**THE TOP 10 WAYS TO CREATE A**

**WINNING STAFF ORIENTATION**

**1.** Make sure EVERYONE knows the

importance of the training. Staff

should know you are satisfying

association-standard requirements,

but also training them to be able to

handle all situations in a safe and

efficient manner. Also, have make-up

orientation dates so people know

they will be accountable for the

information they missed.

**2.** Understand why people don’t

always like orientation. By realizing

the negatives, you can create more

positives. Orientation is often seen as

a waste of time and nothing more

than hours of lecturing.

**3.** Make orientation meaningful, fun

and informative. A few inexpensive

prizes go a long way in showing you

are committed to your staff and

happy to reward them for a job well

done. During orientation, verbally

praise those who arrive on time. Have

your management team and senior

staff greet them with a smile. One

simple idea to add fun to your

orientation is to put a Post-It note

under two chairs in the front of the

room and tell people to check under

their seats for special prizes.

**4.** Do not lecture. Talk with your

staff, not at them. Think about

having new staff come in one hour

before returning staff to make them

feel “at home” as quickly as possible.

Elicit answers and elicit questions.

For example, avoid saying, “Children

who don’t feel well should sit out.”

Instead ask, “Where would you send

a student who is not feeling well?”

**5.** Make your sessions interactive.

Allow staff to write questions down

and hand them in. Then review the

questions and, for example, after

lunch or a long break go over the

responses. This is a great way to

answer concerns of people who do

not want to announce their questions

in front of a large group

**6.** Let people work in groups to

lessen the pressure individuals feel.

This also provides the facilitator the

opportunity to walk around and see

who the leaders are, how staff

interact, and how people work

together as a team.

**7.** Mix it up. Let some of your staff

lead the sessions. This gives more

“buy-in” to the orientation process.

Think about having an outside

presenter speak about issues pertinent

to camping. Talk to the staff as a

whole group, break into smaller

groups based on positions in camp or

age levels they supervise. Do fishbowls

so others can learn from your roleplay

exercises. Keep them moving,

both physically and mentally.

**8.** Timing is everything. Sessions

should never exceed more than one

hour and you should always have

one break. When you return from

the break, summarize what you spoke

about earlier and then move on.

Often, 20 minute “mini” sessions are

very powerful and make it easier for

people to focus. Keep people moving

and have them rotate from one

session to another. Offer bagels or

donuts, 30 minutes before the start

of orientation, help staff mingle and

feel comfortable with each other.

**9.** Get constant feedback. Ask staff

from last year what they would like

to see added to the orientation

process. Talk to new staff before

orientation and ask what they would

like to learn at training sessions.

Input from all areas of your camp

will only enhance your orientation.

Use surveys in order to get the most

honest feedback.

**10.** Have fun! End the day with a

Jeopardy style game show with

questions and answers based on

what they should have learned at

orientation. Have groups create a

camp cheer. Staff orientation is all

about planning, so start now to

ensure your employees are ready for

that first day of camp.