**Build Your Team**

**The Basics**

1. **The starter may not be a continuer.**

The person who has the original vision and drive may not have the right skill-set to be the one who manages the team. In fact, they are unlikely to be managerial types.

1. **One-man bands don’t grow projects.**

When a project starts, it is often because of one person’s drive and dedication. As it grows, the starter needs to start to let go of some things, otherwise they will stifle others and stunt the growth of the project.

1. **Projects that don’t change wither and die.**

External situations often change. The need that led to the project starting may change for better or worse. Projects need to change to reflect those situations. There is nothing less attractive than a charity tackling a twenty-first century problem in a twentieth-century way!

1. **Keep evaluating and restructure whenever necessary.**

If you want to grow, then regularly evaluate your services. If necessary, change to meet the current need. That keeps your organisation fresh and relevant.

**Being Team**

1. **Everyone must share the vision and ethos.**

A lot of time is wasted in organisations dealing with staff and volunteers who have not bought in to the vision, or have their own version of it, or simply like being lone rangers. Define your vision and mission and try to make sure that the team are 100% behind it.

1. **Strive to recruit people with relevant skills.**

Some times people have to do things they are not brilliant at, for the sake of the project, but if you can find round pegs for round holes, it makes for a much happier team. You also need to consider whether it’s best to have someone with the skills but not the shared vision, or someone lacking some skills but totally on board (my preference!).

1. **You need a balanced team.**

Having a lot of different personalities, as well as differnt skill-sets, is good. If everyone is like the leader, it can cause friction. Diversity is healthier than clones!

1. **No volunteer is better than a bad volunteer.**

That may appear harsh, but, just because someone is a volunteer, it does not mean they should be able to get away with things that staff would not. They need the same vision, ethos and dedication, and be given appropriate training and responsibilities, which gives their role dignity. Managing bad\* volunteers is not a good use of precious time. Don’t be afraid to turn down people who will not benefit the project, or politely sack those who are not doing their job or not being part of the team.

\*‘Bad’ is not a reflection on someone’s lack of ability but rather their bad attitude or lack of teachability.

**Identifying Gaps**

1. **Who WILL TAKE YOU TO THE NEXT LEVEL?**

It is well worth investing significant time in identiying the greatest personnel gaps, and recruiting well to fill them.

1. **Admin? Fundraiser? Office Manager? Finance person? Caseworker?** Who do you really need?
2. **Gender and personality type?**

Will they help to balance or complete the team? Are they complementary or just the same as you? (that spells danger!)

1. **What about your trustees – are they TRUSTY?**

You need trustees who are committed and understand what is going on. They must trust you to get on with the job, but keep you accountable. They should keep you on a long leash. A short leash will make you frustrated, and no leash will let you run off and do your own thing.

1. **External observers see more clearly.**

Sometimes it is hard to see what’s going wrong, or what’s missing in a project. An external, trusted observer who is honest and supportive can be invaluable. Awaydays for key team members to bond and plan are also really useful.