

Traveling with your team can be the most motivating experience you can have when you have an *exceptional group*, both in performance and in discipline. But, don't be fooled. The preparation for a trip is never-ending. That is why I emphasized *exceptional group*. Fund-raising, motivating and extensive planning are the two main keys to a successful drill team trip.

PLANNING YOUR TRIP

I. Establish a Purpose

1. Senior Trip
2. Team Trip
3. Pleasure only
4. Special performances
5. Parade
6. Competition



II. Administrative Approval

1. Present your idea in writing including cost estimate to administrator
2. Send resumes, videos, photos, etc. to different reviewing boards to obtain invitation if necessary
3. Include travel companies that are accustomed to booking student groups
4. Compare prices on travel (make sure that you have the same flight times/bus quality and transfers)
5. Compare prices on the ground package (hotel, food, sight-seeing, transfers to hotel, etc.)
6. Does the agency offer complimentary trips for directors?
7. Quality and service are as important as the cost of the package
8. Does the agency send a representative with you or have an agent in the location where you are traveling?
9. Is the agency bonded? (to protect your deposits or payments)
10. Resource recommendations from other teams that have traveled

III. Procedure (Time Schedule)

► 14 months (I, II)

► 12 months

1. After administration approval, present to Booster Club for their approval
2. Present to team (use a creative way to announce, once it is approved)
3. Dancers and parents sign letter of commitment and put up first deposit
4. Set up fund-raising schedule
5. Set up payment schedule
6. Publicity for the community
7. Set up a special account for the trip money

► 10 months

1. Check to make sure each dancer is meeting her monthly goals for money

2. Parents meeting to plan fund-raising activities
3. Check with travel agent to see if air fares are projected to increase prior to payment in full. If so, arrange at a local bank for financing with the airline tickets as collateral.

▶8 months

1. Check individual progress for raising funds
2. Work with admins on establishing rules for the trip within the guidelines of your school policies. Establish *due process* procedures for you to follow for discipline purposes on your trip.
3. Have principal sign and approve a copy of the rules prior to trip.

▶6 months

1. Parents meeting with written progress report
2. Get firm itinerary from travel agent working out meal plans, pool parties, awards banquet, tours, or any other special activities.
3. Plan performance schedule, routine ideas, etc.
4. Plan and order costumes or props (if needed)
5. Check financial progress of each dancer and send a "statement" of dancer's balance

▶4 months

1. Begin weekly rehearsals for performances
2. Reserve video or audio equipment needed from school library for trip. Have someone (manager or parent) that will be responsible for it the entire trip
3. Check with travel agent for any updates

▶2 months

1. Check dancers financial progress--send financial statements. If anyone is far behind at this point, they must catch up or drop out of the trip.
2. Make final payment to travel agency
3. Pay off bank not on airline tickets for their release. Place tickets in a safety deposit box or safe until departure.
4. Rehearse with audio and video equipment that will be used on the trip
5. Parents meeting to discuss final plans and any additional fund-raising needed

▶1 month

1. Make final polishing on performance routines
2. Hand out departure information: checklists, rules & regulations, itinerary, trip suggestions, brochures, medical release form
3. Check costumes
4. Arrange for *emergency money* from activity fund (or booster credit card)
5. Meet with travel agent on any *last minute* details. Give them rooming list and flight list.
6. Meet with chaperones to divide responsibilities and go over trip guidelines
7. Give each dancer a closing statement of money they have paid in for the trip
8. Make sure you have left little or no *free time* (all will be safer and smoother)

9. Have a list to take with you of phone numbers for each parent

► Departure

1. Be at departure location 45 minutes to an hour early (1 1/2 hours if international flight)
2. Have a checklist ready to mark off dancers as they check in and are issued airline tickets
3. Collect medical release forms and signed checklists (to insure all has been packed)
4. Check with travel agent representative (traveling with you) each evening to re-confirm the activities and times for the next day
5. Always give an exact meeting time and location every time you dismiss the group. Do not ever assume that they will take the time to read the itinerary --they are too excited about the trip.
6. Have a great time and don't worry about things too much so you can enjoy the trip as much as the dancers
7. Take plenty of pictures and also take candid video shots of sight-seeing, fun activities as well performances and put a video together for the banquet

► Return

1. Have a "picture party" so all the girls can pass around pictures they took on the trip. Show a video of the trip performances and activities.
2. If you have a resource, you could offer to sell video of the trip to the dancers and their parents
3. Have a boosters meeting to give an over-view of the trip. Show a video.
4. Write follow-up letters (or emails) to the airlines, hotels and restaurants that gave a special service. This helps a great deal for them to receive feedback from large groups.
5. Give a written report of your trip to your principal and superintendent. This will help a great deal for the next time you want to take a trip.
6. Send photos and a brief write up to your local newspaper for additional publicity and for the community to see the results of all your fund-raising projects.
7. Put your feet up and relax--YOU DESERVE IT!!!

