

TIPS for PRESIDENTS

Congratulations, You've Been Elected Club President

"Leadership, like jazz, is a public performance, dependent on so many things ... the environment, the volunteers in the band, the need for everybody to perform as individuals and as a group, the absolute dependence of the leader on the members of the band ... What a summary of an organization!" Max DePree, Author

Now that you have become club president, how does your role change within the group? What are some of the new expectations the group has placed on you? What should you expect from the members in return? Taking on the role of leader changes the nature of your relationship to the club and your responsibilities to your fellow club members. These Tips may prove helpful in planning effective programs and meetings while building a united club.

Tip 1: Collaborate and agree on club goals. Start by inviting club members to work with you in identifying common club needs and goals. Set your club's goals and priorities for the year and evaluate how they can best be accomplished. Monitoring progress through the year will help you adjust your plans and activities.

Suggestion: *Do not lose sight of the original mission by adopting too many new goals.*

Tip 2: Become a *Listening Leader*. You may find that your most important leadership goals can't be measured. Finding ways to connect with each individual member, to increase each one's membership satisfaction and to help that member find their special niche in your club's family is the greatest contribution you can make in your retention efforts.

Suggestion: *Create a member survey to learn more about each member's Quota goals, interests and skills.*

Tip 3: Work as a Team. Dividing and sharing club responsibilities and tasks creates a "win-win" situation. Members "win" because working together in partnerships increases the club's success and impact. Leaders "win" because they avoid the burnout and frustration that can come from assuming too much responsibility themselves.

Suggestions:

- *Match tasks according to the interests and skills of the members.*
- *Explain the purpose of the assignment and how it fits into the big picture of the project.*
- *Agree in advance to expected tasks, results and timelines.*
- *Encourage members to use their own creativity and resources in deciding how to solve the problem or organize work – always be approachable and an encouraging resource for members who encounter problems.*
- *Troubleshoot behind the scenes. Be sure to handle personal problems discreetly and in a caring and encouraging way. Separate the "problem" from the "personality".*
- *Apply "continuous improvement" principles to your club projects. After a project or activity is over, invite participating members to help evaluate what worked well and what can be improved next time. Record what you learn and then pass the information to your next club president.*
- **Thank you** is the most important phrase you'll say to any member! *Be specific about the behaviour, action or contribution that you appreciate.*

Tip 4: Plan meaningful meetings. Effective Meetings can provide up-to-date information, develop team spirit, encourage broader participation, spread the workload more evenly, stimulate creative solutions, enhance and improve existing processes and ideas, encourage leadership growth in other members **and** develop a sense of commitment to group decisions.

Determine your meeting's purpose. Never hold a meeting simply because “we always have”. To ensure that your meeting has purpose and achieves a measurable outcome, ask yourself a few questions.

- ✓ *What outcome do I hope to achieve through the meeting?*
- ✓ *Have I arranged for input from the members on my agenda?*
- ✓ *How can I maximise discussion to best suit our time together?*
- ✓ *Do I have clearly defined facilitator, timekeeper and recorder roles established?*
- ✓ *How will I evaluate the results of this meeting?*

Design your program. All meetings have an atmosphere or climate. Sometimes it just happens, but more times it is planned to ensure a productive meeting. The atmosphere is affected by room temperature, seating, lighting and physical surroundings. All meetings, whether they are one hour or several days in duration, have a defined beginning, middle and end:

By encouraging your members to be productive and helping them to find meaningful ways to participate, you are strengthening your club *and* Quota's presence in your community. **Please** don't forget to celebrate your victories, large and small. Doing so encourages members to tackle future issues and activities with passion and spirit.