



## Building Strong Teams

All bold type shows what the presenter says.

**Preparation:** Two sheets of copy paper per group of four, a snack under each person's chair, masking tape, a Bible, the Building Strong Teams handout, and a kitchen tray with 16 items on it. Suggested items include a paper clip, eraser, toothpick, pencil, staple, piece of candy, thumbtack, pen, rubber band, marker, sticky notes, etc. Cover the items on the tray.

### Part 1: The Truth About Teams

[Suggested Time: 12 mins]

**Welcome to Building Strong Teams! Today we'll discover the biblical foundations for building strong teams and four key principles to do just that.**

**Let's take a few minutes to get better acquainted. Find a partner and introduce yourself, and share a characteristic of the best team you've ever served on. You'll have two minutes each.**

Allow time.

*[Props: two pieces of copy paper per group of four]*

**Let's quickly form teams of four. Then pick the person who looks most like me to come forward and grab two pieces of paper.**

Allow time for people to return to their groups.

**Let's pretend these pieces of paper are volunteers in our ministry. Draw a face on each one. Be sure to cover the whole paper. Set one of them aside for now.**

**Using one paper person, work with your team to show what happens to a volunteer today who tries to do it all alone. You'll have two minutes.**

Allow two minutes.

**Let's regroup.**

**Who'd like to show and tell about your paper volunteer?**

Allow a few groups to share.

**When someone works alone instead of working on a team, it can be very difficult. Let's find out what the Bible says about working on a team.**

**The Bible gives us wisdom about teams. Please open our Bibles to Ecclesiastes 4:9-10. Please join me in reading these wise words.**

**"Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble." Ecclesiastes 4:9-10**

**In these verses, Solomon lists the advantages of cooperation. His point: Two are better than one...and three are better than two. In many areas of life, strength does lie in numbers. And in ministry, the synergy that comes from a group can be more productive than what's accomplished alone.**

**We need cooperation, creativity, and different gifts to see and do what we can't do alone.**

## **Part 2: Key Principles to Build Strong Teams**

[Suggested Time: 33 minutes]

**Let's dive into the four key principles to build strong teams.**

**Principle #1: Effective ministry teams collaborate together and work as one.**

**When teams collaborate, the team members:**

- **Have equal but different team responsibilities**
- **Regularly assist other team members**
- **Seek unity in the midst of their diversity**
- **Work together to accomplish their goals**

**Let's test the theory of collaboration.**

**I'm going to show you a tray full of items, and I'd like you to write down the names of the objects you see in on the tray. You can use the space in your handouts. Everyone ready? Go!**

Show items on the tray for 3 seconds only. Replace the cover on the tray.

Allow 30 seconds for writing.

**How many items did you identify by yourself?**

**Now work together with your group of four. We'll show you the same slide for the same amount of time to see how many items your team can come up with. Ready, go!**

Show items on the tray for 3 seconds only.

Allow 30 seconds for writing.

**How many items did your team come up with? Five or more? Ten or more? Were your team scores higher?**

**I think the advantage of working as a team is obvious!**

**Let's look at principle #2: Effective ministry teams pray, play, drink, serve, and eat together.**

**Acts 2:42 says, "All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer."**

**That's what effective teams need to do, too!**

**Effective teams...**

- **PRAY...together.** Team members pray for one another. One church has its team members draw names each month for their prayer list so they're always lifting each other in prayer.

**Effective teams...**

- **PLAY...together.** A Gallup study reveals that 80 percent of "highly satisfied church members" indicated fellowship and fun helped them develop friendships in their church. Do we plan enough time for fun and fellowship with our team...or is our time together spent just on accomplishing a task?

**Effective teams also...**

- **DRINK...coffee, tea, and soda together, of course.** (Yea, Starbucks!) We need to intentionally meet just for the purpose of being together—outside the walls of the church. It's much easier to get to know another person in a living room, den, or coffee shop than in a more formal setting.

**Effective teams...**

- **SERVE...together.** Volunteering and serving together helps people develop friendships. Even serving in an area that's not our team's "ministry" can build strong relationships, such as going on a short-term mission trip together or doing a day of community service together.

**Finally, effective teams...**

- **EAT...together.**

**In a recent survey by the Gallup Organization, 77 percent of "highly satisfied church members" have eaten a meal with people in their congregation in the last year. There's something powerful that happens when team members experience a meal together, just as the disciples experienced after sharing a meal with Jesus.**

**Let's have a little snack together right now. Reach under your chair and grab your treat!**

**While you enjoy your snack, talk with a partner about ways our team has participated in some of these five team necessities. Write on your handout any new ideas you'd like to try.**

**Allow 3 minutes.**

**Principle number #3 is that effective teams value relationships.**

**Let's see just how important relationships are. Stand up, find a different partner, and introduce yourself.**

Wait while people find partners. Then have them turn their attention to you.

After you've shown the first slide, wait for a moment for people to discuss the answer. I've got a little quiz for you to take. Confer with your partner to see if you know the answers, and then wave your hand if you know.

**1. Who won the Heisman trophy in 2007?**

Allow 15 seconds for people to confer. After 15 seconds, take a few answers.

Answer: **Tim Tebow**

**2. What movie won the Academy Award for Best Picture in 2007?**

Allow 15 seconds for people to confer. After 15 seconds, take a few answers.

Answer: ***The Departed***

**3. Who won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 2007?**

Allow 15 seconds for people to confer. After 15 seconds, take a few answers.

Answer: **Cormac McCarthy for "The Road"**

**4. Who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007?**

Allow 15 seconds for people to confer. After 15 seconds, take a few answers.

Answer: **It was award jointly to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and Al Gore, Jr. for their efforts to build up and disseminate greater knowledge about man-made climate changes, and to lay the foundation for the measures that are needed to counteract such change.**

**Who was your best friend in grade school?**

**Go ahead and tell your partner about this friend and what made that person so special to you. You'll have one minute each. I'll let you know when it's time for your partner to begin.**

After one minute, suggest that if second partners haven't started sharing yet, they should begin doing so now. After one more minute, turn off the music and have participants return to their seats and turn their attention back to you.

**What was the difference between answering questions about notable people and talking about your friend from grade school?**

Let several people share.

**You'd think we would remember important people from history—and the people we tried to remember weren't even from that long ago! But for most of us, these people didn't have any personal relationship with us, or we didn't have any emotional connection with them. Simply put, their lives didn't have a lasting impact on us in the same way that our friends' did. It's amazing that no matter how old we are, most of us can clearly remember our friends from years ago. We remember their names, where they lived, what foods they liked, what we did for birthday parties, and so on. Their lives made a difference to us.**

**The people on our teams make a huge difference in our lives, too.**

**Relationship-building must be a priority and an ongoing practice in our team-building. But sometimes it's not so easy.**

**What gets in our way of building relationships with others?**

Take a few responses from the group for one minute.

**Most people today are pressed for time. And "tasks" get in the way of our taking time to first care for one another and build community. When a ministry team becomes a caring community, we minister to one another, building up our team as it ministers to others. Friendship and serving are not mutually exclusive.**

**Let's look at principle #4.**

*[Props: As teams talk, go around and give a 12-inch length of masking tape to each group.]*

**Trust is the key element for any effective team. Find your team's second paper person.**

**With your team, share real-life examples of when trust has been torn apart on a team. As each person in your group shares an example, tear off a piece of your paper person.**

**For example, perhaps you've lost trust in a colleague who undermined your authority or a team member who broke your confidence and shared personal information.**

As you name each example, demonstrate by tearing the paper person.

**Pass your person around until I tell you to stop. It may go around more than once.**

**Not everyone has to share, but be brief so everyone who wants to talk gets an opportunity.**

Allow two minutes.

**Take a look at your torn paper person. That's not how God intended us to be.**

**Listen to 1 Thessalonians 5:15: "See that no one pays back evil for evil, but always try to do good to each other and to all people." We are to build one another up so that our team and our church are strengthened for ministry.**

**Take your group's paper person and tell things that build trust in your team or church. Pass the person around your group, and as each of you shares a suggestion, tape your piece of the person back on.**

Allow five minutes; then call time.

**Talk to your team...**

**How is this like or unlike when trust is broken?**

Allow two minutes for answers.

**What restores and builds up your team?**

Allow two minutes for answers.

**Building trust on our team is vital to the healthy functioning of our team—and it makes people want to stick around, too!**

**Let's close with this Scripture:**

**1 Corinthians 12:18-20**

**"But our bodies have many parts, and God has put each part just where he wants it. How strange a body would be if it had only one part! Yes, there are many parts, but only one body.**

**As the Body of Christ, we're on the same team—God's team. Let's pray.**

## Building Strong Teams

Ministry is better in teams because two are better than one.

### 4 Key Principles to Build Strong Teams

“Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble.” (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10)

#### 1. Effective ministry teams collaborate together and work as one.

Teams that collaborate:

- Have equal but different team responsibilities
- Regularly assist other team members
- Seek unity in the midst of their diversity
- Work together to accomplish their goals

#### 2. Effective ministry teams pray, play, drink, serve, and eat together.

“All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord’s Supper), and to prayer.” (Acts 2:42)

#### 3. Effective teams value relationships.

2007 Heisman trophy winner \_\_\_\_\_

2007 Best Picture  
Academy Award Winner \_\_\_\_\_

2007 Pulitzer Prize for fiction \_\_\_\_\_

2007 Nobel Peace Prize \_\_\_\_\_

Your best friend in grade school \_\_\_\_\_

#### 4. Trust is the key element for any effective team.

“See that no one pays back evil for evil, but always try to do good to each other and to all people.” (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

“But our bodies have many parts, and God has put each part just where he wants it. How strange a body would be if it had only one part! Yes, there are many parts, but only one body.” (1 Corinthians 12:18-20)