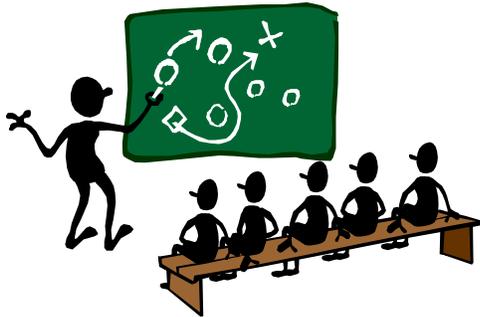




Leading Your Team



“Dependent people need others to get what they want. Independent people can get what they want through their own efforts. Interdependent people combine their own efforts with the efforts of others to achieve their greatest success.” – Stephen Covey

One of the greatest abilities a person can have is to lead others. By leading others toward organizational goals you can increase your effectiveness many times over.

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The Member - Award

Volunteers are your greatest asset. If you allow the flexibility for differing strengths and interests to combine into a common purpose, great things will happen. An orchestra leader combines different instruments making different sounds into one coherent piece of music. A quarterback calls the play that causes a variety of players to move in a coordinated way which results in a touchdown.

You too, as President can harness great power of success by combining volunteer's interest and strengths toward making a difference in the lives of young people. This is truly the “game of life” worth playing!

For this reason it is helpful to make time to get to know every member and discover their “passions” for service. The “Member Interest Finder” is a helpful

tool. This is a form that you can pass out to every member for them to fill out and return to you.

This information can give you a good indication of the most appropriate position or committee to which you can assign them. Another committee assignment technique is to post a list of committees at the front of the room and have members each sign their names under one or two committees.

One of the greatest things a member can do in your club is to sponsor a new Optimist Member! By doing this single act they have essentially doubled the amount of service they can provide for the club.

As president the appreciation of a new member sponsor should be one of the greatest recognitions that you could bestow upon a member.

Using Your Strengths



Every leader is different. There are certainly a wide variety of Leadership Styles and Profiles that are effective in leading others.

Just as a business does a situational analysis of its strengths and weaknesses, so too should you know yourself.

What are your strengths?

What abilities would you like to improve?

What qualities could you highlight in others?

As a leader you should be the best of who you already are. Carefully assess your strengths and then choose other abilities which you would like to improve; make a plan to improve them. For other personal qualities that you do not have, find someone else to take the spotlight by having them use their abilities which best compliment yours.

“The greatest personal reward for being a leader is not what you do with it, but what you become by it.”

Gaining Trust

“People do not care how much you know until they know how much you care.”

Before you begin the process of building a team and leading others you should gain their trust. A personal relationship is what gives the authority to lead. You undoubtedly have earned some trust already or they would not have elected you to be their president.

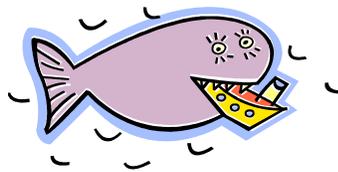
Some of the components of building a trusting relationship include, actively greeting people, calling them by name, smiling and shaking their hand, listening to their ideas, asking about their families and kids, sending them birthday/holiday greetings, showing them respect, appreciating their accomplishments, and genuinely caring about them as people. Think about some other ways that you can gain their “trust” in you.

Lead by Example

Consider a basic “tenant” of leadership, “Never be in the position of asking someone to do something that you have not already done, or are willing to do yourself.”

As a leader of Optimists, you should be the shining example of a positive person with an enthusiastic “can-do” spirit! Optimism begins with you, the leader!

“We must be the change we expect to see in the World.” – Mahatma Ghandi



Ask and Recognize

Training Killer Whales

Have you ever watched the training of “Killer Whales” at a Sea World training camp? How do you suppose they get such magnificent animals to jump out of the water through those hoops?

Well, according to the trainer he first places a rope at the bottom of a pool and if the Whale accidentally swims over it the trainer gives them food in the form of a fish as a reward. The rope is then moved a few inches off the bottom and if the whale happens to swim over it, the trainer gives them another fish as a reward. The rope is again raised, and continually raised until it's to the surface while all the time the trainer rewards positive behavior with a fish. Of course at this point the whale is actually jumping out of the water to obtain the fish/food reward. Soon the rope becomes a hoop and the whale jumps out of the water and through the hoop to the wonder and amazement of audiences. And the trainers still give them the fish/reward.

Of course people are not whales and you would not dare give your volunteers a fish as a reward. This basic concept, however, does apply when leading people. The techniques obviously require a much more sophisticated and creative approach.

“Man does not live by bread alone - from time to time he needs a little buttering up!”

Ask and Recognize

The basic concept illustrated in the “Whale” story is to ask and recognize. With the whale the asking part was difficult and depended on accidental behavior to initiate the process. With people, asking is easy.

So, as a President, use this principle. Ask, then give them a prize, “Great job, Henry, here’s a prize.” Be generous, but consistent. A little job deserves a little prize, a big job, big prize!

Ask yourself, “What are some “little jobs” you could ask of a new or inactive member?”

(Possible answers include: Lead the Pledge, Give the toast, be the greeter at the door, be a “mystery greeter,” draw a ticket in your raffle, etc.)

How might you recognize a “little job”?

(Possible answers include: A handshake, a smile, pat-on-the-back, mention their name in front of the club, name in newsletter/e-letter)

Now for an “intermediate job:” What is a very simple thing to do that is so great that it doubles a person’s capability to serve others?

(Answer: Sponsor a new Optimist member! Alternate answer: show up for a service project)

Yes, and of course, significant excitement and appreciation for this act should come directly from you, the president.

Now, let's talk about a "big job". What are some of the big jobs you could ask someone to do?

(Possible answers: Set up the room, be a Sergeant at Arms, Organize a fundraiser, serve on a committee, serve as a committee chair)

What is a "big reward" for doing a big job?

(Possible answers: Public accolades, Name in newspaper, Certificates of recognition, plaques, personal 'thank you' notes, awards, gifts, etc.)

"Ask someone personally; recognize people publicly."

Be wary of asking for volunteers with a show of hands, or passing around a sign-up sheet – it gives a hint of being impersonal.



Remember that "Recognition is the Pay of a Volunteer."

Many books on leadership and management deal with the methods and abilities you might use to enhance your effectiveness as a leader. Read books, listen to tapes.



The End of part3: Leading Your Team

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