQUEST. IT HAS BEEN DONE!

For the past 15 years we have had over 750 adult volunteers and 1000 teen volunteers working in Challenge & Conquest across the US and Canada each year. Youth Ministry works better with more people helping you out: it is not meant to be a one man or one woman show.

BUILDING A TEAM DEFINATELY TAKES TIME, EFFORT, PATIENCE & PRAYER.

You are not just trying to “Recruit Volunteers” to make your life easier or your organization run efficiently. If that was the case you could read tons of articles and seminars on Volunteer Recruitment techniques. You are trying to do something different. You are building a team of volunteers.

FACT #4

TOP REASONS WHY WE DON'T HAVE MORE VOLUNTEERS IN CHALLENGE OR CONQUEST & HOW TO FIX THAT

A few years ago we did a survey among adult leaders about why they felt they did not have strong volunteer teams to help them. We took the most common responses and broke it down to solve the issue. Perhaps one or more of these obstacles and solutions could apply to your Challenge & Conquest group.

“I THINK I CAN MANAGE ON MY OWN”

You can probably do certain things better than other people, maybe even better than all of the volunteers in your club. You probably have more experience, which will make you a better leader. The best leaders are those who have completed tasks they are asking others to do. We are all limited in our time -24 hours in a day- and capability to do everything. When you take on too much, you do nothing well. On the flip side, no task is too great or burden too heavy when shared by a great number of people. If this is the obstacle: Recognize your limits and begin to teach others to enjoy the things that you have enjoyed doing for so long.

NO ONE
CAN DO
EVERYTHING
BUT
EVERYONE
CAN DO
SOMETHING

“ I DON'T LIKE PUTTING BURDENS ON OTHER PEOPLE. WOULDN'T THEY OFFER?”

There is a big difference between burdening someone with something or offering the person an opportunity. The difference is all about where that person's heart and interests lie. The highest reward for a person's actions is not what they get for it, but what they become because of it. Working in Challenge or Conquest can be a transforming opportunity for many men and women. Many moms and dads understand their teens better, meet good long lasting friends, and grow in their faith.

We have heard the old gospel saying that there is more joy in giving than in receiving. This is a mystery but in most cases when you stretch your heart and give time to others there is a profound joy that comes from a selfless act. If this is the obstacle you feel you face, a good rule of thumb is to realize that God places people in your path for a reason. Just invite them and be totally honest with them about time commitment. If they can, they will probably say yes and if they cannot, they will probably say no. But at least you asked them and left them to decide freely.

“I’VE ASKED BEFORE AND EVERYONE HAS SAID NO. WHY SHOULD I TRY AGAIN?”

Sometimes we have our hearts set on one person for a role within the club because we think that he or she would be perfect. In reality God may have someone else in mind. We may need a “no” from one person, so as to open us to someone else’s “yes”.

TRUE STORY: “I worked for a whole year with one guy in a Conquest club, hoping he would take on the Apostolic Coordination. Everyone said he would be the perfect club leader. His son was a wonderful team leader. After a whole year, in May he came to me and told me he was moving to another state with his family because of his work. I understood but I was disappointed. In the meantime, throughout the year another dad began to get involved in a few projects, started watching our work with the club and how we worked as a team to help the boys. He came to me in June of that same year and asked for a more involved volunteer position. He took on the Apostolate coordination and did wonders for the projects. Within the year he was the club leader and eventually began mentoring other club leaders at other parishes and schools. He was not even on my radar but God had him in mind.”

“ I WORKED HARD AND BUILT A TEAM IN THE PAST AND THEN IT ONLY LASTED ONE YEAR. PEOPLE GOT BUSY OR MOVED AND I REALIZED THAT I ENDED UP SPENDING MORE TIME WITH ADULTS THAN WITH THE TEENS AND THAT IS NOT WHAT I SIGNED UP FOR.”

Your volunteer team will change every year. That is a fact. Some people will last longer than others, based on how many years their sons or daughters are in the group. Life throws us changes we don’t expect all the time. The best we can do is try to expect the curveballs to come. Make sure everyone works with a small team. For the most part, people like to work with their friends so pair them up in tasks. That way someone will be able to take over if another person needs to move on. The reality is that an adult leader is called to work with adult volunteers for the good of the teens involved. Training others and inspiring them to work with youth is probably the toughest part of the job.

The reality of working with any group of people who interact regularly is that drama can occur and there are a lot of different personalities and temperaments that sometimes do not mix well. Everything happens for a reason. Sometimes we have the wrong people in the wrong places and God wants us to see that.

TRUE STORY: “I once had a mom volunteering as the Retreat Planner and it did not go well. She did not get along with the other moms and she did not like organizing the retreats. Everyone was frustrated and it was a tough situation. I asked her what she wanted to do the following year and she said “The Father Daughter Dance”. I told her to go for it and to build a team of volunteers to help her out. She invited about 15 friends and organized the best dance we had ever had with almost 200 fathers and daughters. I had her in the wrong place and doing the wrong thing.”

STEPS FOR BUILDING A STRONG VOLUNTEER TEAM

REMEMBER - AS AN ADULT LEADER YOU ARE A TEAM BUILDER...

TEAM: By definition, it is a group of people working together and united to reach a common goal. You are not trying to simply get individuals to take on tasks. They need to understand that they are part of a team from day one and that they have each other to rely on and work with to achieve their common goal. Teams have different players, with different talents and roles. The common goal is what will unite them in their work, help them rise above their differences, persevere, etc. That goal is providing a good place and opportunity for their daughters to get to know Christ and grow.

BUILDING: A builder maps things out, finds the right “pieces” and makes sure it is put together in a solid way. Your role as a team builder is to map out what is needed and have the master plan in mind. Try to find the right people for the right places on the team. Make sure you put it all together and keep them cemented together “firmly in Christ”.

STEP 1 BELIEVE.

Believe that you are not meant to do this alone. Believe that this is an opportunity for people.

“Ask and you shall receive, seek and you shall find.” God wants this it will happen. There are people out there.



**VOLUNTEERS
DO NOT
NECESSARILY
HAVE THE TIME.
BUT
THEY HAVE
THE HEART.**

STEP 2 KNOW THE NEEDS.

Know what you are trying to build. Know what positions need to be filled. Know what you need the team to do. Set up a framework then fill it in. It helps to sit down and map out your team.

Take your plan of activities for the year in your hands and write down a list of people and what responsibilities they would have to make these activities happen. No help is too small. No task is too large if divided up among enough people.

STEP 3 GET THE WORD OUT & INVITE PEOPLE.

Start looking at your list of parents and team leaders. Look in your parish or school to see the people God places in your path and then invite them. Not many volunteers show up on your doorstep. You'll need to get the word out that you need help. You can do this through a mass email to the Challenge & Conquest club or maybe through the parish or school. You can also get the word out to people in a parents' presentation where you list off all the opportunities in the group for adult volunteering. Get to know the people who are part of the Challenge and Conquest group - parents, teachers, etc - and get to know their talents. Maybe one of the parents in the group is a web developer or professional photographer. All you have to worry about is making the needs clear, inviting people and let God do the rest.

STEP 4 ONCE ON THE TEAM, GIVE THEM CLEAR EXPECTATIONS.

Once they have decided to volunteer, explain to them their role and tasks. Let them know what to expect from Challenge or Conquest and what it is like to work with teens. Share with them the goals of the group and let them know that we do not strive for having the club run like a perfectly oiled machine but rather a place where kindness and team work reign. Introduce them to everyone on the team and their team leaders so they know who they are working alongside.

STEP 5 MOTIVATION, APPRECIATION, COMMUNICATION.

Understanding why someone is volunteering can be very important to help motivate and encourage them along the way. Don't forget to show your appreciation for the volunteers. A thank you can go a long way. Share with the other volunteers the successes of their team members so that they learn to appreciate each other. Communication should be something that is clear, frequent and personal. Try to have monthly meetings where the volunteers can gather together.

BEST PRACTICE: Choose an event where people can get a small taste of volunteering like a service project, summer camp, or retreat. It will probably encourage them to continue to help out in other activities throughout the year.