

10 Tips for Creating Your VBS Program from Scratch

<http://ministry-to-children.com/10-tips-for-creating-your-vbs-program-from-scratch/>

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There are plenty of wonderful and winning Vacation Bible School curriculum programs on the market today that provide ideas, materials, and pointers to allow the director total ease of running VBS in any sort of church setting. There are also plenty of great slice and bake cookies and canned soups available, but somehow there's nothing like a homemade product...and the same principle can apply for a summer program!

While there is certainly nothing wrong with using a pre-fabricated system, there's a multitude of benefits to be reaped from creating a fresh original curriculum. Consider that drafting a unique VBS allows a director to...

Choose a theme and select elements to apply to it.

Adapt jobs and programs to fit the needs of individuals involved

Know material inside and out

Save money on canned curriculum

Personalize areas and equipment

Be creative and have fun

This being the case, it is important to be aware that writing one's own program does take a solid amount of effort and (depending on the magnitude of things) can be quite an undertaking. When executed smoothly, though, coming up with ideas and activities is incredibly rewarding and well worth the task time.

Here are a few survival basics to follow if you choose to attempt going off the beaten path:

1. Start early, plan often

...it's never too soon to begin brainstorming ideas for a quality VBS program. In fact, it never hurts to come up with thoughts as soon as one summer's things are packed up and done!

2. Choose a theme that interests you.

Participants and volunteers alike feed off director enthusiasm. The more personally excited you are about a topic, the more fun you'll have planning events.

3. Over-staff volunteers.

The toughest elements to plan and implement can sometimes be adult helpers. There are bound to be people who bail last minute and there are always extra spots for "floaters" to fit, so don't worry about having too many volunteers.

4. Start big... begin with a broad picture of potential ideas.

Don't worry about throwing out thoughts or getting too specific, but come up with as much possible plan as you can.

5. Hone in gradually.

Look through initial brainstorming and decide which ideas are most practical. Consider what kids will be able to do and what will be fun and memorable.

6. Draft a schedule.

Come up with a daily planning including (at least) a Bible verse, Bible story, games, crafts, snack, songs, and whatever other activities interest your group. Try to incorporate your theme throughout these elements.

7. Identify needs.

Once you have a list of ideas, look through to figure out what materials (food, craft products, etc.) will be required for the program.

8. Recruit resources.

If you do not want to charge kids for VBS, solicit the congregation for donations to make it possible. Post a wish list of items and arrange a convenient spot to place them. You might also want to consider a fundraiser or special offering for monetary donations.

9. Maintain your mission.

Remember your purpose and vision. The program exists for children to experience God's love and have fun. This will only happen if you have fun too!

10. Handle with prayer.

Above all, do not neglect communion with God, the author and perfecter of all things, especially those which are about Him! When frustrated, in doubt, stuck, confused, exhausted, or energized, look to the Lord first and foremost.

Don't forget to breathe, relax, be creative, and have fun!!! :)