

CHRIS & CARRIE KALLAL'S



IDEAS FOR



CAMP BOARD
GREATNESS

THE KALLAL'S



Chris Kallal is the Executive Director at Southeastern Baptist Youth Camp in Greensburg, Indiana. Chris, an Illinois native, has been a camping professional since 2001. He started off at Camp Manitoumi, in Illinois, serving as their program director for 10 years while also teaching 6th grade at Washburn Middle School. Then he spent 3 years learning to be a boy scout as the Camp Director of Ingersoll Scout Reservation. The next 10 years, Chris served as the Executive Director of Camp Good News in Illinois.

Carrie has been working at Camps longer than Chris! Starting as a CIT at Camp Manitoumi in 2000, then moving onto Girl's Leader, Dining Room Hostess, Counselor, Craft Person, Camp Store Director, Canteen Manager, Bookkeeper, Food Service Director, Assistant Director, and now Guest Services Director at SBYCamp! In her free time, she loves to craft, test out new recipes, and talk camp!

When they find time, Chris and Carrie love to search online for the newest, unique ideas to implement into their Camp as well as visiting multiple camps over the years to "steal" ideas from them!

The Kallals love camp so much that they spend a lot of their free time teaching others about camp! They have taught camping classes at different conferences around the world and written a ton of books about the various aspects of camp life. As well, Chris co-hosts a podcast, Scamp Life - The Programming Side, where he talks all things Camp Programming.

They have a total of 4 children, Rowan, Emmalina, Autumn, and Aurora, as well as a couple dogs, cat, some hissing cockroaches, bearded dragon, leopard gecko, frog, turtle, and a pet skunk, named Stinkerbell!

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RELATIONAL SUPPORT

CAMPFESSION

I ONCE ASKED A STAFF MEMBER
HOW THEIR WEEKEND WAS... THEN
REMEMBERED THEY JUST
WORKED 80 HOURS STRAIGHT.

I. Pray Regularly for the Staff and Their Ministry

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.

- Colossians 4:2

- Assign each board member to a specific staff member to pray for throughout the year. Switch it up annually so everyone becomes familiar with the whole team.
- Start each board meeting by highlighting a prayer need from a specific staff member. Ask someone to follow up afterward with an encouraging note.
- Share a monthly prayer calendar with specific requests from the staff
- Include "Answered Prayers" in board updates - It builds faith and connection

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing."
- Martin Luther

2. Write Personal Notes of Encouragement During Busy Seasons.

Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in face you are doing.

- 1 Thessalonians 5:11

- Handwrite cards to be left on staff desks during summer or big retreats
- Include small treats like \$5 gift cards, snacks, or scripture verses.
- Rotate the board's note-writing duties so each member writes a few personalized messages every month
- During summer camp, post a giant thank-you poster in the staff lounge and have board members fill it with shout-outs and uplifting doodles.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"Kind words can be short and easy to speak,
but their echoes are truly endless"

- Mother Teresa

3. Celebrate Staff Birthdays and Milestones

Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn

- Romans 12:15

- Keep a Camp calendar to track birthdays, start dates, milestones, anniversaries, etc.
- Send flowers or cupcakes for milestone birthdays (30,40,etc)
- Host a once-a-year staff birthday party with cake and games. It doesn't have to be fancy, just full of heart.
- Don't forget family milestones too! Births, weddings, and graduations are great opportunities for a simple card or gift.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"Everyone you meet is fighting a battle you know nothing about. Be kind. Always"

- Robin Williams

4. Attend Camp Events to Show Visible Support

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together...but encouraging one another.

- Hebrews 10:24-25

- Show up at Camp Events to either volunteer or participate
- Even just a 30-minute appearance at an event can make a big impression on staff, guests, and campers.
- Pitch in where help is needed; serving punch, resetting chairs, or greeting families - serving speaks louder than sitting
- Wear camp-branded clothing to blend in and support the vibe
- After each event, send a quick follow-up text or card to a staffer just to say, "You did great! I saw it!"

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"Eighty percent of success is showing up"
- Woody Allen

5. Check in Periodically Just to Care, Not Evaluate

Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

- Galatians 6:2

- Send an occasional "thinking of you" or "praying for you" text. Use your phone or calendar app to send reminders.
- Be clear that these check-ins are not performance-related. No clipboard, no suggestions, no fixing. Just present and listening.
- Invite a staff member out for coffee or lunch just to listen.
- Keep it simple: "How's your soul? Anything I can be praying about? Anything weighing on you?"
- Normalize these check-ins so they don't feel suspicious or evaluative. Consistency builds trust.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care"

- Theodore Roosevelt

CAMPFESSION

I PRAYED FOR STAFF EVERY
DAY THIS SUMMER, AND
SOMETIMES THAT PRAYER
WAS JUST "LORD, HELP
THEM SURVIVE
THURSDAY!"

CAMPFESSION

I AM ONE BROKEN MOP AWAY
FROM CRYING INTO MY MAC
AND CHEESE

PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

CAMPFESSION
I HAD TO GOOGLE SABBATICAL
BECAUSE I HAD NO CLUE WHAT IT
WAS!

6. Advocate for Fair Compensation and Benefits

The worker deserves his wages
- Luke 10:7

- Use nonprofit salary comparison tools (like Guidestar, MinistryPay, or CCCA reports) to evaluate what similar roles earn.
- Push for benefits that support long-term stability: health insurance, paid time off, retirement contributions, and housing help.
- Be proactive about reviewing compensation annually. Especially during seasons of inflation or when staff roles evolve.
- Treat salary discussions with transparency and dignity. Affirm that the goal is sustainability, not just survival.
- Consider offering bonuses or appreciation stipends when raises aren't yet possible.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"You can't do a good job if your job is all you do"
- Katie Thurmes

7. Provide Clear Job Descriptions and Expectations

But all things should be done decently and in order

- 1 Corinthians 14:40

- Review and approve updated job descriptions annually.
- Eliminate vague expectations by clarifying roles and chains of command
- Keep role descriptions outcome-focused, not just task-based. This helps staff understand how they contribute to the mission.
- Respect the leadership chain. Board members offer accountability and insight, but ministry supervision belongs to the Executive Director.
- Follow organizational charts and flowcharts to clarify reporting structures, especially for new hires and seasonal staff

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"When people don't know what's expected of them, they'll invent their own job description"

- Patrick Lencioni

8. Sponsor Professional Development

Instruct the wise and they will be wiser still; teach the righteous and they will add to their learning
- Proverbs 9:9

- Budget annually for staff development - make it a line item, not an afterthought.
- Encourage staff to attend one major conference (like CCCA or ACA) and one or two smaller conferences every year
- Rotate guest speakers for in-house training on topics like mental health, team dynamics, hospitality, or risk management.
- Partner with other camps or ministries to share costs for high-quality trainers or retreats.
- Pay for memberships to professional networks or online learning platforms that align with their roles.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest"

- Benjamin Franklin

9 Encourage Sabbaticals or Extended Rest

Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest

- Mark 6:31

- Develop a clear, written sabbatical policy that defines eligibility, length, expectations, and purpose - typically after 5-7 years of full-time service.
- Build sabbatical funding into the annual or long-range budget.
- Partner with trusted alumni, retired staff, or sister ministries to help temporarily fill the leadership or workload gap.
- Encourage staff to use sabbaticals for spiritual renewal, personal development, or rest - not just working somewhere else.
- After the sabbatical, host a re-entry conversation to help the staffer re-engage well and share what they learned.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes...including you"

- Anne Lamott

10. Mentor Staff Toward Leadership Opportunities

And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others

- 2 Timothy 2:2

- Encourage staff to take on stretch assignments—things that are just beyond their current comfort zone.
- Notice natural leadership moments (like conflict resolution, initiative, or mentoring others) and call them out.
- Help create a "growth map" with the ED for staff: what does development look like year to year?
- Sponsor a "Leaders-in-Training" track for returning summer staff to build your future full-time team.
- Offer guidance on stepping into more responsibility, whether through internal promotions, team leadership, or new initiatives.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself. When you become a leader, success is all about growing others."

- Jack Welch

CAMPFESSION
INSTEAD OF A JOB DESCRIPTION,
I HAVE A STICKY NOTE THAT
SAYS "ALL THE THINGS"

CAMPFESSION
I ONCE ASKED "ARE WE
DOING ENOUGH TO PREVENT
BURNOUT?" AS THE
DIRECTOR WALKED PAST ME
CARRYING THREE PLUNGERS
AND A BROKEN PROJECTOR.

PRACTICAL HELP

CAMPFESSION

I ONCE HELPED WEEDEAT AT CAMP.
APPARENTLY THOSE "WEEDS"
WERE THE DIRECTOR'S WIFE'S
DAY LILLIES!

II. Volunteer for Big Projects or Events

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in various forms.

- 1 Peter 4:10

- Join a Spring Workday, serve meals at Retreats, or chaperone youth events!
- Show up with your work gloves and your willingness
- Bring your family, small group or church team to serve. It becomes a shared experience and builds camp buy-in
- Let staff know in advance what you're coming to do. Being "low maintenance help" is one of the most valuable things you can offer. Don't make more work for the staff.
- Don't be afraid to do the hidden, humble tasks. Cleaning bathrooms and hauling mulch is powerful board-level ministry.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"Service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on earth"

- Muhammad Ali

12. Offer Specialized Skills

If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously...

- Romans 12:8

- Make a list of each board member's professional expertise and share it with the Executive Director-don't assume they know what you can offer.
- Offer "office hours" once or twice a year where staff can tap into your skills-legal reviews, IT audits, facility walk-throughs, etc.
- Help the camp avoid unnecessary expenses by donating your time instead of outsourcing (e.g., reviewing insurance policies, designing a brochure).
- Keep boundaries clear: offer what's helpful without micromanaging or overstepping staff roles.
- Encourage other professionals in your network to volunteer their expertise too. Donors often love giving time just as much as money.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"Your talent is God's gift to you. What you do with it is your gift back to God."

- Leo Buscaglia

13. Help Recruit Volunteers or Seasonal Staff

The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.

- Matthew 9:27-28

- Use your circle of influence (church bulletin boards, small groups, workplace peers) to share seasonal job postings and volunteer needs.
- Don't just "promote", personally invite. A one-on-one conversation is still the #1 way to recruit someone into camp ministry.
- Think beyond counselors: help fill roles like camp nurse, kitchen help, drivers, or maintenance assistants.
- Mentor a college student or teen into camp leadership by encouraging them, walking them through the process, and checking in throughout the season.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"A good leader is not the person who does things right, but the person who finds the right people to do the right things."

- Anthony Padovano

14. Be Present during Critical Seasons

Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

- Galatians 6:2

- Carve out time to be physically present during the highest-pressure moments: the week before summer, first check-in day, or during a full retreat weekend.
- Offer to run errands, prep signage, help with food service, or restock the camp store- whatever lightens the staff load.
- Dropping off cold drinks or warm meals is a huge morale booster. Add a note: "We see you. We're grateful."
- If you can't be there in person, send a care package or coordinate a delivery with local board members.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"Showing up is not all of life - but it counts for a lot."

- William Zinsser

15. Assist with Off-Season Facility Upkeep

Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all
your might
- Ecclesiastes 9:10

- Create a "Camp Projects List" visible to board members and volunteers-include dates, supplies needed, and contact info.
- Turn seasonal workdays into mini-events with coffee, lunch, and a short devotional.
- Encourage each board member to "adopt" a cabin or facility to check on twice a year.
- Invite outside groups (youth ministries, men's groups, civic clubs) to participate and get connected to camp's mission.
- Celebrate before-and-after photos on social media to build momentum and appreciation

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"Small deeds done are better than great deeds planned."

- Peter Marshall

CAMPFESSION

I BROUGHT TOOLS TO THE CAMP
WORK DAY...AND LEFT THEM
THERE FOR 4 MONTHS!

CAMPFESSION

I ONCE HELPED FIX A
LEAKY SINK AT CAMP
AND NOW I AM NO
LONGER ALLOWED TO
ATTEMPT MAINTENANCE
DUTIES!

STRATEGIC SUPPORT

CAMPFESSION

WHEN A BOARD MEMBER STARTS
TALKING ABOUT HELPING WITH
FUNDRAISING, I MENTALLY BEGIN
PREPARING TO DO ALL THE WORK!

16. Help Shape Long-Term Goals and Vision

Where there is no vision, the people perish; but blessed is the one who heeds wisdom's instruction
- Proverbs 29:18

- Block out time for annual or biannual strategic retreats where board and leadership collaborate on vision casting.
- Encourage "what if" thinking (new facilities, outreach programs, or digital ministry) Help dreamers dream with support, not skepticism.
- Don't just support vision emotionally-commit to it financially and relationally.
- Stay flexible. Big dreams require big faith and long-term alignment, even when the path isn't fully clear yet.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"The best way to predict the future is to create it."

- Peter Drucker

17. Promote Camp at your Church AND Business

Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

- Matthew 5:16

- Promote the camp back in your churches and communities to grow visibility and support
- Ask your church or employer if you can set up a camp info table, make a brief announcement, or sponsor a "Camp Sunday."
- Lead a field trip! Invite your small group, coworkers, or youth ministry to visit the camp firsthand.
- Make sharing easy: repost camp content, forward newsletters, and tag friends who might want to get involved.
- Keep printed materials (brochures, donation cards, flyers) in your car or at your desk (you never know when an opportunity will pop up).

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"Do what you can, with what you have, where you are."

- Theodore Roosevelt

18. Give Financially and Lead by Example in Giving

Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

- 2 Corinthians 9:7

- Don't just approve the budget, contribute to it. Be among the first to give when new campaigns launch
- Set up monthly giving, even at a modest level. It models consistency and commitment.
- Offer to match gifts during campaigns to inspire others.
- Share why you give during board meetings, donor dinners, or church events. Personal stories open hearts faster than statistics.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"Giving is not just about making a donation. It's about making a difference."

- Kathy Calvin

19. Secure Partnerships with Churches, Organizations, or Businesses.

Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor

- Ecclesiastes 4:9

- Keep a "connection list" of business owners, pastors, civic leaders, or educators who may be open to partnering with camp.
- Introduce camp staff to people in your network by arranging a lunch, tour, or video call. Warm handoffs go a long way.
- Offer practical ideas: volunteer service days, shared advertising, or facility use in exchange for sponsorship.
- Look for creative alignment, don't just ask for help; show how partnership benefits both sides.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together"

- African Proverb

20. Help Grow and Cultivate the Donor Base

You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion...your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God
- 2 Corinthians 9:11

- Write hand-signed thank-you notes to donors after big events or year-end gifts. Gratitude leaves a lasting impression.
- Bring guests to fundraising banquets or open houses. Personal invites lead to long-term investment.
- Offer to host or co-host a donor dinner, dessert night, or coffee hour (This creates spaces where people feel honored and inspired.)
- Share stories of impact, not just needs, when talking to potential donors. People give to vision, not just budgets.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"People don't give to institutions. They invest in ideas and people in whom they believe"

- GT Smith

CAMPFESSION
I LOVE DREAMING BIG
WITH THE BOARD! I JUST
WISH ONE OF THOSE
DREAMS INCLUDED
REPLACING THE BROKEN
OFFICE CHAIR FROM 1997

CAMPFESSION
A BOARD MEMBER BROUGHT A
DONOR TO CAMP... ON MY ONLY
DAY OFF!

GOVERNANCE AND STABILITY

CAMPFESSION

I VOTED TO SUPPORT THE STAFF'S
DECISION, THEN REALIZED I HAD
NO IDEA WHAT THE ACTUAL
DECISION WAS.

21. Ensure Solid Governance Practices are in Place and Understood.

Let all things be done decently and in order
- 1 Corinthians 14:40

- Set a recurring annual reminder to review bylaws, board policies, and legal documents, don't wait for a crisis.
- Hold regular board self-assessments or bring in an outside facilitator every few years for governance training.
- Foster a culture of respectful disagreement. Unity doesn't mean uniformity. Stand together publicly, even when decisions are difficult.
- Clarify roles (board vs. staff vs. ED) frequently. Mission drift often starts with role confusion.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"Good governance with good intentions is the
hallmark of our civilization"

- Narendra Modi

22. Protect the Mission and Values

So then, brothers and sisters, stand firm and hold fast to the teachings we passed on to you

- 2 Thessalonians 2:15

- Before major decisions, ask: "How does this align with our mission and values?" If you can't answer clearly, pause.
- Post the camp's mission and values in the boardroom, staff lounge, and major publications. It's not just a plaque, it's a compass.
- When the mission starts to blur, gently steer back to the "why."
- Empower the Executive Director to say "no" to good ideas that don't serve the core purpose, and back them when they do.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"People don't buy what you do; they buy why you do it."

- Simon Sinek

23. Develop Emergency and Succession Plans

The prudent see danger and take refuge, but the simple keep going and pay the penalty.

- Proverbs 22:3

- Create a written emergency response plan covering health incidents, weather disasters, and public relations crises, then review it annually.
- Identify potential interim leaders for key staff positions and create simple documentation for handoff procedures.
- Rehearse "what if" scenarios occasionally at board meetings, not to cause panic, but to build readiness.
- Succession planning isn't just for the director. Build leadership depth in every department by cross-training and delegating responsibility.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"Someone's sitting in the shade today because
someone planted a tree a long time ago"
- Warren Buffett

24. Review Policies that Impact Staff Roles or Camp Safety

Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.

- Proverbs 31:8-9

- Schedule a full staff handbook review every 2-3 years, or more often during seasons of growth or legal changes.
- Clarify processes for hiring, termination, grievance reporting, evaluations, and promotions. Ambiguity breeds mistrust.
- Include staff representatives or anonymous input when revising policies (those affected by the policies should have a voice).
- Ensure your policies reflect your values: grace, truth, safety, accountability, and justice should all show up in how people are treated.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"Policies are not just paperwork - They are how we love people in practical ways."

- Unknown

25. Back up Staff Decisions when they Follow Policy

Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching
- 1 Timothy 5:17

- When staff make hard calls. Back them publicly if they followed protocol, even if it's unpopular.
- Address disagreements privately, not in front of staff, parents, or campers. Undermining leadership erodes authority and morale.
- Reaffirm your trust in the Executive Director by giving them room to lead while offering support, not interference.
- Remind board members: unity doesn't mean blind agreement, it means shared respect and aligned support..

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"Support your team publicly, correct privately.
That's how trust is built and leadership is earned"

- Patrick Lencioni

CAMPFESSION

OUR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
WERE WRITTEN IN COMIC SANS.
THAT TELLS YOU EVERYTHING.

CAMPFESSION

THE BOARD SAYS THEY
TRUST US TO MAKE
DECISIONS...UNLESS
SOMEONE'S GRANDMA
CALLS, THEN IT'S SUDDENLY
A FULL INVESTIGATION.

COMMUNICATION AND CONNECTION

CAMPFESSION

WE CREATED A SUGGESTION
BOX...AND FORGOT TO
CHECK IT FOR SIX MONTHS!

26. Hold Annual Staff/Board Gatherings

How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity

- Psalm 133:1

- Host a low-pressure event like a BBQ, ice cream social, or game night before the summer season begins.
- Use fun icebreakers or trivia games that allow everyone to laugh, relax, and connect across roles.
- Encourage informal seating, shared stories, and personal introductions. It builds relational equity that pays off during high-stress seasons.
- Keep it short, intentional, and fun. Don't make it a disguised meeting.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"Relationships are built at the speed of trust,
and trust is built at the speed of connection"
- David Horsager

27. Practice Active Listening

Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak,
and slow to become angry

- James 1:19

- When staff bring concerns, pause before jumping into solutions or defenses, listen fully, reflect, and affirm.
- Ask follow-up questions to show you're engaged: "Can you tell me more about that?" or "How long has this been a challenge?"
- Avoid getting defensive in the moment-even if you disagree, say, "Thank you for sharing that, I'll think about it."
- If possible, follow up later with a response or small action step that shows they were heard.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply"
- Stephen Covey

28. Open Regular Feedback Channels

The way of fools seems right to them, but the wise listen to advice

- Proverbs 12:15

- Create anonymous ways for staff to offer input (physical suggestion boxes or digital tools like Google Forms).
- Host bi-annual listening sessions with board representatives present, specifically for staff feedback. Just listen, no decisions.
- Make it clear that feedback won't result in retaliation or defensiveness; model humility and gratitude in response.
- Follow up! Let staff know what feedback was heard and what action (if any) was taken, it builds trust.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"Feedback is a gift. Ideas are the currency of our next success"

- Jim Trinko

29. Celebrate "God Sightings" Together

Let the redeemed of the Lord tell their story -
those he redeemed from the hand of the foe

- Psalm 107:2

- Start board meetings with a time for staff to share recent "God Sightings" (moments of answered prayer, breakthrough, or spiritual impact)
- Create a shared digital journal or bulletin board where staff can drop short stories or testimonies anytime
- Invite board members to contribute their own "sightings" too. Keep it about Camp (from donor conversations, church visits, or other camp-related moments).
- Use these stories to fuel prayer, guide decisions, and remind everyone why the work matters.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"The more you celebrate your life, the more there is in life to celebrate"

- Oprah Winfrey

30. Pair New Board Members with Staff Mentors for Onboarding

Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor

- Ecclesiastes 4:9

- Pair a new board member with a department lead (like kitchen, maintenance, or programming) for their first 3 months.
- Encourage a casual meet-up or "shadow day" at camp.
- Include onboarding materials like job descriptions and an organizational chart.
- Make this mentorship mutual. Let staff ask questions about the board too.
- Use these pairings to help reduce the lack of communication between board and staff.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"Mentoring is a brain to pick, an ear to listen,
and a push in the right direction,"

- John C Crosby

CAMPFESSION

THE BOARD CONSTANTLY SAYS
THEY ARE HERE TO HELP. BUT
ALSO, THEY'RE NEVER AT CAMP.

CAMPFESSION

I INVITED A STAFF MEMBER
OUT FOR COFFEE. I
THOUGHT IT WAS A BREAK.
THEY THOUGHT IT WAS AN
EVALUATION. IT WAS... TENSE

RESOURCE SUPPORT

CAMPFESSION

A BOARD MEMBER DONATED A
GENTLY USED CHAIR TO CAMP. TURNS
OUT "GENTLY USED" MEANS IT'S
FROM THE 70S AND BROKEN

31. Help Write or Review Grants

Commit to the Lord whatever you, and he will
establish your plans
- Proverbs 16:3

- Offer to proofread or format grant proposals. Fresh eyes catch both errors and tone.
- Help research funding opportunities, especially those your own network or industry might access.
- Provide impact quotes, testimonials, or data as a board member that strengthens the case for support.
- Break the task into small chunks so staff don't feel overwhelmed; even reviewing one section can make a big difference.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"Alone we can do so little. Together we can do so much"

- Helen Keller

32. Fundraise for Specific Staff Needs

Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, 'Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,' but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it?

- James 2:15-16

- Ask staff what tools, equipment, or spaces would make their work easier, then share those needs with donors in clear, tangible terms.
- Post a "Camp Staff Wish List" online or in newsletters with links to purchase or donate toward specific needs.
- Host a small donor-driven campaign: "Let's raise \$500 for a new staff laptop!" or "Sponsor the kitchen team's rest area."
- Let donors see the impact - a photo of the new item, a thank-you note from staff, or a video shout-out builds connection.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"Do for one what you wish you could do for everyone"

- Andy Stanley

33. Donate Tools, Furniture, or Equipment that Makes Staff Jobs Easier

Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to act
- Proverbs 3:27

- Think beyond cash: new (or gently used) tech, tools, furniture, or appliances can save the camp thousands.
- Reach out to local businesses for in-kind donations (printers, office chairs, kitchen equipment, or outdoor gear.)
- Offer your own professional services (printing, IT setup, car maintenance, or grounds-keeping) as a practical ministry.
- Always ask staff what's actually needed before donating. Helpful is better than "almost helpful."

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"Act as if what you do make a difference.
Because it does"

- Williams James

34. Offer Professional Mentoring or Coaching

Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and
the one who understands obtain guidance

- Proverbs 1:5

- Offer regular meetups with younger or developing leaders. Listen, ask questions, and offer perspective.
- Recommend books, podcasts, or articles. Then offer discussion over coffee or during a walk at camp. (offer, don't expect or require)
- Focus on encouragement and curiosity, not evaluation. Your role is guide, not boss.
- Coaching isn't about having all the answers. It's about being present and invested in their growth.
- Pay for a professional to help mentor the staff

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"A mentor is someone whose hindsight can become your foresight."

- Unknown

35. Build a Resource Wishlist with Staff Input

The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely
as haste leads to poverty
- Proverbs 21:5

- Use a shared spreadsheet where staff can list needs and rank urgency.
- Break the list into categories (e.g., tech, facilities, fun extras).
- Share the list with donors during year-end giving or special campaigns.
- Revisit and refresh the list quarterly so it stays relevant.
- Include photos or short descriptions to bring needs to life for potential givers.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"Plans are nothing. Planning is everything"
- Dwight D Eisenhower

CAMPFESSION

I ONCE ASKED WHAT THE
STAFF NEEDED. THEY SENT
BACK A SPREADSHEET, 6
LINKS, AND AN AMAZON
CART. I WAS...NOT READY.

CAMPFESSION

WE GOT NEW RADIOS. I NAMED
MINE KEVIN!

MISSIONAL ALIGNMENT

CAMPFESSION

I NEVER KNEW OUR CAMP
MISSION. NOW IT'S ON A
STICKY NOTE ABOVE MY
MIRROR

36. Pray with Staff Before Major Events

For where two or three gather in my name,
there am I with them

- Matthew 18:20

- Show up 30 minutes early on the first day of camp, retreats, or events to gather in prayer with staff. Presence speaks volumes. (They could be busy so pray for them instead of expecting them to join you)
- Organize a pre-event campfire or chapel moment with board-led encouragement and prayer - short and heartfelt goes far.
- Lead a short devotional or offer a blessing over the grounds, the staff, and the campers (it sets a holy tone).
- Make prayer normal, not formal. Casual, sincere prayer creates deep spiritual connection.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"Prayer does not fit us for the greater work.

Prayer is the greater work"

- Oswald Chambers

37. Invite Staff to Speak at Your Church

Let the redeemed of the Lord tell their story -
those he redeemed from the hand of the foe
- Psalm 107:2

- Invite staff to share a brief testimony or camp story during a Sunday service or missions moment. Real stories move hearts.
- Include a Q&A, slideshow, or even a brief camper video to make it visual and memorable.
- Pair it with a call to action: "Register for camp," "Support a staffer," or "Join a workday."
- Follow up by introducing the staffer personally to potential donors or volunteers at your church.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"Stories are the single most powerful weapon in a leader's arsenal"

- Howard Gardner

38. Provide Spiritual Growth Materials or Subscriptions for Staff Use

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path

- Psalm 119:105

- Give a devotional book, Bible journal, or a subscription to something like Dwell, RightNow Media, or a worship playlist.
- Invite staff to join a small group, men's/ women's Bible study, or discipleship cohort hosted by your church or online. (Invite, don't require attendance. They have busy lives)
- Bring in a trusted speaker, pastor, or worship leader for a spiritual refresh day mid-summer. It feeds the soul during the hardest stretch.
- Make it clear: this isn't about performance, it's about *being* with Jesus. That's what sustains ministry.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"You are only as deep as the last person you
discipled"

- Francis Chan

39. Serve Alongside Staff

Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many
- Matthew 20:28

- Show up in unexpected ways (NOT show up unexpected): wash dishes, sweep floors, help with late-night checks. Staff will remember that forever.
- Serving breaks down walls between "board" and "boots on the ground." It builds respect and deepens relationships.
- Bring your work clothes and a humble attitude (not to oversee, but to support)
- Pick weekends when things are busiest and say, "Put me where you need me." Then follow through with joy.
- Don't give more work to the staff. Don't come and serve on days they have "off" or require them to give you more attention than the ministry

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"You can't lead if you're too important to serve"
- Craig Groeschel

40. Stay Committed During Transitions

Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess,
for he who promised is faithful
- Hebrews 10:23

- Be a non-anxious presence when the camp is going through leadership changes, program shifts, or budget challenges.
- Speak words of steadiness to the staff:
"We're with you. We're praying. We're staying."
- Help the Executive Director carry the weight of big transitions. Don't let them feel alone in the vision.
- Be transparent and hopeful in communication. Uncertainty is bearable when people feel seen and supported.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"Anyone can hold the helm when the sea is calm"
- Publilius Syrus

CAMPFESSION

I JOINED THE STAFF IN
WORKING A WEEKEND
RETREAT. MY BODY STILL
HASN'T RECOVERED FROM
THE BUNKBED. MY HEART?
FULL.

CAMPFESSION

BOARD MEMBER PRAYED OVER
US. I'M NOT CRYING...IT'S DUST!

CARE AND
WELL-BEING

CAMPFESSION
APPARENTLY NOTHING SAYS
STAFF APPRECIATION LIKE A
CHIPOTLE BAR!

41. Sponsor a Staff Appreciation Week

And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up

- Galatians 6:9

- Organize a themed appreciation week (e.g., "Camp Superheroes" or "Fuel the Fire") with fun surprises each day.
- Get creative: breakfast burritos, handwritten thank-yous, cold drinks, or s'mores kits go a long way!
- Invite board members, alumni, and families to sponsor meals, notes, or small gifts.
- Cap the week with a laid-back night like a campfire, game night, or catered meal. No agenda, just celebration.
- Don't forget seasonal staff. Recognition early in the summer keeps energy high!

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"People may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel"

- Maya Angelou

42. Provide Access to Counseling or Pastoral Support

Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed.

- Proverbs 15:22

- Partner with a local counselor, spiritual director, or pastoral care provider to be "on call" during camp season.
- Offer stipends or gift cards for staff to seek out care on their own terms.
Confidentiality builds trust.
- Encourage a culture where asking for help is seen as wise and healthy, not weak.
- Don't just react to burnout, build emotional and spiritual support into your leadership rhythm proactively.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"You don't have to be in crisis to benefit from care"

- Unknown

43. Support Staff Family Needs

But if anyone does not provide for his relatives,
and especially for members of his household, he
has denied the faith

- 1 Timothy 5:8

- Offer childcare during camp events, retreats, or banquet nights so staff spouses can attend and relax.
- Organize a rotating meal train during summer weeks to bless families who are running on fumes.
- Include spouses and children in appreciation events. Make space for them to feel seen and valued too.
- Remember: when you support the family, you extend the staff member's stamina and joy, decrease burn-out, and help that Staff member desire to stay at the camp for years!

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"When you care for the whole family, you
strengthen the whole ministry"

- Unknown

44. Cover Occasional Date Nights or Rest Days for Staff Couples

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest

- Matthew 11:28

- Pool resources from board members or donors to create a "Date Night Fund" with restaurant or entertainment gift cards.
- Offer free childcare by recruiting trusted volunteers or retired staff (bonus points for games, crafts, and snacks)
- Create small "Care Baskets" with cozy items (popcorn, candles, devotionals, fuzzy socks, etc.) for couples to enjoy a night in.
- Be intentional about timing. Mid-summer refreshment can go a long way in preventing burnout!

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"Never underestimate the power of a quiet night
and a good conversation"

- Bob Goff

45. Create a Crisis Fund for Emergencies

Rescue the weak and needy; deliver them from
the hand of the wicked

- Psalm 82:4

- Set aside a portion of the annual board or donor budget as a designated "Staff Crisis Fund."
- Keep access private and respectful. Let the Executive Director facilitate disbursements confidentially.
- Encourage donors to contribute to this fund directly; people love knowing their gift meets tangible, urgent needs.
- Use this fund for things like emergency travel, unexpected medical bills, car repairs, or housing crises. It shows compassion in action.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"You have not lived today until you have done something for someone who can never repay you"

- John Bunyan

CAMPFESSION

SOMEONE BOUGHT ME
COFFEE AND A WALMART
GIFT CARD DURING
WEEK 7. I CONSIDERED
PROPOSING.

CAMPFESSION

WE GOT A NEW COUCH.
I HAVEN'T MOVED SINCE!

ENCOURAGEMENT AND RECOGNITION

CAMPFESSION

WE GAVE OUT BONUSES AT THE
END OF SUMMER. ONE STAFF
MEMBER WHISPERED, "I CAN
AFFORD THE GOOD SHAMPOO!"

46. Publicly Recognize Staff Achievements

Honor one another above yourselves
- Romans 12:10

- Feature a "Staff Spotlight" in each camp newsletter, church update, or donor email. Highlight a win, a story, or a testimony.
- Celebrate milestones with your own personal social media posts or short highlight videos that staff can share proudly.
- Start every board meeting with a "staff win" moment. This builds culture and keeps the mission personal.
- Encourage the staff to share about one another, too. Peer celebration builds community.
- Make announcements at your church about staff achievements. "Our ED was asked to speak at a conference", "Our Food Service Director created a fun new menu item", etc

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"Recognition is not a scarce resource. You can't use it up, so don't hold back"

- Susan M Heathfield

47. Nominate Staff for Awards or Grants

Let someone else praise you, and not your own mouth; an outsider, and not your own lips
- Proverbs 27:2

- Research award programs from CCCA, ACA, local nonprofits, or Christian leadership groups. Keep a list ready each year.
- Submit staff stories to local papers, ministry blogs, or leadership platforms to amplify their impact.
- When a staffer wins something, celebrate it with a special meal, framed photo, or announcement to campers and donors.
- Even if they don't win, the act of nominating says, "We see you, and we believe in what you're doing."

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"The best way to inspire someone is to recognize the greatness they don't see in themselves"

- Unknown

48. Provide Staff with Branded Camp Gear

A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed

- Proverbs 11:25

- Give camp-branded gear during orientation. It builds unity and pride from day one.
- Surprise staff with items like journals, mugs, or water bottles on birthdays or just-because moments.
- Let staff earn gear as a reward for going above and beyond. Recognition and swag go a long way!
- Don't just give them the stuff they can get in the camp store, have it made special for them
- Bonus: When staff wear their camp gear in public, they also become walking billboards for your ministry.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"Feeling appreciated is one of the most important needs that people have"

- Harvard Business Review

49. Surprise Staff with Encouragement Mid-Season

Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others
- Philippians 2:4

- Keep a small "Board Blessing Budget" for unexpected acts of kindness
- Don't underestimate the impact of a cold drink, a handwritten pun, or surprise snacks.
- Use local delivery services or Amazon to send treats even when you're not nearby.
- Add a small camp-branded item (sticker, button, pen) to reinforce belonging.
- Random care builds relational equity, especially when it's not tied to performance.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"Kindness is the language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see"

- Mark Twain

50. Give Small Seasonal Bonuses or Gift Cards

The generous will themselves be blessed, for they share their food with the poor

- Proverbs 22:9

- Even a modest gift at the end of summer or around Christmas can make staff feel seen and valued.
- Partner with a donor or local church to underwrite seasonal staff appreciation gifts. They love helping with things that "bless the blessers."
- Consider surprise Venmo transfers, Amazon or coffee shop gift cards, or camp store credit. Small moments of generosity go a long way.
- Be consistent, not extravagant. A little thoughtfulness is more sustainable than a rare big gesture.

Identify My Camp's Faults:

What can I personally do to improve this as a board member:

Actionable Improvement Steps:

"It's not how much we give, but how much love
we put into the giving"
- Mother Teresa

CAMPFESSION

I GAVE A GIFT CARD TO
THE DIRECTOR. HE CRIED
BECAUSE HE COULD
FINALLY TAKE HIS WIFE
OUT TO DINNER!

CAMPFESSION

SOMEONE NOTICED. THAT'S
ALL I NEEDED!

Key Questions to Ask Ourselves

- What are the top 5 that our board needs to do better on?
- What barriers have kept me, or our board, from being more effective?
- What specific ones do I personally want to help lead or influence this year?
- Where have I seen God at work in our camp? and how can I help tell that story?
- What practical steps can I take this month to encourage our camp staff or director?

Other Books by Chris & Carrie

Steal This: Ideas of Awesomeness

(Updated: December 2018)

ST: Ideas for Outdoor Ed & STEMiness

(Updated: October 2019)

ST: 50 Ways to Be Awesome

(Updated: November 2019)

ST: Ideas of Portableness

(Updated: October 2019)

ST: Ideas of Contemporary Craftiness

(Updated: February 2020)

ST: Ideas of Virtualness

(Updated: May 2020)

ST: Ideas for Time Fillers & Brain Breakiness

(Updated: August 2020)

ST: Ideas of Camp Boxiness

(Updated: April 2021)

ST: Ideas During Covidness

(Updated: April 2021)

ST: Ideas of Social Distancedness

(Updated: May 2021)

ST: Ideas for Escape Rooms & Puzzleness

(Updated: October 2021)

ST: Ideas of Teambuildingness

(Updated: October 2022)

ST: The BIG Book of Awesomeness

(Updated: February 2023)

ST: Ideas of Games & Funness

(Updated: October 2023)

ST: Ideas of CAFÉ Bagginess

(Updated: October 2023)

ST: 25 Rules for Unparalleled Hospitalityness

(Updated: February 2025)

ST: Ideas for Camp Board Greatness

(Updated: July 2025)

ST: Ideas of Parenting Awesomeness

(Updated: August 2025)

ST: 50 Ideas for Retreat Awesomeness

(Updated: December 2025)

ST: Ideas of Staff Training Greatness

(Updated: January 2026)

Princess Diary: Devos for Girls

(Updated: October 2021)

Man Book: Devos for Boys

(Updated: October 2021)

Church Notes Vol 1-4

(Updated: October 2022)

Coming Soon (whenever they get time to write)

Steal This: Ideas for Fun Fundraisingness

Steal This: Ideas of Successful Marketingness

Steal This: Ideas for Waterfront Awesomeness

Steal This: Ideas for Nighttime Funness

Steal This: Ideas of Rainy-Day Campiness



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