

North Carolina



Destination Imagination

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"What we see in DI is a reflection of our values as a company. It prepares children for the workplace. You see creativity blossoming."
~Alex Cirillo, VP, 3M Corporation



If you are ready to start your team but don't know what to do, you should call DI Headquarters toll free at 1-888-321-1503 and they can walk you through the process, or you can go to www.shopdi.org and click where it says "Start a Team." It costs \$135 to buy a one-team pak. As soon as your purchase is complete you will get internet access to the materials. Materials will also be mailed to you soon after your purchase.

Interest Nights and Team Manager Trainings

If your school is interested in beginning DI and wants to introduce the program to the parents and students, we will be glad to set up an interest night at your school. And if you have started a team and haven't had a chance to attend a team manager training, let us know so we can schedule one in your area.

Ten Tips For Getting Started With Your Team

You've started your team and you have your materials, but now you're wondering where and how to begin? Here's a great list to help you get started.

10. Read and re-read the *Rules of the Road* and the *Team Manager's Guide* and most importantly the specific *Team Challenge* that your team is working on. Have the team read and re-read it until you are sure that they understand it.

9. Make sure everyone understands Interference rules. This includes you, the team, and the parents.

8. Have a discussion about expectations. Let the team set their own goals for the season. If you start pushing a team beyond their desire to excel, things will go sour quickly. Let the team discuss and set some team rules. Make sure they understand your expectations such as how they will behave at meetings, or the consequences of missing a team meeting.

7. Remember that you are not supposed to solve the challenge for the team. That's their job. Understanding this can be a big relief for a new



team manager.

6. In the early stages, concentrate on building the team rather than solving the challenge. Do a lot of Improv, team building, and Instant Challenge activities.

5. Enlist your team members' parents. Have a parent meeting. Don't be shy about delegating some responsibilities. You'll be much happier if you don't try to do everything yourself.

4. Attend a Team Manager training.

3. Use the web. Go to the NCDI site, www.ncdini.org, as well as www.idodi.org, and make sure that you keep up with deadlines, dates, and clarifications.

2. Don't be afraid to ask questions! It is the job of your affiliate director to be available to listen to your questions and concerns. Call or email any time!

1. Always remember to have FUN! If the team isn't having fun, and you're not having fun, something is wrong.



NCDI Tournament News and Dates for 2010

Tournament Season will be here before you know it. Make sure that these dates are on your calendar and that each team parent has them as well!

March 20, 2010: The Western NCDI Tournament will be held at Blue Ridge Community College in Flat Rock, NC.

April 17, 2010: Our Eastern NCDI Tournament will take place at J.C. Sawyer Elementary School in Elizabeth City, NC.



Many thanks to the National Dairy Council for their generous support of the Destination Imagination Program!

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Reflections of a North Carolina Destination Imagination Alumni

Today's job market is becoming increasingly global. With this globalization comes an increase not only in diversity and opportunity, but also an increase in competition for employment. As I have become more active in my personal career search I am amazed at how important Creative Problem Solving, especially through Destination Imagination® has been in my life.

I participated in Destination Imagination for six years. DI offers a unique experience for inter-



ested youth. It provides a supportive environment to build communication and performing skills. Nowhere else will you find this kind of freedom to brainstorm and challenge your creativity, where any idea is acceptable. Through DI, I learned an entirely new system of thinking. I no longer thought of how certain parameters eliminated ideas or solutions; I learned to think of how my ideas and solutions could fit within the given parameters.

This ability to change my thinking has been especially important as I pursue my undergraduate degree in Biological Systems Engineering. The skills I gained from DI have enabled me to become a competitive and successful student. Now that my education is nearing an end, I am becoming more aware of how my experiences in Creative Problem Solving have prepared me for the next step in my life, a career in engineering.

Recently, many studies have been published on the subject of what employers are looking for, specifically in the field of engineering. One of the major surprises that keeps coming up is the need for high-level communication skills. Typi-

cally, engineers are not thought of as being great communicators. As the world continues to globalize, the need for effective communication increases. That is why almost every company lists communication skills in their top three criteria for employees.

My experience in Destination Imagination has given me an absolute edge when it comes to communicating. For some reason, an interview with three stuffy businessmen is nothing when you have performed as a giant tomato in front of hundreds of friendly strangers.



Brett Sallach is a former NCDI participant and a senior at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln majoring in Biological Systems Engineering.

Have Fun With Instant Challenge!

One of the best things about Instant Challenge is seeing students *have fun* while they are learning. Instant Challenges can be intimidating. Students aren't used to the idea of not knowing what is going to happen. Your attitude as a team manager can shape the way your team feels about IC and encourage them to embrace the unknown. So do your best to make IC practice a fun learning experience for your team. Your Instant Challenge practices should vary in intensity, with the challenges sometimes being highly structured, similar to what they might face at competitions, and sometimes being designed to encourage brainstorming, free thinking, and team unity. Here are some easy exercises to help you get started.

1. **ABC Scavenger Hunt:** Give your team a piece of paper with ten letters of the alphabet on it. Set them loose in your meeting area or outside with instructions to quickly find 1 or 2 items beginning with each letter.
2. **Birthday Parade:** Tell the team that they are to plan a birthday parade to celebrate the birthdays of children all over the world. They must create a theme for the parade, a parade float, and a song to perform while the float goes down the parade route.
3. **Alien Creature:** Build an alien, name it, and give a performance telling how it grew so tall. Building materials might be: 3 CD's, 4 straws, 4 pipe cleaners, 1 craft stick, 3 clothes pins, a golf tee, a toilet paper tube, and 3 mailing labels.
4. **Contemporary Hot Potato:** Sit the team in a circle. They must pass a 'potato' around the circle as many times as possible in 3 minutes. The catch is that no one may use their hands, and every time the potato goes around the circle, it must be passed in an original way—no technique may be used twice.

Contact Us!

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Instant Challenge Debrief

After your team has done a practice Instant Challenge, take some time to debrief. Let them talk about what materials they used, and how and why they used them. Here are some sample questions to help prod them:

***What was the Challenge?** Have the team articulate what they were supposed to do. See if they listened and understood the challenge.

***How did you use materials in a unique or novel way?**

***Did the team complete the task? If not, why not?**

***What items worked well?**

***What were some things that could have been done differently to achieve different results?**

***In what ways did the team work well together?**

Having the team debrief helps them see how they can improve. The team manager, or anyone else watching CAN also add input. It is not interference to do so. However, remember to be positive in your suggestions. Also, it's always a good idea to repeat the challenge—either right after doing it for the first time or later in the season. When you repeat ICs you will see marked improvement in your team's skills.