

Practical Leadership For Chapter/Chorus Officers



Developed for Harmony College Northwest

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Introduction

Congratulations and **thank you** for volunteering to be a chapter or chorus leader! You may not fully realize it yet, but you have become barbershop VIP (Very Important Person).

In the life of a barbershop chapter, whether it be a member of the Barbershop Harmony Society or Sweet Adelines International, the chapter officers are those VIPs who do the vital behind the scenes work that make it possible for our choruses to entertain our audiences. Without them the chapters and choruses simply could not exist.

Whether you are in one of the key BHS roles, President, Secretary, or Treasurer, hold one of the key roles in SAI such as Director, President, or Treasurer, or serve in any of the other important roles in your chapter, your decision to offer your time has not gone unnoticed. Whether or not they verbalize it, your members value you and your contribution every single time you gather together.

Overview

This seminar is about leadership – practical leadership that you can use when you walk out the door. The starting point for the seminar is the online chapter officer training available from the Evergreen District. If you have taken it, great! You have a head start, but if you have not taken it, relax. What we will cover in this course builds on the online training, but it does not repeat it. You can pick that up at any time.

Schedule

Our schedule is as follows:

Session 1. A 90 minute interactive course focused on leadership led by Bill Hickman, President of the Bellevue Chapter, BHS and Certified Leadership Facilitator, BHS

Session 2. A 90 minute interactive roundtable discussion facilitated by Bill Hickman, with Ed Gentz, Evergreen District Operations Team Membership (BHS), and Nancy Kurtz, Team Leader of the Pride of Portland, SAI.

What is Leadership?

The Basic Concept:

Leadership is...

The key point of leadership is:

The grand secret of leadership is:

The Leadership Skills You Need

As you think about leadership in both BHS and SAI there is one critically important fact that you must remember...everyone in your chapter and your chorus is a

_____!

This unalterable fact places special responsibilities on chapter and chorus leaders. We cannot use two of the most commonly used tools of business management in our effort to get things done within our chapters.

We cannot hire or fire our volunteers, and we do not have the power of the purse to offer financial incentives.

Given that, how can we get them to do what needs to be done? You need some skills of leadership. These are:

1. The ability to _____

2. The ability to _____

3. The ability to _____

4. The ability to _____

Skill #1 - The Ability to Build Trust

What is Trust?

What is the cost of low trust in a chapter or chorus?

What are the symptoms of low trust in a chapter or chorus?

How to Build Trust

Continuity _____

Caring _____

Communication _____

Competence _____

And the big one:

Skill #2 - The Ability to Communicate Effectively

This is the real key to effective leadership. Wheel of Communication was played to discover a phrase: *Communication is:*

_____!

Many managers share a common misperception about communication. They mistakenly believe that that communication occurs whenever they speak or write.



This type of “communication” is just like a radio broadcast. It is of no value whatsoever until someone tunes their radio to the right frequency to hear what has been broadcast.

Even when this occurs, though, it does not mean that communication has occurred.

Communication only occurs when the message that is broadcast is received and understood as it was intended.

What is Effective Communication?

Effective communication has purpose. It is not a random collection of words thrown together on the spur of the moment. When a chapter leader communicates, he or she is really talking about or seeking answers to one of these core questions:

_____ ? _____ ? _____ ?

_____ ? _____ ?

These questions form the basis of all leadership communication, which means the leader must be clear about the purpose of the communication. There are two questions:

1. *What is the reason for the communication?*
2. *What does the leader really want to convey?*

Are You Creating Communication Problems?

There are many reasons for misunderstanding, some of which you cannot control. If the chorus member is not focused, disinterested, distracted or outright rejects the message there is little you can do about it.

As a leader it may be difficult to accept this rejection, but the hardest thing to accept is *the most common reason for misunderstanding is how you speak – what you say, how you say it, and when you say it.*

Everyone speaks without thinking, but leaders must always be aware that there is a consequence to this: _____!

You can only control what comes out of your mouth, which is why you need to be clear about the purpose of your communication before you speak. That is what will reduce uncertainty and misunderstanding.

To Make Sure Your Message is Understood:

1. _____.

Do not complicate your message. Boil it down to the basics and cover as few points as possible. People process faster that you can speak so they will be tuning in and out during your message. The shorter it is the more likely it is that you will have their attention.

2. _____.

Write it out! When you deliver the message remember the old adage – Tell them what you are going to tell them, tell them, and then tell them what you told them. This will enable you to stay on track and not wander from your point.

3. _____.

Do not assume that just because you said it they understood it. Take every opportunity to repeat your message. The more important the message the more often you must repeat it in various forums.

The Most Difficult Part of Communicating Effectively

Difficult as structuring your message may be, the most difficult part of communicating effectively has nothing to do with what comes out of your mouth. Rather it is...

_____!

Have you ever met someone, exchanged names and in 30 seconds forgotten their name? It wasn't because you weren't listening, it was because you were listening at the wrong level.

The Levels of Listening

No one listens the same way all the time. There are three different levels:

Level One: _____ **Listening**

Level Two: _____ **Listening**

Level Three: _____ **Listening**

Exercise

You and one other person are going to be given a topic to discuss. You will each have an opposing view. You can use any arguments you can think of to make your point. Your goal is to get your opposite number to agree or at least acquiesce to your view.

Round 1: “Yeah, but....”

Pair up. The first person states his or her opinion

The second person responds however he or she chooses, but lead off with the words, “Yeah, but....”

The first person responds however he or she chooses, but must lead off with the words, “Yeah, but....”

Round 2: “Yes, and....”

Do the same exercise but the responses must lead off with the words, “Yes, and....”

How did you feel after each round?

What’s the point of this exercise?

Active Listening

Experts tell us we only listen effectively about 25% of the time. The rest of the time we are generally figuring out what we want to say. The way to correct this problem is to become an Active Listener.

Active listening is listening with our minds as well as our ears. It requires us to:

- Focus on the speaker. To do this we need to get rid of distractions.
- Resist the temptation to interrupt. Most often we do this when we are defending our positions.
- Try to understand where the speaker is coming from.
- Pay attention to any nonverbal cues.
- Say back what you have heard to confirm your understanding.

One effective way to do all of this is to follow the A's:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

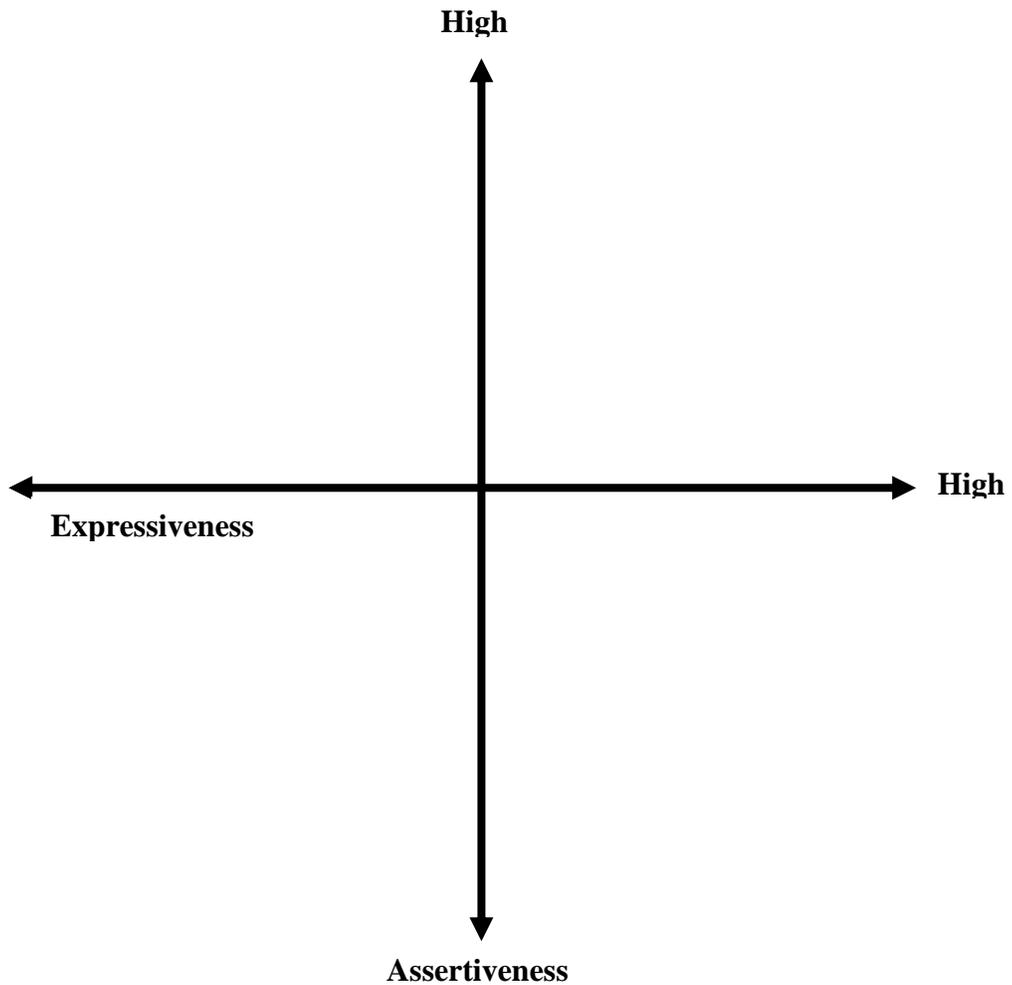
4. _____

Skill # 3 – The Ability to Flex

Here is a simple fact of life – everyone is different. As a chapter or chorus leader it is important to keep this simple fact in mind.

The problem is that too many leaders act as though all of our members are the same. Since they aren't, you must be willing to flex your style of communication.

Communication Styles



Skill # 4 – The Ability to Get Stuff Done

If you were asked how you get stuff done, you would probably respond like most of us:

I don't really know...I just do it!

While this may be OK if we are just singers on the risers, but as chapter and chorus leaders where we are responsible for getting things done through others this rarely works well. There is a better way. We can use some practical tools.

These are:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Think Before You Act

The first and most important element in really getting stuff done is to think before you act.

This is so fundamental that most chapter or chorus leaders don't even give it a thought, which is precisely why it is so important.

When a situation arises that needs leadership what do most leaders do? They start throwing out ideas and declarative statement hoping that something will work. In other words, they try to show they are in charge. Unfortunately, this often creates confusion just at the time when clarity is necessary.

The best chapter leaders don't do this. They think things through before jumping in.

Ask Appropriate Questions

When a problem arises in your chapter or chorus what's your job? To solve the problem, right? **WRONG!**

When we become chapter leaders most of us assume that we are supposed to be able to solve the problems or at the very least know what needs to be done. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Your job is to: _____

What you know is a combination of what you have done, what you have seen, and what you have studied in your life. No matter how much knowledge you have accumulated, it is still not enough for you to know the answer to every problem.

The sum total of knowledge in the world is doubling in less than every 18 months so it is impossible for you to know the answers to every problem, which leaves you with a basic problem. How can you get the job done? The answer is to ask questions.

It is the leader's responsibility to ask questions

_____!

If Leaders Don't Ask Questions....

What happens when leaders don't ask questions? Chapters wither and die.

Why don't leaders ask questions? Ego! They mistakenly believe that if they give any indication that they don't know what to do the members won't respect them, they will doubt their ability, or they will no longer be seen to be in charge.

If you have even a twinge in this direction here is a simple fact that will help:

The person in charge is

_____!

What Are Appropriate Questions?

It is critically important for you to understand the power of the words you use. The words you choose can send very different messages from the questions that you ask.

How would you feel as a member if you were asked any of the following?

- _____
- _____
- _____

These are the kind of closed questions that create problems by making the person being questioned defensive. They can create the very situation you are trying to avoid.

A better kind of question to ask is one aimed at getting people to think and allow them to offer their own answers. Here are three great questions:

- _____
- _____
- _____

How to Ask Questions

The goal of asking questions is to get answers. You want to gather information, understand motivations, or uncover problems, but what happens if no one answers the questions you ask? Getting an answer, a good answer, often relies more on the skill of the questioner than the question itself.

To maximize the probability of getting the answers you want there are some things you can do that will help:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

How to Listen Effectively

_____!

Shift Your Mindset

Remember the job of a chapter or chorus leader?

Your job is to: _____

Given all that goes on to make our groups work, how can you do this? It's really simple:

1. _____

2. _____

These are the skills, but the mindset shift is the most important:

Shift the Right Expectations

What expectations do you hold for your group? The problem is that most chapter/chorus leaders are not clear in their own minds about what they expect. They have general ideas rather than clear expressions.

The result of this is as sad as it is inevitable. Since the leader is unclear about what he or she wants those being led are likewise unclear about what the leader wants.

The result is that they do what they THINK the leader wants. Sometimes right...but very often wrong.

What is your major expectation for your chapter/chorus?
