

September 2014

Gary's Camping Newsletter

Continuous Improvement for Great Camp Leaders

[\(view as a printable PDF\)](#)

“The function of leadership is to produce more leaders, not more followers.” -- *Ralph Nader*

“**Good advice...** is priceless. Not what you want to hear, but what you need to hear. Not imaginary, but practical. Not based on fear, but on possibility. Not designed to make you feel better, designed to make you better. Seek it out and embrace the true friends that care enough to risk sharing it.

I'm not sure what takes more guts—giving it or getting it.” – [Seth Godin](#)

Website of the Month – Most camps simply include a bullet-point list of activities. That doesn't distinguish their camp from *any* other, and doesn't help mom sell camp to her kids. But if you click on any of the activities on Camp Tamakwa's activities page you get more good information than most camps provide for their whole summer program! <http://tamakwa.com/activities/>

Convert Clicks to Campers – Are you tired of hearing me say your camp's website isn't working? Please read this concise advice on how to improve: <http://blog.crazyegg.com/2014/05/27/content-that-converts/>

Bridge Over Troubled Waters – Camp Wakonda (near Springfield MO) has one of the most effective alumni organizations around, all done by volunteers. It would be worth rooting around the tabs on their web site. I love this example of their stick-to-itiveness in solving problems for their camp: http://www.danchiles.macmate.me/ybees/YBees/Bouncy_Bridge.html

Be a Parenting Resource – Mom entrusted her child to stay with you for a week or more because you convinced her you're “child development professionals.” Let's not let her down. How about sending her a series of Parenting Tips? Don't ask her for anything, just *give* her something. For instance, this article would help mom continue the growth started at camp when her camper comes home: http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/science/2014/05/kid_play_zones_in_parks_leave_no_trace_inhibits_fun_and_bonding_with_nature.html -- Thanks to [Laura Kriegel](#) of “Jack and Laura” fame. There are many more examples, both serious and funny, shared in the [Camp Pros Facebook Group](#).

The Wish List: Updated for Amazon – I don't know if this works, but it's a cool, simple idea. Create a “public wish list” on Amazon, including where to ship them (free with Amazon Prime!) The sweetest parts of this example are the descriptions for how they'd use each gift:

http://www.amazon.com/gp/registry/wishlist/2J6ISYP9UINIX/ref=cm_wl_rlist_go_v

-- Thanks to [Debra Askanase's blog](#) for this tip.

Camp Marketing Workshop- September 24-25 – Des Moines Y Camp- Boone, IA --

“Interested in getting an early start on 2015 camp marketing strategies? Join this small, limited space gathering of resident camp leaders to plan in advance with sessions by **Gary Forster** of Camp Solutions LLC, Jen Feltz of YMCA Camp Minikani. For complete details and registration contact ycamp@dmymca.org or call 515.432.7558.” – *Dave Sherry*

Couple Time – Lots of couples *meet* at camp and marry. Camp director Randall Grayson PhD created this Website to help us *stay* together: <http://couplerituals.org/>

Important Website Advice – “Why Home Page Sliders Are Ineffective (And What’s Replacing Them)” <http://blog.leadpages.net/home-page-sliders-ineffective-whats-replacing/> Slide-shows are great, but not when you hot-link them as your primary home-page navigation.

“**One Blindfold Is Worth an Extra 20 feet of Climbing tower.**” — Isn’t that brilliant? — *Thanks to Patricia Foltyn pafladybug@gmail.com Summer Camp Nurse at YMCA Camp Ta Ta Pochon, CA*

“Too often, we wait until we see what something does before we decide what we built it for.” -- [Seth Godin](#)

“Experience is something you don’t get until just after you need it.” -- *Steven Wright*

“I just joined an improb group. It’s unlikely that we’ll ever meet.” -- *Joe Dator*

Here we go again!

Gary

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Directors Camp at YMCA Camp Belknap Overview – Directors' Camp is an intensive weekend of professional development, intentionally liberated from electronic technology and carefully sequestered on the shores of beautiful Lake Winnepesaukee at YMCA Camp Belknap. Facilitated by experienced youth development professionals, Directors' Camp will provide an authentic camp experience for both new and highly experienced residential and day Camp Directors. The goal of the organizers is to give opportunities for all Directors to both learn and contribute as well as present to the group. This is Directors Camp's fifth year.

When: September 26th to 28th

Who Should Attend: Executive Directors, Camp Directors, Program Director level staff

Cost: \$649 for Y Professionals (includes room and board)

Additional Information and Registration: <http://directorscamp.com>