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PRAY LONG – SERVE HARD – LOVE CONTINUOUSLY

GPCAA TEAM DEVELOPMENT PLAN

PhillyChurchesAA.org

As a participant of GPCAA's Discipleship Basketball League, you have embarked on a challenging, exciting and rewarding endeavor. You will be amazed at how transforming this endeavor will be for your kids and you! Experience dictates however, that there are pitfalls. GPCAA is providing this team development plan to assist in establishing an effective, efficient and continuous program that helps to build your sponsoring church and improve its community.

FIRST, you must know, understand and agree with your sponsoring ministry's goals! **TWO CANNOT WALK TOGETHER EXCEPT THEY BE AGREED (Amos 3:3)**! Don't underestimate this truth! It is dishonest and wicked to embrace someone else's vision for your own intents (**Ho. 10:13**). Conversely, you benefit from your honest effort to walk with them (**1 Cor. 9:10**). This doesn't mean that there won't be differing ideas and approaches, but you must be in agreement and submitted to your sponsoring ministry's overall endeavor.

GPCAA has hopes and dreams that we have for participating ministries in the Discipleship Basketball League. We believe these objectives are common to and in concert with most sponsoring ministries' goals:

- Present an Evangelistic Strategy for Improving and Preserving Our Communities
- Provide Mentoring of Youths Using Sports as A Vehicle
- Produce Mature, Positive and Productive Youths by Building Life Principles
- Promote Confidence Through the Development of Athletic and Social Skills

GPCAA, through experience, has derived a Team Development Plan for sponsoring ministries desiring to utilize the Discipleship Basketball League to address their community evangelism and youth goals. This Team Development Plan is simply a guide toward effectively using the GPCAA program to assist in your endeavors. GPCAA recognizes that each church, community and team is different, and that each sponsoring ministry should tailor their own strategy to fit their church, community, team and resources. Perhaps GPCAA's plan can assist in defining or refining your ministry's approach.

The Team Development Plan works to:

- IDENTIFY YOUR RESOURCES
- TARGET YOUR AREA
- PLAN WHAT WORKS
- CAST YOUR NET

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Each stage of the development plan process requires reevaluation to ensure that the other elements of the plan are still functional as you develop your plan.

1. IDENTIFY YOUR RESOURCES

This is the **Second** step. The **First** step is to through prayer and supplication with *thanksgiving*, make your request known unto God, (**Phil. 4:8**)! If you are a new ministry, developing a new outreach in your established ministry, in a new location or developing new members for ministry – this is no joke! The journey will be challenging and require constant reassurance and reconnection with the vision at hand! Decision is often the first step we ignore, but it usually determines our endurance and longevity! Decide before God that this is an avenue you want to be empowered by His grace to touch the youth and community.

Now, count up the cost – that’s what Jesus said, (**Lu. 14:28**). Know what you need and whether you have what you need – or at least have access to what you need. The team will need a place to practice, a place devoted for bible study, a mentor, a coach, uniforms (or at least numbered jerseys) and **CONSISTENCY**. Resources for a movie night or inflatable slides provide inroads into the players’ families and neighborhoods. Incidentally, an important resource is church members that live in the church community. Learn to use them to gain exposure to the community at large. They also provide spiritual access to the area (**Eph. 6.12**). Knowing basketball is great, but that is not what this league is about – basketball is only a vehicle! Your mentor and coach must be able to mentor the kids -mentally, emotionally, secularly and spiritually. You may find your players in varying degrees of dysfunction. Rest assured this ministry will stir up the gift that is in you! You will find players need more time and effort than a once per week basketball game! Can you honor this endeavor with sacrifice?

2. TARGET YOUR AREA

It is common today that church members and/or leaders do not reside in the neighborhood where their church is located. When you are looking to establish a team with the hopes of affecting a community, you must become familiar with the neighborhood from which you will draw your players. Map out a manageable area surrounding your church. You can use police districts, political wards or zip codes to start. This is the area that you will advertise your team tryouts. Drive through this area during different times of the day to learn of its activities and makeup. Socio-economic details of the area can be obtained from your state website. This information will determine how you refine your approach for your area. A high concentration of middle-schoolers for instance, may suggest that a movie night will draw the entire family to your church for a cheap night out. You can also get a clue of the neighborhood’s

spiritual condition during your drive-throughs. Are there signs of drug activity, alcoholism, high unemployment or crime in the neighborhood? Remember your players may be coming out of the households reflected by your observations. These issues are not a deterrent; knowing they exist simply prepares you. This step may require that you reevaluate the resources you have identified for this project.

3. Plan What Works

Based on your resources and the evaluation of your target area, you are ready to determine, at least preliminarily, what will work for you. What practice facility can you use for your neighborhood players? Where can you hold bible study? Who will teach bible study? What day and time will work best to hold practice and bible study? Do you have the resources (including bodies) to accommodate your target area/team? Can you provide transportation if needed for practice/games? This is where your contacts and relationships will serve you best. Each question should be answered before soliciting players. The answer to these questions will determine what players you can accommodate and/or how much help from your church you would need.

4. Cast Your Net

Jesus said, “Cast the net on the right side of the ship and ye shall find...” (**John 21:6**). Few of us realize just how precise God is in His instructions to us. There is a *right* way. We can’t ignore God’s way and expect to get Godly results. When Paul was sent on his missionary journeys, he was sent to the regions of the foreign Jews that heard the wonderful works of God in their own tongue while in Jerusalem! (**Acts 2:4-11**). His travels weren’t random or haphazard (**Acts 16:10**); Neither did Paul proceed ignorantly (**Acts 17:22,23**). Also, Paul admonishes us that we battle against spiritual wickedness in high places (**Eph. 6:12**). There are spiritual influences governing our neighborhoods based on the acquiescence of its residents. That is why it is favorable to have neighborhood residents participating in your neighborhood endeavors whenever possible. They represent permission that facilitates movement within that environment.

That being said, now it is time to cast your net. Start with posting tryout flyers at supportive locations, then neutral locations and lastly residential locations. Go to religious places, social services centers, police stations, schools, recreation centers, post offices and bus stops. Then hit the stores, the playgrounds and the neighborhood hangouts. This is likely your first instance of resistance. Finally, post flyers on poles

within the residential areas. The following week, return to review what flyers have been removed or destroyed.

Have a patent monologue describing the purposes of the church ministry (team) and the league, prepared for the telephone calls you will receive. Write it down if you must – it may be your only opportunity to “sell” the ministry.

For the middle school players, a permission slip should be distributed at the tryout session. Apart from telephone calls, it will be your first entrance into their households. The most critical elements of interaction with your team are love and consistency!

From this point, the league provides information to each sponsoring ministry and coaching staff that directs league activities. Once initiated, each team will be tailored for their community. The league commissioners are available to assist with your specific concerns. Also, the league website will keep you abreast of the upcoming events. League rules are also on the website and should be studied before the start of the games – that will avoid game time confusion or disagreements.

By;

E. Mark Fulton

Commissioner

