

■ by Jacqueline Brustkern

Daily Team Meetings

It can be a challenge to keep your summer staff engaged during daily team meetings, especially if those meetings are only covering agenda items for the day. At Laity Lodge Youth Camp (Leakey, Texas), we strive to integrate fun, business, encouragement and spiritual nuggets into our regular meetings.

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We start every meeting singing the Doxology. Howard Butt, Jr., founder of the H.E. Butt Foundation (which LLYC is a part of), had a deep love for the old hymn. It is a beautiful way to gather everyone's attention at the start of the day and reminds us why we are gathering in the first place. Afterward, our leadership staff takes turns each day presenting a devotional on spiritual content, followed by a time of prayer.

Keeping the attention of 50 college students is no easy task. This is why we integrate fun components into our staff meeting each day. We have everyone guess the UV index for the day (here in Texas, it's almost always extreme!), ask a staffer to present a "Top 3, Bottom 3" list on a fun topic or present some highlights of things going on in the world while we are unplugged at camp.

Of course, the point of a meeting is to cover business. As full-time staff, we empower our college leadership team to take charge of these daily morning meetings. Our program team presents the schedule for the day and covers any related announcements.

Every meeting ends with a time for what we call "shoutouts" and "spinouts." With shoutouts, we let anyone in the room shout out their peers or leaders for good work they've seen them do. It is an easy way to encourage staff to keep working hard.

Spinouts are an opportunity to share silly stories that make us laugh, whether it be something a camper did or one of the many harmless mishaps that happen in a camp day. Ending this way always leaves our staff meeting on a high note with the energy to go out and start the day with campers.

At LLYC, we believe the secret sauce to our staff meeting is meaningful spiritual content with a moment to pause and reflect, a good dose of fun and laughter and covering the important information for the day. The combination of these things comes together to create a space where staff feel equipped, empowered and enlightened for the chaos of the camp day ahead. ■



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