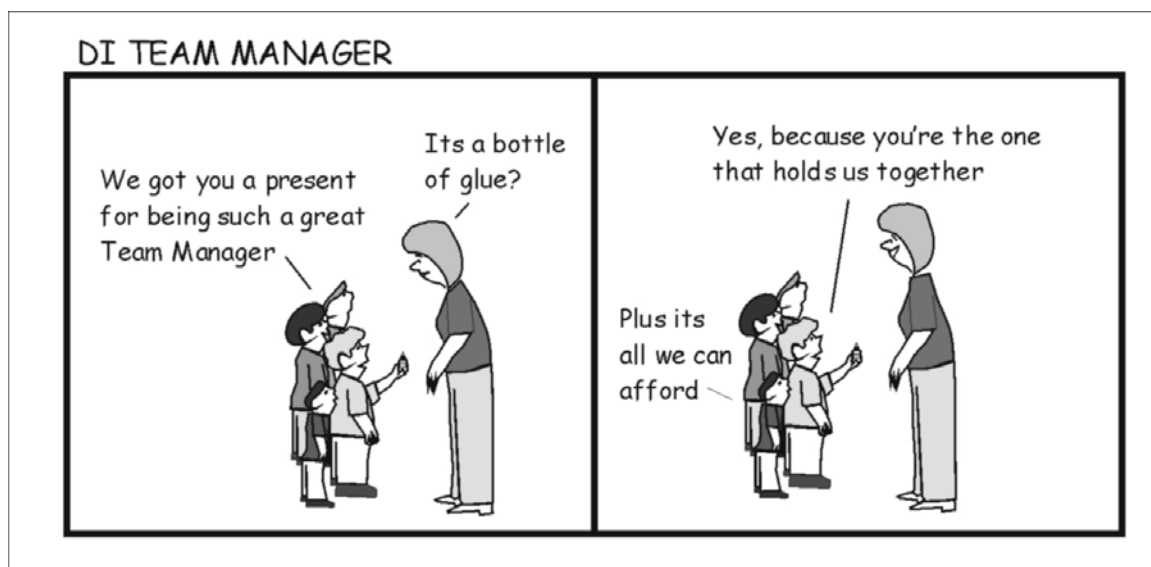


HUDSON DI TEAM MANAGER GUIDE



WELCOME!!!!

DI Team Manager. What does it mean? What have I gotten myself into now?

Well, it will probably be one of the most rewarding experiences you will ever have. That said, there is work involved, but we hope that between asking questions, attending one or more meetings, using our website, and reading this document will start



you off on the right foot (or left if you prefer) and help you enjoy your DI season. We have tried to make this document concise and highlight the things we feel are important. With that in mind, always feel free to ask questions. Our success is built on helping one another. There is no “single right way” to manage a team, so this document simply tries to highlight the things that all teams have in common. So feel free to visit the website (for Team Manager stuff, click on the brown “Team Manager” square on our homepage and for a calendar that shows meetings, workshops, competitions, etc., click on “Events”) or feel free to call any of the folks below:

Hudson DI website: www.hudsonwidi.org
Phone Numbers: Liz Malanaphy (Hudson DI Program Director) 377.9940
Anita Stillwell(St. Croix Regional Director) 377.3705
Roger Davis (Website Manager) 386.5754

In closing, if you ask any team, the kids will likely say the most important thing a team manager does is bring food. But believe it or not, there are other things of greater importance that the team manager is in charge of or should be watchful of. These are the things that are discussed briefly in this document and are as follows:

General Practice Outline
Instant Challenges (ICs)
Keep Parents Involved
Mobility

General Resources
Clarifications
Space
Paperwork

General Practice Schedule

THIS IS IMPORTANT: There is no “one-way” or “right-way” to do a practice. It will all depend on your kids, what they choose as a challenge, where you practice, their experience, and a host of other variables. So please take the outline below as a general guide to help you design what you’d like your practices to be like. Your kids will ultimately determine what they do, but you can help by giving them a framework to start with and let them develop a schedule that works for them.

Typically teams will practice once-a-week for 2 to 3 hours. Many practice right after school on a weeknight, but many also practice on the weekends as well. With the above in mind, here is a general practice schedule.

Snack/Relax 15-20 minutes

Providing a snack is more helpful if you are going to practice right after school. This will help settle the kids down. If you are practicing at some other time, this may not involve a snack, but it’s a good idea to give the kids a chance to get reacquainted before jumping into practice.

Instant Challenge/Team Building Exercise 20-30 minutes

To get the old creative juices flowing again, an instant challenge or team building exercise early in a practice tends to really help get the kids back into the DI spirit.

Agenda 15-20 minutes

After the Instant Challenge/Team Building Exercise, the kids meet to discuss the goals of the practice. What they want to accomplish. Where they are at and how much time they have left before Regionals. We suggest that the kids have a notebook to write this down (it helps). They can also use this book for keeping ideas, writing their script, listing things to do, etc. throughout the season.

Central Challenge 30-90 minutes

Whatever the team decided on above is worked on. Focus on the central challenge and/or side trips. We suggest a 10 to 15-minute break every 30-45 minutes (if they want, which is usually yes). Being creative does take a lot of energy.

Instant Challenge/Team Building Exercise 20 minutes

End the formal session with another instant challenge. You can make this one the harder of the two.

Close, Cleanup and Go Home! Priceless

If there is any “homework” make sure everyone knows what he or she needs to accomplish before practice next week.

Another Approach

Another simple approach for a practice schedule is to have the kids be “serious” for 20 minutes, then to let them have “free time” for the next 20 minutes and repeat the process for the rest of practice. As the season progresses, hopefully the “serious” time will increase to 30 minutes, then 40 and so on. This simple approach will help you keep a structure to practice, but still allow flexibility.

SEASON TIMELINE

We also wanted to provide you with a general timeline for a DI season. The following was based on information from the Destination Imagination Roadmap which is a great Team Manager guide. Go to our website and click on Team Managers for a link to DI's Roadmap.

DI Team Challenges are designed to be solved in a period of eight to twelve weeks. Depending on the team and the complexity of their solution, they may need more or less time than that. Keep in mind that solving DI Challenges is never a textbook process. In fact, problem solving can be a messy and somewhat unpredictable business! This is why solving the challenges takes time. Although we will want to “interfere”, we have to allow the kids to fail. As an adult and parent, you will want to “interfere” and help them avoid their mistakes, but you cannot. Keep them safe, but failing is part of the process and will ultimately help them reach their solution. So let them explore, learn, and try on their own and you’ll be amazed at their results (even if you knew a better way to do it from the beginning). So in the timeline below, stages may overlap, sometimes a team may “slip back” and often stages will dissolve into the next without a clear ending or beginning. What is important is that as long as the team is generally moving forward towards their solution, they will be all right!

VERY GENERAL SEASON TIMELINE

WEEK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Stage 1	2-4 Weeks Team Building/ Challenge Selection																
Stage 2					2-4 Weeks Research Brainstorming Creating												
Stage 3									2-4 Weeks Building and Practicing								
Stage 4												2-4 Weeks Refining and Preparing for Tournament					
Stage 5																	CELEBRATE

Again, DI has created a very detailed guide called the Roadmap for Team Managers and this can be downloaded from our website by clicking on Team Managers on the homepage which will give you the link to this resource.

General Resources

Keep a look out for emails from Liz and others about workshops that will be available during the season. But you don't have to wait to experience some great local places with your team. Here are several nearby resources you can visit with your team.

Go to a play. A couple of us went to Disney's Lion King two years ago and came away with dozens of new ideas for costumes and scenery. Locally, the High School plays and the Phipps always have something great going on. Have a couple of your team members contact the Phipps and see if you can get a tour of the backrooms for costume and prop ideas. Very fun outing and team building experience.

Use the library. If you can't go to a play, then borrow a DVD musical or play from the library. Watch it during a practice. Simple picture books for costumes and gadgets are great for the kids to look through for ideas. Keywords kids have used in their library searches are Halloween, magic, dance, theater, acting, costumes, masks, and stage.

Shop! Now that we have a Goodwill and Dollar stores in Hudson, shopping for ideas couldn't be easier. Also, a great way to generate ideas from scratch is to have your kids go to Menards (or Home Depot or Fleet Farm, etc) and walk through each aisle. You'll be amazed at the ideas your kids will come up with by just looking at stuff. Other great places are Michaels, JoAnn Fabrics, and Axe-Man Surplus.

Our Schools. If you need some specialized tools for some reason, check with the Middle or High School shop teachers. For example, several teams through the years have used the drill press at the Middle School.

Other Tournaments. Although these are late in the year, we would recommend (especially if its your first year) going to the East Metro Minnesota Tournament usually held at the beginning of March at Harding High School. We will send out information on this as it becomes available, but there is no experience better than going to a tournament to gain a better understanding of what they are like.

On-line Video. This one kids can do at home or as a group at practice. What better way to understand DI and get ideas than by watching videos of other performances. Go to our website and click on "Photos" and follow the links to hundreds of video performances.

Instant Challenges (ICs)

As Team Manager, you are responsible for putting ICs together for practices. For a change of pace, you can have the kids occasionally put together an IC, but ultimately it is the Team Manager's responsibility. You can find many ICs to use for practice by downloading them from our website (www.hudsonwidi.org). There are three basic types of ICs and you should have your team practice an equal mixture of them all since they can get any one of these types at competition. The three types are (1) Building, (2) Performance, and (3) Mix or Hybrid.



Building type ICs typically requires the team to construct some sort of structure or device. There will be no storyline or skit for the kids to develop. An example would be the kids having to build a structure as tall as possible from various materials that can hold a weight (for example, a baseball). Scoring in Building ICs is more objective than the Performance ICs since the success of each team's solution can be directly measured and compared. That is not to say that some of the Building IC scoring isn't subjective; however, a significant portion of the total score will be objective when compared against the other two types of ICs.

Performance type ICs typically requires the team to depend solely on their imagination to develop a story or skit. In contrast to the Building type ICs, there are no materials provided. All props, scenery and costumes are imaginary. An example IC would be for the kids to develop a skit about a superhero department store. The kids then must use their imaginations to develop a storyline and perform it using themselves and imaginary props. Since everything is imagined, no elements can be scored through direct measurement. Scoring will be subjective based on the criteria for the challenge, which are typically based on creativity, teamwork, and originality.

Hybrid or Mixed type ICs are a combination of the above. In these ICs, the team will typically be asked to develop a storyline using materials provided to them. An example would be for the kids to make three masks from the materials provided and then develop a story on their historical significance. For these ICs, a portion of the score is objective and a portion subjective. For this example, they may get points for making three masks (objective) and then points for the creativity of their story (subjective).

TIPS:

--Make sure you practice an equal mixture of all three types of ICs.

--It can be fun for your kids (or even their parents) to put together an IC. Visit our website at www.hudsonwidi.org and click on the BONUS IC at the top of the page for instructions you can hand out to the kids (or parents).

--Use plastic baggies to organize each IC. Typically ICs call for a number of small items (like four rubber bands and 6 paper clips). By placing the IC description along with all the items necessary to do the IC into a single baggie, you will always be ready to bring out an IC for your team and not have to worry about losing anything. This also makes it easier to put together a number of ICs beforehand and have them all at the ready for current or future practices.

--You should view the IC as an opportunity to help your kids develop a better understanding of their selected central challenge by mixing in ICs that reflect aspects of their central challenge. For example, if your team chooses a central challenge that requires the use of puppets, then find or develop a couple of ICs that utilize puppets. Of course the majority of the ICs you give to your team will not reflect aspects of their central challenge, but if you can find a few, then using them would be an added benefit.

--You should work with the kids so they begin to understand how ICs are scored. This is especially helpful for the Building and Hybrid ICs. For example, in most build challenges, there will be a maximum number of points the team can earn for accomplishing a task. So lets say the scoring for an IC was as follows:

For every 6 inches of height your structure stands, your team will get 10 points up to a maximum of 30 points.

So you should ask your kids the following: If Team A builds their structure 30 inches tall and Team B builds their structure only 18 inches high, which team gets more points? The answer is that they would both get the same score of 30 points. Since your team typically only has 3 to 5 minutes to build something, it is very helpful for them to know how to use their time wisely. In this case, the extra effort Team A took to build a structure taller than 18 inches did not give them any additional points.

--For building and hybrid ICs, always remind your kids to try and use all the items supplied in their solution. If they were not able to, take time afterwards and ask how they might have used them.

--Always make sure everyone participates during their brainstorming and performance.

--Make sure storylines they develop have a beginning, middle, and ending (especially the ending). In fact, it may be good practice for them to come up with an ending first and develop the rest of the story after that.

Clarifications



It is essential that you and your team understand the challenge they have chosen. All of you should know it well enough to ensure that the work being done is addressing the elements of the challenge. If your team ever has doubts, then you have two options. First, ask other team managers doing the same challenge. You can find out who is doing the same challenge from Anita or Liz. If your team is still unsure, then you should request a Clarification from DI. This can be done through our website (on the main page, click on “Resources”, then under Team Managers, click on “Team Manager Login” and follow the directions).

It typically will take up to 5 days to get a response from the DI Masters (i.e., the people who wrote the challenge). Once DI has emailed you a response and your team understands the answer, be sure to bring that clarification with you to any competition in case a judge questions something. There is a deadline for submitting questions to DI and its usually around mid-February so make sure that your kids really understand there challenge by then!!

TIPS:

- Have your team read the challenge through out load at practice.
- When they present a solution to you, ask them how it addresses the challenge.
- If you have a clarification from DI, always bring it with you to competition.

Mobility

Three things to keep in mind. First, whatever your kids build, they have to be able to carry or move it onto the stage. Second, whatever your kids build, it must be able to fit through a standard doorway (we suggest no wider than 32” and no taller than 6 feet). Finally, whatever your kids build, it must be able to be driven to different locations. If your kids want something bigger, they will need to figure out a way to fold or dismantle their set piece or item.



TIPS:

- Measure the doorway to any classroom and challenge the kids to make sure that whatever they make has to fit through it.
- Check with families to see if they have a hitch, trailer, van, etc. that could be used to haul stuff.

Keep Parents Involved



Get to know the parents of each team member by enrolling their help for snacks, professional expertise, transportation, and practice space.

Food. We know that the parents “don’t have time” to be a Team Manager, but they typically are more than willing to help out in other ways. **MAKE SURE THEY DO.** If you find

having a snack/food at practice helps, then have each family take turns providing a snack for practice.

For challenge help, challenges typically require research into a particular area. Ask the kids on your team what each parent does for a living and you may find a match. For example, if your kids choose a central challenge that involves electricity and one of the parents is an electrician, then he/she could give an overview of what electricity is or show how to make a simple circuit. **THEY CANNOT** read the challenge and suggest an idea, but they can teach them about electricity in general so the kids can generate ideas, be safe, and make their own solution.

Transportation is important. Not only for getting the kids and their stuff to tournaments, but during the season as well. You may find that your team needs supplies for their solution. If your vehicle cannot carry everyone, then you can ask a parent to help chaperone the team to a store so they can search and buy the supplies they need. So early on, find out what type of vehicles everyone has and if any of them have a trailer hitch. You never know how much hauling capacity you might need.

Space. You will need to find an appropriate practice space. Many teams practice at their respective schools, but many practice at homes (or garages). Some teams change spaces over the season (for example, they may start at the school, then when they need space to build something, they move to a garage). Again, the size and type of space depends on the chosen challenge. If your challenge requires a lot of building, then that space would require a larger area than a challenge only requiring costumes to be made. Realize also that our season is during the winter months, so make sure whatever space you choose will stay dry and warm in the winter. So early on, find out what space team families may have. For building space, it will likely need to be dedicated to DI for at least the months of February through the end of March.

TIPS:

- Early on, ask each family about (1) vehicles, (2) space, (3) profession, and (4) food.*
- Consider changing practice locations during the season. It may be easier for a family to agree to “loan out” their garage for 1 month rather than 4.*
- Have each family put together an Instant Challenge.*
- Have a parent come in to take pictures of a practice and/or have parents put together a photo album of the season or of the day of competition.*

Stage

Two main thoughts for this category. First, each challenge will state the minimum size for the performance area. So make sure that whatever the kids create that their performance can fit within that size area. Typically at competition the stage area will be larger than the minimum. The smallest performance areas are typically in classrooms, where the stage will be very wide (width of the classroom), but not very deep. Second, make sure your kids are comfortable entering the stage from either side or from the rear. If your kids practice by always entering from stage left, they sometimes feel high anxiety when at competition they have to enter from stage right or even from the rear. Overcome this by having them practice entering from each side.



TIPS:

- Mark on the floor with tape the area of the stage and have the kids perform within it.
- Have them practice entering from different sides of the stage and change the shape of the performance area.
- On the day of competition, take the team and together check out your stage so they are prepared.

Paperwork/Forms



YUCK. Even DI has paperwork. Don't lose sight of this. The kids need to fill this stuff out and we often forget about it until the last second and unfortunately it does take time to complete. For most challenges, you will have three forms: (1) Judges Form, (2) Expense Report Form, and (3) Declaration of Independence Form. All three forms are required at each competition and all three forms are available at the DI website. The Declaration of Independence is straight forward, but the other two require time and study.

TIP:

- Setup a folder and keep the receipts of the things your team buys AND uses in their solution (things not used do not need to be tracked).
- Remind the kids to keep track of their expenses against their budget.
- Start your paperwork in February. You'll be glad you did.
- Especially for younger kids, it is fine for you to help fill out the forms as long as the words/ideas are the team's and are not added to or embellished by the Team Manager.
- Spend time on the Judges Form. This is what the judges use to understand your story and look for specific scoring elements. If they can't understand your team's answers, then they won't be able to judge your performance well.

Interference



This is one of the main distinguishing features of DI. No adult help. Your role as a Manager is more “behind the scenes” than a typical manager. In addition to the items above, you make sure the kids are respectful to one another, remind them of deadlines, make sure they are doing things safely (especially if they are using tools), and help them stay focused. Two things you can do that are commonly asked are (1) you can videotape practices so your kids can see for themselves how their performance looks and (2) you can transcribe lines the kids come up with for their script. So if they get stuck, you can ask them questions to help jump start them again, but you cannot give them ideas or solutions or lines for their challenge. Neither can parents and you need to make sure the parents know this. The best way is to tell your kids this. They are the best at telling their parents that they are interfering. There are also pre-drafted letters that you can download from our website and distribute to your families explaining their roles and what defines interference. Finally, DI has what is commonly referred to as the “Bible of DI”, called the “Rules of the Road”. This has information on everything and you should download this from our website and know that it’s a good place to look for an answer when you can’t get a hold of anyone.

TIP:

--Come to our Team Manager evening get togethers. They are informal, fun, and just a place to share what’s happening. You’ll be glad you did.

--Download information for parents off of our website (www.hudsonwidi.org) and email them to the parents or print it off and have the kids hand it to them.

--Tell the kids that it is OK for them to tell their parents when they are interfering. Many teams avoid parent interference by deciding to keep what they are doing a “secret” until the end of the season and surprise their parents with their performance.

