

Welcome to Module 2 of this Lead2Play training. If you are watching this video, then you are getting ready to join or start a Lead2Play team. That's great. We're here to help.

In this video, we are going to talk about how to set up an effective Lead2Play team. And, not surprisingly, it starts with youth.

At Lead2Play, we think youth leaders are key. Youth relate to other youth in ways adults just can't. Giving smart, talented kids the opportunity to lead play makes such perfect sense, it's hard to understand why it doesn't happen more often.

That's why the central actors on a Lead2Play team are:

1. A Leadership Coach who helps to get Lead2Play up and running and who provides supervision for the program.
2. The Youth Leadership Team that takes responsibility for running the Lead2Play program.

Let's talk about how the Youth Leadership Team is formed.

First, how do you get members? Recruiting a Lead2Play team can be challenging. At the start, you might want to meet individually with people you think are a good fit. Or, you can post recruitment flyers and hold information meetings. We've made two promotional flyers to help with this.

Second, how large should a team be? Just about any size is a good one. In fact, the size of your team isn't important at the start. You can always grow as you go along. Don't be afraid to start small and do a few things really well.

Third, how can a team function well? The best teams achieve synergy. Now that's a big word, but its meaning is pretty simple.

Teams having synergy achieve more than the individuals on that team can on their own. In other words, on great teams 1 + 1 makes 3. 2 + 2 adds up to 6. On teams with synergy, members make each other better, stronger, and more effective. They bring strength to weakness. They bring motivation and humor and fun to the enterprise.

Truly, there is nothing quite like being a part of a team with synergy.

Now, if you want your team to have synergy, you'll have to work at it. And you'll need to make sure your team has these five things:

1. Leadership.

Teams need leadership. One or several people need to lead the team. Leaders set up team meetings so that everyone knows where and when to meet. They create meeting agendas so that meetings are focused and efficient. They coordinate and communicate so that everyone is on the same page. They mediate when there is conflict between team members. They encourage the team. And, they coordinate with those outside the team.

To start, the Leadership Coach might lead your team most of the time. But, as the weeks go by, more and more of the leadership responsibilities are given to youth. That's what Lead2Play is all about.

In addition to leadership, teams need a mission.

2. A Mission.

A mission is something the team rallies behind, something to believe in. Your team can write its own mission. Or you can steal this one.

Our mission is to lead positive, safe and healthy play. We make play so fun that kids want to keep playing for a lifetime. We are dedicated to using play to help kids make friends and to stop playground bullying.

In addition to a mission like this, great teams need shared norms.

3. Shared Norms.

Norms define the culture of the team. They are agreed upon ways of acting. Some great group norms include the following:

1. We value humor, compassion, and respect.
2. We admit our mistakes and always try to get better.
3. We do what we say we will do.
4. We don't talk behind each other's back.
5. We have each other's back.

Shared norms like these are every bit as important as team leadership and mission. But all of this team goodness can be undone by poor follow through.

4. Great Follow Through.

Tasks promised and left undone will destroy team spirit faster than almost anything else. When a team member commits to completing a task, they simply must get it done, or they need to let others know they need help. Great teams have great follow through.

So, that's four. What's number 5?

5. Strong Communication.

Great teams talk. They make sure everyone gets important team news. They share what is going well. But, they aren't afraid to tactfully call each other out when necessary. They deal with conflict maturely when they can. And, they ask for help when they can't resolve conflict on their own.

So, those are the ingredients to a team with synergy: leadership, a powerful mission, agreed upon norms, great follow through, and strong team communication.

We wish you great success as you assemble your Lead2Play team and begin to use these ideas to guide your efforts.