

# STUDENT MINISTRY LEAD TEAM HANDBOOK

*Defining the WHY, WHAT, WHO & HOW of a Campus Lead Team*

## WHY DO WE NEED A LEAD TEAM?

Student Ministry is too big a burden to carry alone. If you have been trying to do it alone, then you understand this. The workload combined with the emotional and spiritual load are simply too much. God never intended ministry to be done alone. Any time we try to shoulder a burden in ministry alone, we fail because God has not designed us to be alone. He doesn't give any one person all the giftings, capacity, or time to do ministry alone. He is a good Father, and he delights in seeing his children bear one another's burdens. Think about it - How long did Jesus minister without a Lead Team?

## WHAT IS THE LEAD TEAM RESPONSIBLE FOR?

The Lead Teams' primary function is to share the burden and ownership of leading their local kids or youth ministry under the direction of either the local Kids/Youth Pastor or the Campus Pastor. Their job is not to simply "help" the local leader with tasks. They exist to bear the burden with them to as great an extent possible. Together the local leader and the Lead Team are responsible for leading a ministry that exists to see kids transformed by Jesus.

## WHO MAKES UP THE LEAD TEAM?

**Team Leader:** If your location has a designated Leader or Pastor for your Kids/Youth ministry then they will personally lead the team. If there is no designated leader, then ownership is shared amongst the team. In this case, someone will need to be chosen to lead the team meetings, and the team itself will report to the Campus Lead Pastor.

**Team Members:** Members of the local Victory Life Church in good standing, either volunteer or paid staff. Members will usually be current volunteers in the student ministry but the team is not restricted to only volunteers. The team can contain parents or other interested and qualified parties. A lead team works best when it is diverse. An ideal team includes a variety of personalities, giftings, genders, and ages. You want people who are most at home with checklists and order combined with free thinkers for whom the sky is the limit. If you have a team full of people who all think the same and act the same, your team isn't going to have the potential to devise creative solutions and think outside the box. The more diverse the team is, the fewer blind spots it will have.

### **Lead Team Member Qualifications:**

While a Lead Team member is not expected to be perfect, and without flaw, they must be living an overcoming life as a Christian and be deeply committed to their local church family. Lead Team Members must be:

- **Trusted** to bear the weight of ministry as a teammate.
- Dedicated to and a **faithful** attendee of the local Victory Life campus.
- A **leader** or possess leadership potential. (1 Tim 3:1)
- **Mature**, not necessarily in age, (though age does bring experience that should be present on a lead team) but mature in word and deed. (1 Tim 3:2)
- Of a **good reputation** within the community, giving no cause for others to think badly of the church, their faith, or the Lord. (1 Tim 3:2, Titus 1:6,7)
- **Growing** in their faith, developing beyond the sins and addictions of the past, striving to follow Christ's example of perfection, radically obsessed with Jesus. (1 Tim 3:2-3, Titus 1:7-8)
- Known to display a **love** for people, both the church and the lost. (1 Tim 3:2, Titus 1:8)
- **Gentle** - not quarrelsome or quick to anger. (1 Tim 3:3, Titus 1:7)
- A **good manager** of their money and their family. (1 Tim 3:4-5, Titus 1:6-7)
- A **seasoned** follower of Christ - not a new convert. (1 Tim 3:6)
- Committed to **doing what is right**, even when what's right isn't easy. (1 Tim 3:2, Titus 1:6-8)
- **Knowledgeable** about the Bible - not necessarily a bible scholar but familiar with the Word due to daily reading, study, and hearing the taught and preached Word. (Titus 1:8-9)
- Committed to the "Leadership Covenant"

## WHAT TO CONSIDER WHEN FORMING A LEAD TEAM:

While a Lead Team member can be paid staff or volunteer, just because an individual is paid staff, a long time volunteer, leader, or Pastor, does not mean they should be invited to be a part of a Lead Team.

Not being invited to join a leadership team does not mean that a church member or staff member does not possess the qualities required. Ideally, most of the people in a congregation and on staff possess the necessary qualifications. The selection of a Lead Team must be careful, taking into consideration the giftings, personalities, commitment, and availability of each member - seeing each person as a part of a whole team as opposed to selecting a few good people and trying to make them function as a team.

**Team Building:** A good team is not just built. A good team must be grown. Any team you put together will get better over the long haul. Once you have celebrated together, cried together, triumphed together, and failed together, you will transform from just a group of individuals in a meeting into something truly special—an actual TEAM. There is no shortcut to creating a dream team. You can't have a genuine team without the following ingredients: Time, love, vulnerability, forgiveness, open conflict, passion, hope, persistence, failure, and success. Just like when cooking soup, it is a mixture of ingredients, heat, and time that gives a soup its unique flavor. Be careful, though. If you remove an ingredient or randomly toss one in, you change the soup and not necessarily for the better. Just like with the soup, be very careful about adding or subtracting people. Every time you do so, the team, like the soup, will no longer be what it was. The only way to get back to the high functioning team you were before is time, love, vulnerability, forgiveness, open conflict, passion, hope, persistence, failure, and success. If the ingredient you added was toxic, the entire soup is poisoned, not just a small part of it. It is a wise leader who seeks the face of God at length before choosing team members.

**Number of Members:** too few people on a team, and it doesn't serve its function. Too many, and it will move too slow and be hard to schedule. The sweet spot is four—no less than three no more than six.

## HOW DOES A LEAD TEAM FUNCTION?

### **How often does a Student Ministry Lead Team meet?**

The Lead team should meet for *at least* 2 hours per month - these may be divided weekly or monthly. The best-case scenario would probably be a one-hour meeting every other week. It's great if your team can eat together before or after these meetings to build a stronger connection. When a team doesn't meet enough, meetings either become filled with "catch up" information, or the team isn't informed enough to make good decisions. These infrequent meetings at best mutate the group into an event planning team, and at worst, transform meetings into a time-wasting burden for all involved.

In addition to regularly scheduled meetings, the team should have a weekly post-service or post-event huddles to debrief. These huddles should only take 5-10 minutes with someone taking light notes, so the things brought up in the huddle can be addressed in the next meeting or handled before the next service /event.

### **What does a lead team do?**

Everything your ministry does must be viewed through the lens of the 4 Disciplines of Excellence. These disciplines empower The Lead Team to hone their local ministry into a lean and effective organization that is Seeing People Transformed by Jesus. Without these disciplines, the ministry will inevitably deform into an ineffectual group of frustrated too-few volunteers just going through the motions.

## THE 4 DISCIPLINES OF EXCELLENCE

### **Clarify**

- What is the goal?
- What are we trying to achieve?
- What is the win?
- Why?

### **Simplify**

- Simplicity is the drive of Excellence.
- Inconsistency is the product of complexity.
- There is no way to provide repeatable, consistent, excellent results amongst raging complexity.

### **Evaluate**

- Are we meeting our goals?
- Are our goals realistic?
- Are our expectations realistic with current limitations?
- What are our obstacles?
- Evaluation is only as good as your clarifications.

### **Improve**

- Never be satisfied or complacent.
  - Discover where you can grow and pursue growth in this area with discipline.

## **Example**

Here is a brief example of what it looks like to walk through the 4 Disciplines of Excellence with a Lead Team. Each question requires a good answer that the entire team is in agreement on.

## **Back to School Party!**

### **Clarifying questions:**

- How does the “Back to School party” lead people to be transformed by Jesus?
- How do we know if the party is achieving this goal?
- How will we measure success?

### **Simplifying questions:**

- What work is required to plan, advertise, execute, and clean up the party?
- How can this process be simplified - what steps could be eliminated or delegated without losing the value this event brings?

### **Evaluation questions:**

- Is this event achieving the goals we have set?
- Is it even *possible* for this event to have the effect we need it to?
- What are the obstacles to this event achieving its full potential?
- Can we afford this event?
- When we say YES to this event, what are we saying NO to? What could we be doing if we weren't busy doing this?

### **Improvement:**

- Take action on any discoveries you have made with the above questions.
- Always be on the lookout for ways, big and small, that this event can be made even more effective.
- Never forget that just because something works great today does not mean it will work great forever. Never stop looking for ways to improve and keep up with the ever-changing needs of your church and community. Today's solutions are often tomorrow's problems. Make peace with the reality that your excellent and effective party will one day need to be cut from your strategy and be replaced with something new that meets your ministries' future needs.

**The four disciplines of Excellence should be applied to everything your ministry does:**

- Check-in
- Check-out
- Security
- Pre-service
- Worship
- Transition
- Giving
- Curriculum
- Sermons/Video lessons
- Post-Service hospitality for parents/students
- Baptism Services
- Life Groups
- Student or kids fellowship events
- Grow Teams - recruiting, retention, appreciation
- Outreach
- Events
- Guest Follow-Up & Integration
- Physical Building
- Janitorial
- Efficient usage of space
- Games/toys
- Expansions
- Excellence in every area
- Etc...

## LEAD TEAM MEETINGS

The agenda of a leadership team meeting should be set by the ministry leader or the meeting leader based upon the current needs of the campus. **There must always be a written agenda.** Nothing kills a team like wasting their time!

These essential elements should always be present but can be added to:

1. How is the team? How can the team agree in prayer for any specific personal needs?
2. How is the ministry? Are there any specific issues the leader needs the lead team to agree in prayer over?
3. Pray together.
4. Debrief the weekend services:
  - a. Identify wins
  - b. Identify any problems
  - c. Clarify, Simplify, Evaluate, and Improve
5. Debrief any recent events:
  - a. Identify wins
  - b. Identify any problems
  - c. Clarify, Simplify, Evaluate, and Improve
6. Examine the calendar together. Observe what events are on the calendar within the next 30/60/90 days.
  - a. Run upcoming events through the four disciplines as the first step in planning an event.