



Making Successful Appointments

2010-2012 GFWC Club Manual | Club Management

Building a successful and committed team of chairmen is one of a club president's most difficult—and most important—responsibilities. This guide is provided to assist you in recruiting, selecting, and retaining club chairmen and committee members.

WHAT IS A GOOD LEADER?

A leader is a person that brings people together and guides them to the realization of a shared mutual goal. A good leader must have or develop as many of the following qualities as she can:

- 1) Vision
- 2) An open mind
- 3) Sound judgment
- 4) Knowledge
- 5) Enthusiasm
- 6) Enjoyment
- 7) Creative thinking
- 8) Thick skin
- 9) Good interpersonal relations
- 10) Empathy

ARE LEADERS BORN OR MADE?

Leadership is not a one-day thing. It is a constant commitment to excellence, a habit, a daily practice.

- 1) Treat members with respect and dignity.
- 2) Set the example for others to follow.
- 3) Be a cheerleader.
- 4) Empower your members.
- 5) Maintain the highest standards of integrity.
- 6) Insist on excellence and hold members accountable.
- 7) Build a team with pride and stick together.
- 8) Show confidence in your members.
- 9) Maintain a strong sense of urgency.
- 10) Be available and visible to your members.
- 11) Develop yourself to your potential.

HOW CAN GOOD "FOLLOWERSHIP" CONTRIBUTE TO GOOD LEADERSHIP?

A good follower:

- 1) Anticipates
- 2) Creates
- 3) Evaluates
- 4) Listens
- 5) Hears
- 6) Observes
- 7) Participates
- 8) Prepares
- 9) Questions
- 10) Responds

HOW CAN WE INSPIRE OTHERS TO LEAD?

The greatest inspiration one can give another in becoming a leader is to make that member feel important. Seven ways to make members feel important are:

- 1) Give them as much responsibility and authority as they can handle. Adjust this as they grow.
- 2) Give them work they can feel proud about accomplishing.

- 3) Include members in the decision-making process to the fullest extent possible.
- 4) Ask members for their advice, opinions, and ideas...and really listen to what they say.
- 5) Let members share the spotlight when things go well.
- 6) Never belittle or humiliate members, even in jest.
- 7) Let members know how much you appreciate their help and ideas.

HOW CAN YOU SPOT A LEADER?

When trying to spot a good leader, use these hints to evaluate the potential leadership qualities of a member:

- 1) Do not confuse a lot of talk (hype) for good leadership. Look for quality comments, not quantity.
- 2) Conversational “bullies” should be noted. Half of being a good leader is being a good listener.
- 3) Watch for eye contact and group interaction. When discussion gets stalled or confusing, do all eyes turn to one person? Also make note of whom the group ignores or seems annoyed with.
- 4) A leader will start the discussion or break the ice when everyone else is acting shy.
- 5) Look for the person who gives direction to a straying discussion or opens new avenues of thought in a stalemated or stalled discussion.
- 6) The class clown does not necessarily make a good leader, unless she is obviously using humor to moderate tempers or make a point.
- 7) A leader will formulate generalized statements of philosophy or principle from a seemingly confused series of comments by other members.
- 8) Do not mark down a member because her opinion differs from others.
- 9) Tardiness or no-show is an extremely serious offense. Mark it down.
- 10) The best discussion leader never says a word. Refrain from interjecting your opinion or dominating the discussion. If you ask a question, turn it right back to the group. Give good marks to the member who answers.
- 11) Look for the member who asks leading questions. This usually shows that she has her own opinion, but wants to hear how others feel first.
- 12) Wallflowers are usually not leaders. A good leader will try to draw them into the conversation.
- 13) Observe members who learn from experience.
- 14) In some cases, you may have a member who defends an extremely unpopular position. This takes courage in a group of peers. Give good marks for this.
- 15) You may observe a member playing “devil’s advocate.” This is an extremely sophisticated leadership technique, not to mention difficult to do without alienating the group. Give highest marks for this.
- 16) Look for courteous behavior and do not reward rudeness or belligerence.
- 17) Do not confuse an obviously high IQ for good leadership. A person who flaunts intelligence usually has an unsettling influence on the group.
- 18) Do not mistake ignorance on a subject for poor leadership. A frank “I don’t know” should be respected within the group.
- 19) A concise statement indicates control of thoughts. If she cannot put a thought into words, the thought is probably not clear. A leader should remain silent. Be cautious of the rambler.
- 20) A good leader accepts criticism in a mature manner.
- 21) Watch for the “gunner.” This will be obvious in trying too hard to impress.
- 22) Refrain from making snap judgments based on appearance, brazenness, or physical attributes.

HOW DO YOU SELECT YOUR BOARD MEMBERS WISELY?

- Establish a club index file or spreadsheet of members’ hobbies, talents, skills, and interests that can be referenced when appointing chairmen and committees.

- Consider polling members on their interests and willingness to assume a chairmanship. Some States have formal resumes or surveys that they ask members to complete, listing prior special interests, career or work experience, prior club or State service, etc.
- Encourage members to suggest or recommend other club members who they think are enthusiastic and capable.
- Ask for suggestions from current chairmen, officers, and former presidents. They may have had a great committee member or someone who was not able to serve as a chairman, but did an outstanding job.
- Be objective when making appointments. Close friends may not always have the special capabilities the position requires.
- Appoint a different individual to be chairman each year. Members can get stale in a job and may not be as open to change as a new member in the position.
- Never persuade a member to accept a chairmanship by saying, “You won’t have to do a thing!” When she finds out there is work to be done, she may be resentful or unable to perform the job satisfactorily.
- Discuss possible projects the chairmen might undertake and share GFWC program information with them.
- Make sure all chairmen understand their duties, such as attending meetings, writing newsletters, or attending workshops. If a job description does not exist, develop one and share it with the appointee at the beginning of her office term.
- Advise all chairmen of reporting responsibilities to both the State Federation and GFWC. Encourage them to keep current records for use at reporting time and to pass on to their successor.
- If a chairman is not doing her job or is not effective, try to find out why. Perhaps she is confused about her duties. Offer assistance and review her responsibilities with her. If she feels she cannot perform the functions of the position, ask if she would like someone else to take over the job or someone to help with it. Perhaps she can serve at a later date. If a chairman cannot, or does not, do the job she agreed to do, replace her with someone else. Hard to do, if you have told her, “You won’t have to do a thing!”
- Use praise frequently, call attention to special efforts, and publicly recognize outstanding achievement. It need not be lengthy, but sincere appreciation does work wonders.

BLESSED IS

Blessed is the leader who knows where she is going, why she is going, and how to get there.

Blessed is the leader who knows no discouragement, presents no alibi.

Blessed is the leader who knows how to lead without being dictatorial.

Blessed is the leader who leads for the good of the most concerned, and not for the personal gratification of her own ideas.

Blessed is the leader who develops leaders while leading.

Blessed is the leader who has her head in the clouds, but her feet on the ground.

Blessed is the leader who considers leadership an opportunity for service.

—Anonymous

Information adapted from presentation of 2008-2010 Recording Secretary Sheila E. Shea at the 2010-2012 Administration Orientation Meeting, November 2009