

Delivering the “Goods”

Michael Brandwein

Camp is about having fun. It’s about making friends and creating memories that will last a lifetime.

And yet all of this great stuff is not why we’re here. These valuable things are what it *feels* like as we accomplish the real mission of camp.



Our mission at camp is to help campers develop into even better people. That means we’re in the change business. **We’re here to change people in positive ways.** We’re here to use the camp experience to help people develop strong, healthy skills that will help them be successful and happy, maintain positive relationships with others, set and reach satisfying goals, and more.

We’re here to deliver the “goods.” We use the word “goods” in two ways.

- First, the “goods” are our end product. In other words, what do you want to have delivered to campers as a result of our work with them at camp? What are the specific positive changes we want to occur? What do we want them to say and do that they weren’t saying and doing when they first arrived?
- But the second way we use “goods” is to mean that these changes are, literally, “good” things. They are good skills that help campers reach their full potential as people.

To accomplish our mission, we ask these important questions:

1. **What are the “goods”—the great life skills—that we want them to receive?**
2. **How do we “deliver”—get the campers to learn—these skills?**
3. **How do we “confirm delivery?”** How do we measure whether we’ve been successful in teaching the goods? What does success look like?

Question two, the “How do we deliver?” question, is exactly why we’re here in our staff development sessions. We’re going to study and practice ways to help campers learn these “goods.” These teaching methods include:

- a) **modeling:** using the skills ourselves, so campers see them “in action”
 - example

- b) **positive communication:** praising the skills when they are used by others, and explaining why they're valued
 - o example

- c) **learning by discovery:** we'll lead campers in problem-solving games and other activities in which we will guide them, by asking good questions, to figure out what works and what doesn't
 - o example

What we need to do now is begin work on questions one and three. Here's how. **Please make on a separate sheet of paper a simple chart that looks like the one below.** In the left column, put the "goods" that you think would be important for campers to have more of as a result of camp. These are the positive changes that you want to happen to your campers. Then in the next two columns please write some things that you would see or hear that would be evidence to you that these goods had been delivered—in other words, that the changes had taken place and that the campers had these new, good skills.

The "Goods" — what we'd want to have more of by the end of camp	What we'd see	What we'd hear
1. self-confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o tries more new things, even if they seem hard o smiles when doing something hard o speaks up more in the group, offering suggestions and opinions o gives opinions or ideas that may be different from those said by others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o "I can do this." o "I want to try it." o "I'm getting better at this." o "I'm good at this." o "I have an idea." o "Check this out — look at what I can do."
2. ??????		

Later, when we discuss these with each other, we can make a "**declaration of value**" for the goods. Here, we explain why the goods are important. How would the world be different if people had more of these skills? Thanks!

Reprinted from *Training Terrific Staff Volume Two* (2008) by Michael Brandwein